

4201 N Interstate 27
Lubbock, Texas 79403
Telephone: (806) 749-3478
Fax: (806) 749-9002
www.sorghumgrowers.com

SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:
the voice of the sorghum industry

National Sorghum Producers Board Elects New Officers

NSP announced today that Gerald Simonsen will assume leadership of the NSP Board of Directors to serve as chairman for the coming year. The Board voted during its August meeting to elect Simonsen to fill the role of former chairman, Toby Bostwick. His term is effective Oct.1. Simonsen, a sorghum producer from Ruskin, Neb., previously served as vice chairman of the board.

He said he is proud to fill such an important role and has a good support system in the Board. "It's an honor and a privilege to be elected to this position," Simonsen said. "I want to thank Toby for his service and I appreciate his commitment and dedication; I think we have a great board and I hope I can do as well as Toby has done this year."

Bostwick, a sorghum producer from Melrose, N.M., will now serve as NSP's past chairman. Bostwick said he is thankful for his previous role as chairman and looks forward to Simonsen's leadership.

Terry Swanson, who will assume the role of vice chairman, is a sorghum producer out of Walsh, Colo. Swanson said he is ready to begin his term and is confident in Simonsen's abilities to lead the organization to continued success.

Under its new leadership, NSP will continue to efficiently and effectively represent the interests of the U.S. sorghum industry. For more information on the NSP Board of Directors, click [here](#).

Senate Committee Releases Climate Change Language

Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) this week released her long awaited version of the Senate climate change bill, drawing concern from agriculture groups.

The new bill, titled *The Clean Energy, Jobs and American Power Act*, does not include agriculture provisions that were part of the House version of the bill. During House negotiation on the climate change bill, House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson included multiple protections for the agriculture industry. This new bill aims to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2020 through a cap and trade system. Despite the release of the draft legislation, the Senate is not expected to take up climate change

legislation this year. Controversial health care discussions will likely continue to take center stage for several more weeks.

NSP Represents Sorghum Producers' Interests in RFS2 Comments

Last week the National Sorghum Producers submitted its comments to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the proposed Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS2). The RFS2 defines the parameters around which renewable fuels policy will be built in the future. NSP recognizes that the issues presented by EPA in the RFS2 will, in many ways, define the future of the agriculture industry as a whole.

Specifically, NSP's comments set grain sorghum starch apart from corn starch for ethanol production. In the proposed rule, the two were combined into one category for greenhouse gas (GHG) calculations. Additionally, NSP's comments focused on sorghum's high ethanol yields and presented evidence that sorghum ethanol yields are competitive with corn ethanol yields while delivering 12 percent more GHG reductions.

Comments submitted by NSP addressed an almost flat trend yield – the amount EPA expects sorghum yields to increase over time – as the proposed rule did not account for increased investment into technology via the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. For grain sorghum, NSP comments pointed out incorrect data on input levels and argued against a complicated feedstock certification program. NSP also pointed out the potential of sweet sorghum, which was mentioned only once in the proposed rule, and delved into equivalence values and the greenhouse gas reduction threshold for advanced biofuels. Finally, NSP asked that energy sorghum be granted a dedicated pathway for cellulosic ethanol as energy sorghum was not discussed in the proposed rule.

Atrazine Receives Support from Growers

Sorghum producers from several states left their combines this week to discuss the importance of atrazine to their farming operations with leadership from Syngenta Crop Protection. A roundtable meeting was held at the National Corn Growers Association office in Chesterfield, Mo., followed by an informal meeting at the Keith Witt farm in Warrenton, MO.

Environmental activists such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are attacking atrazine despite its successful re-registration by EPA in 2006. Trial attorneys also continue their efforts for legal action against the makers of the crop protection tool.

Among the producers in attendance were three NSP past chairman of the board including Bill Kubecka of Texas, Greg Shelor of Kansas and James Vorderstrasse of Nebraska.

Vorderstrasse said atrazine allows him to use moisture conserving no-till practices on his farm. "There is no alternative to atrazine," he said. "Every time you till the soil, you lose an inch of moisture. Without atrazine, you'd have to till two or three times pre-plant plus cultivate a couple of times and that amounts to a loss of five inches of moisture."

Other producers attending the meeting echoed Vorderstrasse's thoughts and said they will continue their efforts to prevent atrazine from coming under attack.

New Chief Agricultural Negotiator Nominated

President Obama announced last week his intent to nominate Dr. Islam Siddiqui as the new Chief Agricultural Negotiator of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) last week.

Dr. Siddiqui has experience in biotechnology, regulatory issues and trade issues important to farmers and ranchers. He previously served as undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and was the senior trade advisor to Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. Dr. Siddiqui was vice president for agricultural biotechnology and trade for CropLife America before moving to his current post as vice president for science and regulatory affairs.

The U.S. Senate must formally approve President Obama's nomination of Dr. Siddiqui due to the ambassador standing of the position.

33 Percent of Sorghum Crop Harvested

Coloring advanced to 87 percent complete by the end of the week which is four percent more than last year but two percent less than the five year average. Five percent of the sorghum crop matured during the week leaving progress at 45 percent with a result of four percent less than last year and 14 percent lower than the average. The most significant delays were evident in Illinois and Nebraska where overall progress was more than three weeks slower than normal, respectively. Producers harvested just two percent of the nation's sorghum crop during the week. With 33 percent of the crop harvested, progress was two percent less than last year and six percent less than the five year average. Overall, 49 percent of the sorghum crop was rated in good to excellent condition, unchanged from last week but four percent less than last year.

Source: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/WWNatSumm/WWNatSumm-09-29-2009.pdf>

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 alexis@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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Sorghum Partners, Inc.
P.O. Box 189, New Deal, TX 79350
Phone: (800) 645-7478 Fax: (806) 746-5305
Website: www.sorghum-partners.com
E-mail: information@sorghum-partners.com

Quote of the Week:

If we are strong, our strength will speak for itself. If we are weak, words will be no help.
--John F. Kennedy

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