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## **SORGHUM E-Notes**

December 11, 2008

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

### **NSP Yield Contest Winners Announced!**

NSP is proud to announce the winners of its 2008 NSP Yield and Management Contest this week. Contestants entered the contest in one of five production categories, and each entry must have harvested for contest purposes a plot of at least five contiguous sorghum acres. The Yield Contest is hosted annually by NSP to recognize outstanding production practices and yield accomplishments by sorghum growers nationwide.

This year's national winners include: In the Conventional-Till Irrigated Category, **Chris Bass** of Bailey County, Texas; in Conventional-Till Non-Irrigated, **Phil Scott** of Gibson County, Indiana; in Mulch-Till Non-Irrigated, **Steve Richard** of Cloud County, Kansas; in No-Till Non-Irrigated, **Jarrod Spillman** of Sheridan County, Kansas; and in Reduced-Till Irrigated, **Matt Mason** of Union County, Kentucky. **Mike Fischer** of Thayer County, Nebraska took home the first place prize nationally in the Food Grade category.

This year's Bin Buster awards, recognizing the highest yields contest-wide in irrigated, non-irrigated and Food Grade categories, are **Chris Bass** of Bailey County, Texas for his irrigated yield of 201.76 bushels per acre and **Brad Stephen** of Daviess County, Kentucky for his non-irrigated yield of 180.48 bushels per acre. Food Grade Bin Buster was **Mike Fischer** of Thayer County, Nebraska with 133.57 bushels per acre.

Each national winner will receive a trophy and will also be honored at a dinner at Commodity Classic with the NSP Board of Directors and staff. A breakfast awards ceremony for all county, state and national honorees will be held during Commodity Classic, the premier convention and trade show of the U.S. sorghum, corn, soybean, and wheat industries. The 2008 Commodity Classic will be held in Grapevine, Texas at the Gaylord Texan resort and hotel February 26<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Sorghum-specific programming begins on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Congratulations to all of our winners, and thank you to all Yield Contest participants!

### **House Republicans Select New Agriculture Leader**

Representative Frank Lucas (R-OK) was chosen by House Republicans yesterday to lead the Minority Office of the House Committee on Agriculture. Representative Lucas succeeds Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) who was required to step down by Republican Conference rules after serving three terms as the panel's top Republican, including two as Chairman.

"I have long served as a strong voice for production agriculture," said Lucas. "As the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will continue to work with both Republicans and Democrats to ensure that farmers and ranchers have the necessary resources to not only survive, but to thrive in this nation."

### **NSP Signs Letter Urging Farm Bill Implementation**

The National Sorghum Producers, along with 19 other groups and commodity organizations, signed a letter this week urging progress on farm bill implementation. The letter, which was sent to Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer and copied to Office of Management and Budget Director Jim Nussle, expressed the industry's serious concerns about the delay in

publishing regulations to implement numerous commodity and conservation provisions of the 2008 farm bill. Those who signed the letter urged Schafer to release the regulations immediately in order to give farmers time to adequately prepare for the 2009 crop year.

"We certainly understand the significant challenge of implementing the provisions of the new farm law, but it is critical that program provisions be announced in a timely fashion so that farmers can make decisions for the 2009 crop year," the letter stated.

The full text of the letter can be viewed on the NSP website's 2008 Farm Bill page at <http://www.sorghumgrowers.com/2008%20Farm%20Bill.html>.

## **WASDE Report Leaves Sorghum Mostly Unchanged**

The latest World Ag Supply and Demand Estimate (WASDE) Report out today reflects little change in USDA's projections about the sorghum industry. Area harvested remained steady from the December report at 7.4 million acres as did yield at 63 bushels per acre. The WASDE production report remains steady at 465 million bushels. The only change reflected in today's report is a 10 million bushel reduction in exports which is directly offset by a 10 million bushel increase in projected sorghum feed use.

## **Ceres, Inc. Announces Availability of High Biomass Sorghum Seed**

Ceres, Inc. announced today that it has begun booking high-biomass sorghum seed and switchgrass under its Blade Energy Crops label. The launch marks the first seed sales of non-food, low-carbon crops developed specifically as raw materials for biofuels and biopower. The company simultaneously launched a Blade website to support direct-to-farm sales. That website is at [www.BladeEnergy.com](http://www.BladeEnergy.com).

The company reported that the first Blade products build on the inherent advantages of these highly efficient crops, offering double-digit biomass yield gains in many cases — a remarkable level of improvement by crop science standards. High yields are needed since widely dispersed sources of biomass are cost-prohibitive to harvest and transport.

Anna Rath, vice president of commercial development, says that switchgrass and high-biomass sorghum can provide new options for growers, especially on underperforming acres. While she expects the bulk of Blade seed to be sold to bioenergy companies this first year, the company has set aside seed for growers interested in gaining experience with these crops as the market for biomass develops.

## **Advanta US Welcomes New Business Development Manager**

Advanta US is pleased to announce the appointment of John Oppelt as Advanta US Business Development Manager. In his newly created position, Oppelt will focus on sustaining and growing the seed and seed research company's customer base. Advanta US's major product lines include sorghum (grain and forage) and sunflowers. As sorghum is playing an important role in the expansion of global Bioenergy, Advanta US is launching into the bioenergy marketplace and Oppelt will lead efforts to build new relationships in that arena.

## **Nebraska Board Meeting Scheduled**

The Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board has scheduled their next public meeting on December 15, 2008 at the Holiday Inn, 110 South Second Avenue, Kearney, NE. The meeting will begin at 10:30 AM, and items on the agenda will include reports of board activities, research and market development.

A copy of the agenda will be available one week prior to the meeting by contacting the office of the Grain Sorghum Board at (402) 471-4276 or by emailing: [sorghum.board@nebraska.gov](mailto:sorghum.board@nebraska.gov).

## **Highway Authorization Act Proposals**

The American Trucking Association, National Association of Manufactures and America for Safe and Efficient Transportation are supporting proposed legislation in the 2009 Highway Authorization Act regarding federal truck size and weight regulations. Among other things, their proposal would increase the weight limit on trucks and standardize a 53 ft. trailer length. The groups believe these changes would increase productivity in the trucking industry which would directly affect most agricultural producers. The groups also point out that these changes would improve traffic safety as well as decrease engine emissions.

## About Sorghum Notes

SORGHUM Notes is a publication of the National Sorghum Producers. NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers. The organization serves as the voice of the sorghum industry from coast to coast through education and legislative and regulatory representation. To learn more about NSP visit our website at [www.sorghumgrowers.com](http://www.sorghumgrowers.com). Write to us at National Sorghum Producers, 4201 N Interstate 27, Lubbock, TX 79403. *To unsubscribe to Sorghum Notes, please reply to [hannah@sorghumgrowers.com](mailto:hannah@sorghumgrowers.com).* If you have questions about the sorghum industry or the National Sorghum Producers, please do not hesitate to **call NSP at (800) 658-9808**.

## SORGHUM Notes is sponsored by:

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## Quote of the Week:

What's another word for Thesaurus?  
-- *Steven Wright*

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