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SORGHUM E-Notes

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS:

the voice of the sorghum industry

Kansas Brings in Record Sorghum Yields

USDA's 2009 Crop Production Summary released yesterday revealed that Kansas farmers raked in record yields for grain sorghum. The statewide yield was 88 bushels per acre, up from last year's 78 bushels per acre. In some places, grain is still standing in the field as farmers struggle to get the last of their crops out, fighting a particularly cold, snowy winter. Meanwhile, projected wheat plantings are down since many farmers didn't have time to plant winter crops after harvesting summer row crops. Sorghum could take some of those unplanted wheat acres next season.

Nationally, sorghum yield was up 5.4 bushels to 69.4 bushels per acre after a yield of 64 bushels per acre the previous year. Sorghum production across the U.S. was also down, landing at 382.9 million bushels due to a disappointing harvest in Texas that offset Kansas' great success. Drought in one of the largest sorghum producing areas in the U.S., the Texas Coastal Bend and Rio Grande Valley, reduced the state's production to only 98.4 million bushels when Texas usually brings in 155 to 160 million bushels.

USDA has said it may revise its estimates for the March 10 Crop Production Summary because northern states continue to bring in grain.

RFS2 Final Rule Expected Out Soon

A Final Rule on the Renewable Fuels Standard-2 (RFS2) is expected to be released within days. The Final Rule may include a mixed bag for sorghum as reports indicate that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may not have originally incorporated all of NSP's recommendations for improvements to the rule. However, NSP continues to work to open other doors for sorghum to find support in the RFS2. Last summer, NSP testified that sorghum has lower lifetime greenhouse gas emissions than previously assumed in the rule. NSP also recommended a dedicated pathway for grain sorghum, energy sorghum and sweet sorghum. In the future, this could set sorghum up for increased usage by bioenergy conversion facilities. NSP will provide details of the Final Rule and their impact on the sorghum industry as soon as they become available.

January 2010: What to Expect from D.C.

As Congress makes its way back from a holiday break this week, buzz about the upcoming legislative agenda has precipitated plenty of speculation during the past week. And while nothing is final, talk from the Hill indicates producers have some things to look forward to and a lot to fight for in 2010.

Much-needed disaster legislation for many southern producers may make a return to the national stage after being put off during the healthcare frenzy before Christmas. Key players may attempt to pass a disaster bill sooner rather than later, either through increased Supplemental Revenue Assurance Program (SURE) payments or through additional direct payments.

Climate change legislation is unlikely to move very far in 2010 because it is an election year. Even so, the issue will not go away because if Congress does not regulate greenhouse gas emissions for climate change mitigation, EPA may.

Finally, the House Ag Committee plans to begin hearings for the next farm bill this year. They will likely be very general in nature. USDA may also begin work on a new farm bill this year and may be looking to further modify 2008 Farm Bill programs.

Meanwhile, regulatory issues continue to abound as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) looks to further regulate everything from particulate matter – that's farm dust – to Atrazine. NSP will closely follow these and other developments throughout the coming year and keep producers constantly informed of how decisions in Washington, D.C. affect producers on their own farms.

Plan for Upcoming Producer Meetings

January kicks off a season of producer meetings across the Sorghum Belt hosted by state grain sorghum producers' associations, extension and NSP. A complete list of meeting times and locations can be found on [NSP's calendar](#) which will be updated with new information as it becomes available. In the mean time, note that the **New Mexico Grain Sorghum Producers Association** annual meeting will be held in Clovis on January 25. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension's annual **Grain Sorghum Educational Program Series** will visit nine locations across the state February 1-4. The **Oklahoma Grain Sorghum Producers Association** meeting will be held in Hooker on February 23 followed by the **Colorado Grain Sorghum Producers Association** meeting on February 23 in Granada. Stay tuned into NSP's calendar for the latest information and agendas as they are finalized.

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:

*"There never was a good knife made of bad steel."
-- Ben Franklin*

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