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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:

the voice of the sorghum industry

Vilsack to Deliver Keynote at Commodity Classic

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack will deliver the keynote address to an expected crowd of more than 4,500 farmers, family members and industry representatives during the General Session at the 15th annual Commodity Classic, March 5 in Anaheim, Calif.

"We are excited that the Secretary has accepted the invitation to join sorghum, corn, soybean and wheat growers at Commodity Classic," said Gerald Simonsen, chairman of the NSP board of directors. "It is always beneficial to hear what our highest level administration officials have in mind for agriculture and we look forward to the opportunity."

Commodity Classic is the premier convention and trade show of the sorghum, corn, wheat and soybean industries. It's not too late to get in on the action at this year's Classic whose trade show will host over 800 booths showcasing the latest agricultural equipment, technology, products and services. In addition to walking the trade show floor, participants will also have numerous opportunities to take part in policy discussions, view demonstrations and attend learning sessions. For more information, visit www.commodityclassic.com.

USDA Proposes Compromise on Crop Insurance Cuts

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), which administers the Federal crop insurance program, yesterday revealed important elements of the second draft of a proposed new Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA), which establishes the terms, roles, and responsibilities for both the USDA and insurance companies that participate in the Federal crop insurance program.

The administration's original proposal would have cut crop insurance programs by \$8.4 billion over 10 years, a move that farm state lawmakers like House Ag Committee Chairman Collin Peterson argued would not only reduce vital coverage, but reduce the farm bill baseline when the next farm bill is written. The new proposal would cut the program by \$6.9 billion over 10 years. The new draft includes a series of significant changes, including many discussed during negotiations between the RMA and the participating crop insurance companies.

RMA data shows that annual insurance industry payments have doubled from \$1.8 billion in 2006 to an estimated \$3.8 billion in 2009 based on the terms of the existing SRA. Meanwhile, the number of total policies dropped slightly from 1.3 million in 2000 to 1.1 million in 2008.

The administration says it is attempting to cut the costs of subsidies to crop insurance companies and agents for delivering crop insurance coverage. National Crop Insurance Services Chairman Bob Parkerson said the change is a step in the right direction, but "we aren't there yet."

For USDA's press release, [click here](#).

Australian Sorghum Crop Projected Lower than Usual

Australia's sorghum crop is projected to be smaller this year than normal, with only 1.06 million acres planted to the crop. This would be the smallest area planted to sorghum since 1992-93. The decrease affects not only sorghum, but overall Australian crop production as well because of dry weather early in the season. Grain sorghum production is projected to be about 47 percent of last year's production.

This reduced production could open the door for greater U.S. sorghum exports to Southeast Asia, a major Australian export market. The [Sorghum Checkoff](#) is working to capitalize on this and other new market opportunities, both internationally and domestically.

Sorghum Covered at U.S. Grains Council Meeting

The U.S. Grains Council held its annual meeting this week. Tony St. James covered both domestic and international sorghum marketing in interviews with Sorghum Checkoff board members who travelled to the meeting to represent the sorghum industry. To listen to their interviews, [click here](#).

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:

"Talent hits a target no one else can hit; Genius hits a target no one else can see."
- Arthur Schopenhauer

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