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SORGHUM E-Notes

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS Ensuring Sorghum's Profitability

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Sorghum Mission to Spain Yields New Usage

Following an overseas sorghum promotion mission late last fall, Abengoa Bioenergy in Spain has begun to use large amounts of U.S. sorghum in their European ethanol production facilities. The new usage comes as a result of a mission to Spain, Morocco, Germany and France during which NSP and U.S. Grains Council leaders met with executives at Abengoa and cleared up some misconceptions about using sorghum for ethanol production.

"They (Abengoa) were importing Argentine corn for their ethanol plants in Spain because they were afraid to use sorghum in fear that end-users of sorghum-based DDGS (distiller's dried grains with solubles) would have concerns with color and overall quality," said Ken Hobbie, USGC president and CEO. "We spent considerable time sharing research with them provided by the National Sorghum Producers to address their concerns and fill the knowledge gap that existed."

According to a more recent meeting between Abengoa and USGC executives, Abengoa has been importing one vessel (1.2 million bushels or 30,000 metric tons) of sorghum per month since February as a result of the information they gained during the USGC/NSP meeting, and are contracted for a total of 9.5 million bushels, or 240,000 metric tons, through September.

"We are very pleased that our mission to Spain last winter has yielded such positive results," said NSP CEO Tim Lust. "NSP looks forward to continuing to work with the U.S. Grains Council, Abengoa Bioenergy and others who find that sorghum is, in fact, a high quality, viable alternative to other ethanol commodities."

Sweet Sorghum on the World Radar

Sweet sorghum is getting some significant global media attention as the world turns to more and more alternative crops for biofuels production. In recent weeks, the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), VOA (Voice of America) and Reuters ran stories on sweet sorghum, exploring its potential for an environmentally friendly, water-sipping, low-input crop. To listen to the stories, follow these links:

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSN1230595720080513>

BBC: <http://www.sorghumgrowers.com/Issues>

VOA (*12 minutes into 22 minute broadcast*): <http://www.voanews.com/english/Science/2008-05-16-voa38.cfm>

Weather in Midwest May Affect Sorghum Acreage

Disastrous flooding in the Midwest that has wiped out homes, farms and entire towns, has prompted many farmers to turn to sorghum in order to fulfill their delivery contracts. When the flood waters recede, it will be too late to replant the corn that has been wiped out in many areas. As such, the NSP office has received several calls from farmers who hope to plant sorghum and recover some of their losses for the season.

Elsewhere, a tornado struck Manhattan, Kansas last night and the campus of Kansas State University. Our thoughts and prayers go out to KSU and all those affected by recent weather as they begin to clean up and recover from the storms.

Trade Title of Farm Bill Clears Congress

After a clerical error caused the Farm Bill to be vetoed without the Trade Title, the latest version which includes the Trade Title, has passed the House and Senate and is now in the President's hands. USDA Deputy Secretary Chuck Connors expects that the President will again veto the bill and that Congress, again, will easily override that veto. The majority of the Farm Bill has been law since late May.

Sorghum Planting Continues to Lag Behind the Average

Producers had planted 62 percent of their intended sorghum acreage, 8 and 9 percent behind last year and the 5-year average, respectively. During the week, in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and New Mexico, producers planted between 11 and 18 percent of their acreage. Planting was complete in Arkansas and was nearly complete in Louisiana. Planting was severely behind in Illinois as only 13 percent of the intended acreage had been planted, compared with 70 percent planted on average. Sorghum planting delay was attributed to excessive rains reaching up to 800 percent of normal in some areas. However, Illinois producers are not alone as nearly all sorghum-producing states were delayed when compared with last year and the 5-year average.

From: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/WWNatSumm/WWNatSumm-06-10-2008.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 representation. 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. Copy and paste "Unsubscribe to Sorghum Notes" into the subject line.

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Quote of the week:

Talent hits a target no one else can hit; Genius hits a target no one else can see.

-- *Arthur Schopenhauer*

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