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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:
the voice of the sorghum industry

House Agriculture Committee Begins Farm Bill Hearings

The House Committee on Agriculture under the leadership of Chairman Colin Peterson (D-MN) held its first hearing on the upcoming 2012 Farm Bill. Many provisions of the “recently”-passed 2008 Farm Bill will expire in September 2012.

“This hearing is the first step in the process of writing the next farm bill,” said [Chairman Peterson](#). A bill this large and that covers so many important issues takes a lot of time and effort to get it right, and I am committed to a process that is open, transparent and bipartisan.”

The only witness at the hearing was Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack who spoke specifically to rural development and steered clear of traditional Commodity Title farm programs. The Administration did not deny that it is seeking to reduce direct payments, crop insurance and some conservation funds but Vilsack said that USDA seeks to build opportunities and services in rural areas to enrich opportunities for rural families.

Agriculture programs will have to fight significant cuts to vital programs like crop insurance in the next farm bill debate. To that end, the Secretary had a frank exchange with Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK). Hear that audio clip [here](#) at Ron Hays’s [Oklahoma Farm Report](#) page.

First Crop Report of the Season

Sorghum farmers nationwide have been hard at work over the past several weeks, putting sorghum in the ground for the 2010 growing season. Growers in Arkansas are especially enthusiastic as two weeks of sunny skies and above-average temperatures have allowed widespread planting progress. In Arkansas, 62 percent of sorghum had been planted as of April 18 compared to only 14 percent at this time last year and the 29 percent five-year average. However, Arkansas growers will now be watching the clouds for a needed rain even this weekend, hoping to further put off irrigating their crops. Louisiana growers are also significantly ahead of normal, having planted 61 percent of sorghum, 17 percent ahead of the five-year average.

Meanwhile in Texas, 53 percent of sorghum had been planted compared to 58 percent at this time last year and the 57 percent five-year average. Growers in Texas who have been in the fields between moisture events that finally broke an extended drought, are behind their normal schedule but happy to start the season with some moisture.

Nationwide, 23 percent of sorghum has been planted compared to 24 percent last year and a 25 percent five-year average.

USDA Announces County Loan Rates for 2010

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announced April 20 it has set the county loan rates for grain sorghum. The rates specific to each county are posted on the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport> or you can contact your county's FSA office. The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes the national loan rate for the 2010 grain sorghum crop at \$1.95 per bushel. For grain sorghum, the 2010 national loan rate was established at the same level authorized for the 2009 crop.

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:

"You know how I'm smart? I got people around me who know more than I do."
-- *Louis B. Mayer*

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