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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:
the voice of the sorghum industry

NSP to Submit Comments on Biomass Crop Assistance Program

NSP will submit comments tomorrow on the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) proposed rule. Comments are due tomorrow in order to be considered for the final rule on this 2008 Farm Bill program. As reported in last week's Sorghum Notes, BCAP is drawing fire from some Congressional representatives who argue the program is high budget and low benefit. However, BCAP could be very important to the sorghum industry as cellulosic ethanol production from high biomass forage sorghum becomes reality and USDA shells out more BCAP matching payments to producers for the collection, harvest, transportation and storage of biomass crops for bioenergy production.

This week, USDA touted the early benefits of BCAP, including new jobs, more energy production and ripple effects that have positively impacted rural communities. The USDA press release said that the program has created a snowball effect in one area, where a qualified bioenergy production facility was able to hire 62 new employees after BCAP payments allowed his company to lower prices and be competitive internationally.

"The final rule will unleash the full potential of the BCAP program to encourage on-the-ground innovation through new crops and new economic development for farmers and rural communities," said Jonathon Coppes, administrator of the USDA Farm Service Agency which facilitates the program.

House Agriculture Committee to Hold Field Hearings

Although it seems like the 2008 Farm Bill was just recently put to bed, the House Committee on Agriculture is mapping out field hearings for a 2012-ish Farm Bill. The hearings will begin in late April. Committee Chairman Collin Peterson is likely to roll out his idea for a whole farm revenue assurance program which he suggests replace current farm programs like the loan rate and crop insurance. While Peterson's idea is early in the process, he has been known to take to heart honest input from producers, so check the hearing schedule and be sure to speak up at one in your area.

The hearing schedule has not been finalized yet but will be posted at www.agriculture.house.gov. Watch Sorghum Notes for the complete schedule in coming weeks.

Sorghum Makes Inroads in Cotton Country

NSP and the Sorghum Checkoff co-sponsored a meeting this morning with Levelland-Hockely County Ethanol, LLC, Farmers Co-op Elevator of Levelland, Texas and Pioneer Seed to better inform South

Plains farmers about the benefits of rotating cotton with sorghum. The Sorghum Checkoff served hot sorghum pancakes to a chilly crowd of farmers while the local co-op and ethanol plant presented marketing information and benefits of taking local sorghum to the local ethanol plant. A grower panel, including 2009 NSP Yield and Management Contest Irrigated Bin Buster, Greg Methvin and Mike Hensen, was the highlight of the morning as producers asked questions about best management practices.

Methvin won the Irrigated Bin Buster award after producing 216 bushels of sorghum per acre. He was growing sorghum in rotation with cotton for only the second time in his farming career, and saw improvement in the quality and quantity of his cotton crop along with environmental benefits like less blowing sand. Methvin is featured on the cover of the spring issue of *Sorghum Grower* magazine, which will reach mailboxes in mid-April.

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 Web site 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:

"If I had only known, I would have been a locksmith."
-- *Albert Einstein*

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