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SORGHUM E-Notes

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS Ensuring Sorghum's Profitability

April 3, 2008

Washington, D.C. Update: Fighting for Farmers

NSP staff is in Washington, D.C. this week working to maintain key provisions of farm policy for sorghum producers as staff and Members of Congress negotiate a compromise on farm programs. As stakeholders continue to fight over funding allocation in the farm bill, there have been repeated attempts to take money out of the Commodity Title. Serious concerns remain about protecting direct payments and crop insurance funding, as well as maintaining any increases that commodities may have received in either the House or the Senate passed versions of the bill.

On a positive note, there is ongoing work to further improve the proposed disaster program being created in the farm bill to make sure it meets the needs of growers. Even under mounting pressure to finish a farm bill in the next two weeks, there are still many unresolved issues, not only in the Commodity Title, but in almost every title that could impact sorghum producers in a positive or a negative manner. Ultimately, Congress needs to act soon to improve the sorghum safety net because of recent massive increases in input costs.

The newest April 18th deadline has forced staff, members, and other stakeholders to come to the table and negotiate, but last night USDA Secretary Schafer suggested a two-year extension. Whatever changes come about, be assured that NSP will remain involved in the negotiation process as many groups are still trying to take large sums of money from the Commodity Title to shift it into other titles and away from the sorghum safety net.

USDA Planting Intentions Place Sorghum Acreage Down

USDA released 2008 planting intention numbers on Monday, March 31, 2008. According to USDA, sorghum planted acres will be down by 303,000, or four percent, from approximately 7.7 million acres to approximately 7.4 million acres. This prediction does not take into consideration acres lost to hail or double crop acres, which could be significant when taking into account a reported shortage of soybean seed. The four percent drop is half of the projected eight percent planted acreage drop projected for corn. To access data from the NASS Prospective Plantings report, click [here](#) and navigate to page five.

Rokala Recaps the Farm Bill with TSN

Mark Rokala, NSP's Washington, D.C. representative, interviewed yesterday with Texas State Network's (TSN) Keith Merckx about the state of the 2007 farm bill. "They've taken this April 18th deadline seriously," said Rokala. "This deadline has forced alot of people to sit down and start talking."

Since last week's report, principal negotiators have agreed upon a budget number of \$10 billion over the baseline and staff and members now get to the business of writing farm policy. The President is holding firm to his statement that he will recommend a significant extension if a farm bill is not completed by April 18th and will veto any bill that includes tax increases. As Bush is serving his last term as President, he has little political motive to sign a farm bill that is not in line with his tax philosophy.

To listen to the full audio of Mark Rokala's interview with TSN, visit www.sorghumgrowers.com and click the link on the home page.

TSTA Seeks New Executive Vice President

The Texas Seed Trade Association (TSTA) is accepting resumes for the position of Executive Vice President until July 31, 2008. A job description can be found at www.texasseedtrade.com. All resumes should be mailed to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 924, Brenham, Texas 77834-0924.

About Sorghum Notes

SORGHUM Notes is a publication of the National Sorghum Producers. NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers and works to ensure the profitability of sorghum production through market development, research, education and legislative representation. 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. Copy and paste "Unsubscribe to Sorghum Notes" into the subject line.

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Quote of the week:

It's a recession when your neighbor loses his job; it's a depression when you lose yours. – *Harry Truman*

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