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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:

the voice of the sorghum industry

NSP Supports Agriculture Coalition on SPCC Letter to EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed amendments to the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule have garnered comments from the Agriculture Coalition on SPCC, which represents farmers, ranchers, farmer cooperatives, livestock operations and related agribusinesses. The proposed amendments would establish compliance dates by which farms must prepare or amend SPCC plans and implement those plans.

The letter states, "throughout history and evolution of the SPCC rule, the coalition has strived to maintain a constructive dialogue with EPA to ensure that any agency action regulating oil spill prevention and response take into account the uniqueness of the agriculture industry." The coalition proposes a compliance extension that would allow farmers and ranchers to familiarize themselves with the requirements of the SPCC rule so they can take the steps necessary to comply with regulation.

NSP Submits BCAP Comments to USDA

NSP submitted comments to USDA this week on the Biomass Crop Assistance Program that was included in the 2008 Farm Bill. NSP encouraged USDA to swiftly implement the program, which provides financial assistance to producers or entities that deliver eligible biomass material to designated biomass conversion facilities for use as heat, power, bio-based products or biofuels.

NSP believes it is extremely important to implement BCAP nationwide as soon as possible to provide vital resources for an up-and-coming cellulosic biofuels industry. The program benefits the cellulosic biofuels industry, the environment, American farmers, and ultimately American consumers. NSP also encouraged USDA to include in its rules the impact on the local water supply of raising a biomass crop, stating sorghum's water-sipping capabilities make it a favorable biomass option.

In order to more accurately fulfill Congressional intent from Section 9011 of Title IX of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, NSP proposed a hybrid of USDA's A and B alternatives as presented with the request for comment on the Environmental Impact Statement. The hybrid approach will create a targeted program to build a cellulosic biofuels industry while avoiding program abuse and boosting rural economies throughout the heartland of the United States.

Ag Center Focuses on Sorghum Improvement

Kansas State University's Center for Sorghum Improvement has changed its name to the Great Plains Sorghum Improvement and Utilization Center with the addition of collaborative research from Texas A&M and Texas Tech Universities. The center will continue to focus on critical sorghum research to benefit a global society with a need for sustainable agriculture and health-promoting foods. More information about the sorghum center or crop research at Kansas State University can be found under the "Research" tab at www.agronomy.ksu.edu.

NSP Chairman Will Participate in Nebraska State Fair Farm Bill Forum

KRVN and Rural Radio Network will be hosting a Farm Bill forum at the Nebraska State Fair Aug. 30, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. Gerald Simonsen, NSP chairman and producer from Ruskin, Neb., will represent the sorghum industry as the forum takes place on stage, at the exhibition building on the Nebraska State Fair Grounds in Grand Island. The forum will stream live on 880 KRVN.

Conservation Reserve Program Sign-Up Deadline Approaching

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding producers that the deadline to enroll in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up is quickly approaching. Farmers and ranchers have until close of business on Friday, Aug. 27, 2010, to offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general sign-up. Applications can be completed by land owners at the FSA county office where their farm records are maintained. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized USDA to maintain CRP enrollment up to 32 million acres. In addition to producers signing up for the first time, CRP participants with existing contracts that are scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2010, may elect to re-enroll under a new 10-15 year contract. Contracts awarded under this 39th sign-up are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2010. For more information, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

Triazine Network Seeks Support for Letter to EPA

The Triazine Network has written a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson, expressing concern about the agency's re-review of atrazine. Even though more than 6,000 atrazine studies over the past 50 years have proven that the herbicide poses no danger to public health, EPA continues to re-review atrazine, causing grave concern by organizations, farmers and other citizens interested in a science-based outcome to the atrazine issue at the EPA. To show your support for the Triazine Network's efforts, NSP encourages its members to sign the letter by visiting <http://agsense.org/take-action/>.

Grain Ban and Shortages Create Opportunity for US Sorghum

Last week Israel purchased 1.6 million bushels of U.S. sorghum as a direct result of an agricultural export ban in Russia and the short grain supply in Ukraine. Israel has the intention to purchase 2.4 to 3.1 million bushels in the near future, increasing their imports of U.S. sorghum by about 65 percent. This will bring the U.S. market share of sorghum to Israel to about 85 percent this calendar year.

This Week's Crop Report

Heading of this year's sorghum crop advanced to 84 percent complete by Aug. 15, 13 percent ahead of last year and 7 percent ahead of the 5-year average. Despite evidence of double-digit advancement of sorghum coloring in portions of the Great Plains and Colorado, national progress remained slow,

advancing to 35 percent complete by week's end, slightly ahead of last year but 3 percent behind the 5-year average. Twenty-three percent of the nation's crop was at or beyond the mature stage by Aug. 15, 4 percent behind last year and 2 percent behind the 5-year average. Overall, 64 percent of the sorghum crop was reported in good to excellent condition, down 2 percent from ratings last week but 17 percent better than the same time last year. Triple-digit temperatures combined with persistently dry weather led to a three point decline in crop condition ratings in Kansas and a two point decline in Texas.

Upcoming Field Days and Events

- Aug. 23** Dupont Field Day at Oklahoma State University site, *Blackwell, Okla.*
- Aug. 24** Dupont Field Day at Oklahoma State University site, *Homestead, Okla.*
- Aug. 25** Kansas State University Field Day, *Hays, Kan.*
- Aug. 26** Kansas State University Field Day, *Garden City, Kan.*
- Aug. 26** Pioneer Field Day, *Manhattan, Kan.*
- Aug. 31** Sorghum Field Day at Cropping Systems Research Lab, *USDA-ARS Lubbock, Texas*
- Sep. 2** Oklahoma State University Field Day, *Goodwell, Okla.*
- Sep. 2** Texas A&M Field Day, *Bushland, Texas*

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 lindsay@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:

"The diligent farmer plants trees, of which he himself will never see the fruit."

—Cicero

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