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SORGHUM E-Notes

December 19, 2008

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:
the voice of the sorghum industry

Obama Nominates Secretary of Agriculture

The National Sorghum Producers congratulates former Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack on his nomination today as President-elect Obama's Secretary of Agriculture. The cabinet appointment represents the President-elect's commitment to production agriculture, renewable energy and rural development.

"We are looking forward to working with Governor Vilsack as he assumes the top role at USDA next month," said Toby Bostwick, NSP Chairman of the Board from Melrose, New Mexico. "Governor Vilsack has shown a track record of supporting production agriculture and alternative energy policy. His commitment to rural development will also be positive for U.S. sorghum growers."

Governor Vilsack spent eight years as Governor of Iowa, an agriculturally intensive state. He launched an early bid for Democratic presidential nomination but removed himself from the race shortly after President-elect Obama entered the arena.

"Governor Vilsack is a bright addition to the Obama camp and NSP looks forward to working with him on behalf of U.S. sorghum producers," said Bostwick.

NSP Works to Resolve Sorghum Odor Issues

NSP is actively working with the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Association (GIPSA), the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) and the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) to insure that sorghum is fairly graded on the basis of odor.

During an industry meeting last week, GIPSA officials presented results of an informal study to evaluate sorghum based on odor. The FGIS presented sorghum samples to seven industries that use sorghum, including: ethanol, beef cattle feeding, dairy cattle feeding, hog feeding, pet food, human food and general mill feeding. The industries were asked to evaluate the grain solely on odor. Based on the results of this evaluation, GIPSA determined that there was no need to relax the odor line for acceptable/unacceptable grain sorghum. However, members of the GIPSA advisory committee, NSP representatives, and delegates of other industry organizations disagreed because samples deemed unacceptable by FGIS were deemed acceptable by industries asked to review the samples. FGIS agreed to the following resolution:

"...Advisory Committee recommends that GIPSA embark on a review of how the sour/musty odor is determined for official grades of grain sorghum. Input (to be provided) from all stakeholders in the form of an industry group that has as its members a cross-section of users, producers and handlers."

NSP to Hold Board Meeting

The National Sorghum Producers will hold a Board meeting in Lubbock, Texas at the NSP offices January 7th and 8th, 2009. For more information, contact NSP at (800) 658-9808.

United Sorghum Checkoff Program Web Presence

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) has a temporary web page for the most up-to-date information on the sorghum checkoff. Visit the new page at www.sorghumcheckoff.com.

United States Files WTO Case Against China

U.S. Trade Representative Susan C. Schwab announced today that the United States has requested World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement consultations with the People's Republic of China regarding China's "Famous Brands" programs. These programs appear designed to promote the development of global Chinese brand names and to increase sales of Chinese-branded merchandise around the world. The United States is concerned not only because these programs appear to incorporate export subsidies (which are generally prohibited by applicable WTO rules), but also because of the protectionist industrial policy apparently underlying these programs.

The United States has discovered that China, as part of its industrial policy aimed at promoting the sale of Chinese products abroad and encouraging worldwide recognition of Chinese brand names, apparently provides numerous subsidies at multiple levels of government. The subsidies appear to include cash grant rewards for exporting, preferential loans for exporters, research and development funding to develop new products for export, and payments to lower the cost of export credit insurance. The designated Chinese brands represent a wide range of sectors, including household electronic appliances, textiles and apparel, a range of light manufacturing industries, agricultural and food products, metal and chemical products, medicines, and health products. These subsidies apply across the economy and therefore may unfairly alter the competitive landscape around the world for *any* industry competing with these Chinese products. The United States also has found other apparent export subsidies for Chinese products in particular sectors of the Chinese economy, available whether or not the products are famous brands. These sectors include textiles, agricultural products and products with high-technology content.

NSP Holiday Schedule

NSP offices will be closed December 24th through 26th and January 1st and 2nd in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. We thank you for your continued support and wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a wonderful start to 2009.

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. 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*. If you have questions about the sorghum industry or the National Sorghum Producers, please do not hesitate to **call NSP at (800) 658-9808**.

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Quote of the Week:

"I heard the bells on Christmas Day; their old familiar carols play, and wild and sweet the word repeat of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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