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NSP Testifies Before House Agriculture Committee

LUBBOCK, Texas – The House Agriculture Committee held a hearing in Lubbock, Texas, today to review U.S. agriculture policy as the Committee begins the process of writing the 2012 Farm Bill. It was the seventh hearing of the Committee's tour across the country to listen farmers' opinions of the upcoming farm bill.

Dan Smith, a sorghum grower from Lockney, Texas, and member of the National Sorghum Producers Legislative Committee, testified before the eight members of the Committee who attended today's hearing. Smith thanked the Committee for its work on price elections in the 2008 Farm Bill, and asked for their continued support for the bill's Energy Title.

"The Committee's work on sorghum price elections in the 2008 Farm Bill led to an increase in crop insurance price elections from 88 percent the price of corn to 97.8 percent the price of corn," Smith said. "For my farm, this translates to \$7.33 per acre more dryland crop insurance coverage and \$41.94 per acre more irrigated crop insurance coverage. Thank you for leveling the playing field."

Smith asked the committee to maintain a strong crop insurance program in the next farm bill.

"Crop insurance has saved my operation several times in situations where I would have gone out of business without this vital risk management tool," Smith told Committee members. "It is extremely important across all crops on my farm, and I want to underscore that good sorghum crop insurance is indispensable for me."

The renewable fuels industry is the fastest growing value-added market for the sorghum industry, with more than one-quarter of the U.S. grain sorghum crop currently being processed through an ethanol plant. Smith encouraged the Committee to continue their support for programs in the farm bill's Energy Title.

"Energy programs like the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels (Section 9005) and the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) have been very positive for the sorghum industry," he said. "If implemented correctly, both programs will help build cellulosic and sweet sorghum as feedstocks for companies looking to make ethanol out of its biomass and sugars."

NSP encouraged the Committee to look at new proposals for energy programs in the farm bill that will continue to involve the agriculture industry in the business of providing America's energy.

NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers, and serves as the voice of the sorghum industry from coast to coast through education and legislative and regulatory representation.

