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## **SORGHUM E-Notes**

Feb 2, 2012

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:

*the voice of the sorghum industry*

### **NSP, Commodity Organizations Unify for Smart Farm Policy**

National Sorghum Producers joined 12 other commodity organizations today in a joint statement regarding farm policy priorities.

Joint meetings were held Tuesday and Wednesday in Washington, D.C., for producer leaders to discuss policy priorities, hear perspectives of key policymakers and to work toward consensus on the future of U.S. farm policy. The groups confirmed in the meeting that they are committed to working together to come up with a viable farm policy.

"It is our common belief that Congress should pass and the President should sign a strong new farm bill into law this year. The law expires at the end of this year and producers – like all job creators – need certainty from Washington," the statement says.

"American agriculture stands out as one of the few sectors of the economy that has, throughout the economic downturn, still contributed positively to our nation's balance of trade while helping to create jobs and put this country back on its economic feet. And we have accomplished these things with a farm policy that also stands out as consistently under budget over the past 10 years and for leading the way on deficit reduction, contributing disproportionately and in some cases even alone in the effort to get our nation's fiscal house in order. The economy is fragile, unemployment is high, and Americans are worried. Given the need for economic growth and deficit reduction, for our part we have offered to do more with less. If Washington provides America's farmers and ranchers with some certainty, we can continue to help lead our nation's economic recovery."

### **U.S. DOL Reconsiders Child Labor in Agriculture Rule**

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division announced yesterday it will return to the drawing board on the controversial farm labor rule that would have prevented many young people from working on family farms. The DOL will specifically look at changes to be made to the "parental exemption" portion of the rule related to child labor in agriculture. NSP submitted [comments](#) to the Federal Registrar last December urging the DOL to consider the detrimental effect the proposed rules will have on both farmers and rural youth.

The re-proposal process will seek comments and inputs as to how the department can comply with statutory requirements to protect children, while respecting rural traditions. The re-proposed portion of the rule is expected to be published for public comment by early summer, and the department will continue to

review the comments received regarding the remaining portions of the proposed rule for inclusion in a final rule.

## **Mexico Market Offers Opportunity for South Texas Grain Sorghum**

With the La Nina weather pattern expected to continue, the South Plains of Texas once again seems susceptible to drought. Given the natural drought tolerance associated with sorghum and demand opportunities from Mexico, regions like the Rio Grande Valley and the Texas Coastal Bend are well positioned to increase sorghum acres. Purchasing more than 78 million bushels of grain sorghum annually, Mexico is one of the most important markets for U.S. sorghum. To read more about this market opportunity, click [here](#).

## **USDA Announces CRP General Sign-Up**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture yesterday announced it would conduct a four-week Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general signup beginning March 12 and ending on April 6. Currently, about 30 million acres are enrolled in CRP, and contracts on an estimated 6.5 million acres will expire on Sept. 30, 2012. Producers with expiring contracts and producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP. For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **Sorghum School Dates and Locations Announced**

Sorghum production will be the focus of the day as K-State Research and Extension hosts six in-depth Sorghum Schools in various locations around the state.

The one-day schools will cover a number of issues facing sorghum growers: profit potential; weed control strategies; and planting, fertility, insect and disease management.

The schools, sponsored by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, each begin with registration at 9:30 a.m. and the program at 9:45 a.m. Lunch is included at each location. The program will wrap up by mid-afternoon.

### **Dates and locations include:**

**Feb. 15 - Burns** - Community Center, 301 N. Washington.

**Feb. 16 - Dodge City** - Ford County Fair Building, 901 W. Park.

**Feb. 17 - Mulvane** - St. Michael's Catholic Church Parish Hall, 525 E. Main.

**Feb. 29 - Leoti** - Wichita County Community Building, Wichita Co. Fairgrounds.

**March 1 - Stockton** - Harding Hall 4-H Building, Rooks County Fairgrounds.

**March 6 - Concordia** - Cloud County Community College, Cook Theater.

Participants are asked to register for the sorghum school of their choosing by contacting their local K-State Research and Extension office by the Monday before the school they plan to attend.

## **Upcoming Sorghum Events**

Feb. 7-9	Southwest Farm & Ranch Classic, <i>Lubbock, Texas</i>
Feb. 15	New Mexico Sorghum Association Annual Meeting, <i>Clovis, N.M.</i>
Feb. 20-21	Kansas Commodity Classic, <i>Wichita, Kan.</i>
Feb. 21	Oklahoma Sorghum Association Annual Meeting, <i>Norman, Okla.</i>
Feb. 21-22	Oklahoma No-Till Conference, <i>Norman, Okla.</i>
Feb. 21-22	New Mexico Ag Expo, <i>Portales, N.M.</i>
Feb. 28-March 4	Commodity Classic, <i>Nashville, Tenn.</i>

**Market News** - To view this week's Gulf export grain report, click [here](#).

## **Sign Up to Receive the Sorghum Checkoff e-Newsletter**

Sorghum producers can also receive monthly e-Newsletters from the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. To receive monthly news and information regarding the Sorghum Checkoff's efforts in sorghum research, education and market development contact [info@sorghumcheckoff.com](mailto:info@sorghumcheckoff.com) and provide your email address or sign up at [www.SorghumCheckoff.com/contact-us](http://www.SorghumCheckoff.com/contact-us). You can also follow the Sorghum Checkoff on Twitter @SorghumCheckoff.

## **About Sorghum Notes**

Sorghum Notes is a publication of the National Sorghum Producers. NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers and 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](http://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 [jennifer@sorghumgrowers.com](mailto:jennifer@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. You can also follow NSP on Twitter @SorghumGrowers, and you can find National Sorghum Producers on Facebook.

## **SORGHUM Notes is sponsored by:**

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## **Quote of the Week:**

*"From principles is derived probability, but truth or certainty is obtained only from facts."*

— Tom Stoppard

## **Interested in Sponsorship Opportunities?**

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