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SORGHUM E-Notes

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS Ensuring Sorghum's Profitability

May 1, 2008

Just One More Time?

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, the House and Senate have passed yet another extension of the 2002 Farm Bill, this one for two weeks, until Friday, May 16. As before, commodity programs were not extended. The bright spot for this extension is new talk of a serious agreement between the House and Senate conferees on farm bill programs. Such optimism began to circulate last Friday and has remained at the forefront for almost a week.

Bringing back memories of late summer, Congressmen Ron Kind and Jeff Flake presented a motion today to instruct conferees to limit direct payments to \$40,000 per person. The motion failed 157 yeas to 259 nays, partly as a result of a "fact vs. fiction" letter circulated by savvy farm-state congressmen and supported by commodity groups such as NSP. The letter pointed out the significant farm program reforms put forth in both House and Senate versions of the farm bill, in contrast to some misleading math used by Kind-Flake to sway opinion in their direction. The most recent reports indicate that direct payments will likely take a one percent from the 2002 bill and may be capped at \$50,000 per person. Congressman Jerry Moran (KS) and Senator Pat Roberts (KS) have been outspokenly opposed to any cuts in direct payments.

At press time, House and Senate conferees are attempting to arrange a meeting for the afternoon while waiting on CBO scores (Congressional Budget Office price tags) for many changes in the bill. Some things never change; the Administration is still not pleased with the farm bill framework currently being put forward by Congress and continues to threaten a veto.

NSP Opposes RFS Waiver

Texas Governor Rick Perry wrote a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency last week requesting a waiver of the Renewable Fuels Standard that was passed as part of the 2007 Energy Bill. Perry asked for a 50 percent cut in the mandate for grain-based ethanol in order to provide "immediate relief from skyrocketing food prices." In his letter to EPA, the Governor cited a report that was presented to him just weeks before by his own alma mater, Texas A&M University. The report studied correlations between various factors and rising food costs, and states in the executive summary that "Relaxing the RFS does not result in significantly lower [grain] prices." The report instead pointed to the cost of labor, which accounts for almost 40 percent of food costs, and the astronomical price of oil as culprits for rising food prices.

Tim Lust, NSP CEO, interviewed with KFLP All Ag All Day radio regarding the waiver request on Monday, April 28th. "You have a very complex situation that [the Governor] has tried to simplify into blaming one piece of biofuels legislation for all of our problems," said Lust. "And we just don't believe that is an accurate portrayal of the situation." Listen to the entire interview and read more about the requested RFS waiver by clicking [here](#).

Sorghum Planting Behind Regionally, Normal Overall

Sorghum planting, at 27 percent complete, was two percent behind last year but one percent ahead of normal. Nearly three-fourth's of the expected acreage had been planted in Louisiana, nine percent behind last year but 15 percent ahead

of normal. Planting in Texas was 65 percent complete, ahead of last year and normal by four and 11 percent, respectively. Planting was also underway in Arkansas with 13 percent planted, significantly behind last year and normal by 62 and 46 percent, respectively. Oklahoma producers had planted 5 percent of their crop, 20 percent behind last year and 8 percent behind the 5-year average. Elsewhere, producers had not begun planting.

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:

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have to admit, in my sentences, I've gone where no man has gone before. I've coined new words like hispanically. I've expanded the definition of words themselves, using vulcanized when I meant polarized, Grecians when I meant Greeks, inebriating when I meant exhilarating. And instead of barriers and tariffs, I said terriers and bariffs. And you know what? Life goes on. My wife and my daughters still love me. Our military still protects our shores. Americans still get up and go to work. People still go out and have fun, as we're doing tonight.

– ***George W. Bush***

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