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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:

the voice of the sorghum industry

Atrazine Faces Coordinated Media Attack

The New York Times, Huffington Post and National Resources Defense Council released coordinated reports with negative information about atrazine on Sunday and Monday. The stories were based on data from a monitoring program that Syngenta, the maker of atrazine, entered into with EPA in 2003. The Atrazine Monitoring Program (AMP) is an intensive monitoring program currently focusing on about 100 community water systems located primarily in the Midwest.

The Environmental Protection Agency's maximum contaminant level (MCL) for atrazine at 3 parts per billion (ppb) based on an annual average in public drinking water. Atrazine is among a list of 87 drinking water contaminants routinely monitored by the EPA. Jere White, executive director of the Kansas Corn Growers Association and Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association said results of the two testing programs should not be used to confuse consumers. The activist groups used two sets of data to cause concern among consumers, White said.

"You can do anything with numbers. There are spikes, but those spikes were taken into consideration by EPA when the 3 parts per billion annual drinking water level for atrazine was set. That's why it is an annual average and not a daily or weekly number. But to then take data from an entirely different program, and suggest that the levels were above the EPA's MCL for atrazine is simply misleading."

In its July 2009 update, EPA stated, "Through its review of this data, the Agency has confirmed that none of the systems have exceeded OPP's level of concern, a 90-day average of 37.5 parts per billion (ppb) of atrazine and its degradates. Concentrations below this 90-day average are considered to be safe."

The [Sorghum Producers](#) along with the [Grain Sorghum Producers Association](#) will continue to monitor the situation and speak out on behalf of producers and the proven safety of atrazine.

Kennedy Loss Could Have Domino Effect on Agriculture Committee

The death of veteran senator Ted Kennedy this week will cause a ripple effect in the U.S. Senate where he leaves a vacancy in the Chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. Because the Ranking Democrat on that committee, Chris Dodd of Connecticut, is also Chair of the Senate Banking Committee and each Senator can only hold one chairmanship, Dodd will have to decide whether he wants to chair HELP (which faces major responsibility for health care legislation) or Banking. While there are many possible scenarios, if Dodd does not take the HELP appointment, Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa probably will. Harkin is the current chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. If he does take the HELP Chairmanship, the most likely candidate to take his Chair is Senator Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas. If Lincoln becomes chair of the Agriculture Committee, she would significantly alter the committee's focus from Midwestern to Southern as the Ranking Member, Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, is also a southerner.

27 Percent of Sorghum Harvested

Sorghum heading advanced to 84 percent complete by week's end, two percent ahead of last year but two percent behind the five-year average. Heading was complete in the Delta. The most rapid progress occurred in New Mexico where rainfall

over the past two weeks boosted crop conditions and encouraged head development. Acreage in the coloring stage or beyond reached 40 percent complete, six percent behind last year and eight percent behind the average. Thirty percent of the crop was mature, one percent ahead of last year and two percent ahead of normal. Crop maturity was limited to the Delta, Colorado, Missouri, and Texas. Harvest remained active in Louisiana and Texas and began in Arkansas this week. By August 23, twenty-seven percent of the crop was harvested, compared with 25 percent last year and 24 percent for the five-year average. Overall, 50 percent of the sorghum crop was rated in good to excellent condition, up three percent from last week but down six percent from a year ago.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

We are updating our online listing of field days, fairs, farm shows, meetings and events. [visit for the latest information](#).

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 sorghumgrowers.com. Write to us at National Sorghum Producers, 4201 N Interstate 27, Lubbock, TX 79403. *To unsubscribe to Sorghum Notes, please reply to @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:

"When a man says he approves of something in principle, it means he hasn't the slightest intention of putting it into practice."

-- [Von Bismark](#)

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