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## **SORGHUM E-Notes**

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**NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:**  
*the voice of the sorghum industry*

### **EPA Rules on RFS Waiver**

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson announced today that the EPA has ruled against an April 25<sup>th</sup> [request by Texas Governor Rick Perry](#) to reduce the Renewable Fuels Standard on the grounds that it negatively impacts the economy of the state of Texas. Today's ruling comes after several delays by the Agency.

Toby Bostwick, Chairman of the National Sorghum Producers said that EPA made the right decision. "This ruling proves that the truth about ethanol prevails when scrutinized against hard numbers and economics. Ethanol is a benefit, not impairment, to the nation's economy. Fuel prices are lower because ethanol is included in the U.S. fuel supply."

EPA released a fact sheet explaining their motives for denying the waiver. It states that: "EPA also determined that the evidence also indicates that even if the RFS mandate were to have an impact on the economy during the 2008/2009 corn marketing year, it would not be of a nature or magnitude that could be characterized as severe. Even in the modeled scenarios where a waiver of the RFS mandate might reduce the production of ethanol, the resulting decrease in corn prices is anticipated to be small (on average \$0.30 per bushel of corn), and there would be an accompanying small increase in the price of fuel (on average \$0.01 per gallon in fuel costs). The average increase in corn prices in all modeled scenarios, including scenarios where the RFS mandate would and would not have an impact, was \$0.07 per bushel of corn. Such levels of potential impacts from the RFS program do not satisfy the high threshold of harm to the economy to be considered severe."

In a statement, Governor Perry said he was "greatly disappointed with the EPA's inability to look past the good intentions of this policy to see the significant harm it is doing to farmers, ranchers and American households."

Significant doubt has been cast on Perry's real motives for requesting the RFS waiver after an [open records request](#) on some of Perry's associations returned evidence of several meetings with poultry-producing giant Bo Pilgrim. Shortly after those meetings early in the year, Pilgrim donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to Perry and the Republican Governors Association which Perry chairs. Perry cited harm to Texas's large livestock industry when he originally made the request, but Texas also boasts a burgeoning ethanol industry.

"This is an important victory for all Americans," said RFA President Bob Dinneen. "If EPA had agreed to the waiver request, our oil import dependence would have increased. Moreover, such a decision would have sabotaged the development and growth of new technologies and a cellulosic biofuels industry. Thankfully, the EPA recognized this grave risk and rejected the waiver request."

The ruling is a victory for the grain industry which has recently found itself in a crossfire of negative media attention aimed at ethanol. Little ink has been given to the fact that ethanol has kept U.S. fuel prices at least 20 to 40 cents lower than it would have been without the blending in of ethanol. The Journal News in New York's Lower Hudson Valley this week reported E-85 fuel selling for \$3.39 per gallon while the regular unleaded pump next door offered fuel for 84 cents more at \$4.23 per gallon. To read that story, click [here](#).

### **NSP Weighs in on New Farm Programs**

Last week, NSP sent a letter to USDA's Farm Service Administrator (FSA) Teresa Lasseter encouraging USDA to implement new farm programs providing farmers with as much flexibility as possible. Almost a million additional acres of sorghum were planted as a second crop, providing much-needed feed grain production this year. NSP's staff will continue to work with USDA to point out ways the federal agency can implement the farm bill to help sorghum farmers operate efficiently and effectively to feed and fuel the world.

## **U.S. Grains Council Elects New Board**

The U.S. Grains Council met last week and elected a new Board of Directors. Troy Skarke, NSP's USGC representative and a former NSP board member, and farmer near Claude, Texas was selected to represent the sorghum sector on the Grains Council Board. Dale Artho completed his term as President of USGC. Our thanks go out to Dale for his service during his year as USGC President. He sacrificed many hours away from farm and family to make a strong contribution to the grain industry.

## **New NSP Website to Debut Next Week**

The National Sorghum Producers is rolling out a brand new website complete with a fresh look and easy to access information on legislative and regulatory issues, yield contest and more. We will be updating over the weekend so bear with us through the transition and be sure to send any feedback you may have. The new site will still be located at [www.sorghumgrowers.com](http://www.sorghumgrowers.com).

## **Congress in Recess until September**

Congress recessed last Friday for its traditional August break. They will return the first week of September for three weeks before most members return to their districts to prepare for November elections. This is a great time to meet with your Congressperson and make your voice heard on issues important to the agriculture industry. Watch your local news media for information about town halls and meet and greets in your congressional district. Members of Congress represent *you* and want to hear your opinions!

## **International Conference on Sorghum for Biofuels to be Held in Houston**

NSP, Texas A&M University, USDA, and other organizations are sponsoring the International Conference on Sorghum for Biofuels in Houston, Texas August 19 through 22. The conference will highlight the up-and-coming use of all types of sorghum for biofuels production. Sorghum's unique water-sipping qualities, short growing season, and hardy nature make it an excellent option for next generation biofuel production. To register, view the schedule, and learn more about the conference including field trips to Texas A&M University and Verenum's conversion plant in Jennings, Louisiana, visit <http://www.ars.usda.gov/meetings/Sorghum/>.

## **Sorghum Maturity Slightly Ahead of Five-Year Average**

Fifty-one percent of the nation's sorghum crop reached heading by week's end, 13 percent behind last year and nine percent behind the five-year average. Delays were evident in all states when compared with normal, except in Colorado and New Mexico, where heading was ahead of the five-year average by 26 and nine percent, respectively. Coloring, at 30 percent, was five percent behind last year but one percent ahead of the five-year average. Arkansas' development lagged significantly behind the five-year average, while Colorado's progress was 38 percent ahead. In Louisiana, where development advanced 16 percent during the week, coloring progress was 14 percent ahead of the normal pace. Sorghum acreage was 22 percent mature, the same as last year but three percent ahead of the five-year average. Texas acreage was 56 percent mature and Louisiana acreage was 42 percent mature. Condition of the crop was rated 50 percent good to excellent, down one percent from last week.

From: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/WWNatSumm/WWNatSumm-08-05-2008.pdf>

## **About Sorghum Notes**

SORGHUM Notes is a publication of the National Sorghum Producers. NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers and works to ensure the profitability of sorghum production through market development, research, education and legislative

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**Quote of the Week:**

True contentment is a thing as active as agriculture. It is the power of getting out of any situation all that there is in it. It is arduous and it is rare.

-- *Gilbert K. Chesterton*

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