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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

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ON THE COVER: Small opportunities sometimes lead to careers in places you least expect. For these young individuals, experiences with National Sorghum Producers helped ignite a dream for a career in Washington, D.C., serving agricultural interests in a variety of capacities. Read more about their journeys on page 8.

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Editor's Desk



It's About the People

Recently, I was providing a guest lecture to students at Texas Tech University on advocacy. At the end of class, a student raised their hand and asked a final question regarding my most memorable sorghum career experience. I racked my brain for a profound moment that demonstrated my work as an advocate and my communications education tie to the department. There are plenty, but in that moment, I could only think about two particular memories, and they were purely relationship-based. I became emotional as I told the two stories. They were about the people—not the job.

I think that surprised the young woman who asked, but I am grateful I was able to leave that final thought with those students that day. I believe it with every inch of my being and consider myself extremely fortunate to be surrounded by people I truly enjoy working with each day. Working for the sorghum industry has always been about the people, and that is seen from leadership at the top, down.

That is what this issue is about—the faces of our industry and the people that make up our sorghum family. We always say agriculture is a small world. Dial that down into a specific industry segment like sorghum, and we all become very close. From farm wives across the country to advocates in Washington, and young, emerging leaders on our state and national boards, the sorghum industry is well-connected and well-represented. I cannot help but feel energy as I look around the room at our industry events seeing the people that are coming to the table to lead change in this industry.

National Sorghum Producers is a grassroots organization, and that day in February when China came knocking on our door announcing an investigation into our product and our producers, we went to work. By fortuitous timing, almost two dozen NSP sorghum farmers and staff were in Washington, D.C., that week and collectively held nearly 100 meetings with the White House, Congressmen, Senators, cabinet officials and their respective staffs, raising awareness surrounding the issue and underscoring the need for support as we moved forward. Those meetings have not stopped, and I can assure you, those you have entrusted your farm and your business with to serve as your voice have not slowed down one bit since that day. We may not know what the final outcome will be, but know you have a lot of people on your side and a staff that is extremely invested in you and working hard to defend you.

Jennifer Blackburn
Sorghum Grower Editor

Building a Case for U.S. Sorghum

By Jennifer Blackburn

It was an early, quiet Sunday morning. National Sorghum Producers staff was ready to welcome our legislative committee members and other affiliated producers to Washington, D.C., for our annual legislative fly-in. It is always a busy few days, packed with briefings, training sessions, meetings and networking opportunities where sorghum producers take part in advocacy efforts on behalf of the industry. A few final touches and some extra copies, and we were ready—until the news came.

THE FIRST 24 HOURS Sunday, February 4, 2018

6:00 AM

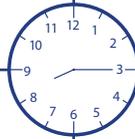
NSP staff was informed China self-initiated anti-dumping (AD) and countervailing duty (CVD) investigations on imports of U.S. sorghum into China. U.S. sorghum had never been investigated in international trade up until this point. Our day suddenly looked very different.

8:15 AM

Both the NSP and USCP board of directors were notified on the action taken by MOFCOM. The email began, “I hate to bring this news to you on a Sunday morning, but unfortunately our concerns have come true.”

10:30 AM

An initial general press statement was formalized and distributed to key staff spokespeople between NSP and the U.S. Grains Council (USGC). It was only a matter of time before the press began calling.



7:00 AM

The case language found on the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China (MOFCOM) website was sent to the United Sorghum Checkoff Program’s legal counsel and NSP’s counsel and Washington representatives, who were also preparing for the week’s legislative fly-in. Our talking points for the week, which were already prepared and distributed, needed to change immediately.

9:00 AM

The facts of the case were gathered, and staff went to work putting together a list of contacts to set up meetings with the following day—law firms that specialized in international trade and have experience with China topped the list.

3:00 PM

NSP and USCP had a board and staff-wide briefing call. Then we prepared for what Monday would inevitably bring.

The Days that Followed

The first press inquiry came at 4:30 a.m. Monday, Feb. 5, followed by the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg News and the Washington Post, to name a few, plus countless farm media.

It was clear U.S. sorghum was a small, initial part of a much larger picture. As word about the investigations spread, the market quickly reacted, dropping substantially. Even though it began to stabilize by Thursday (Feb. 8) and bids were re-established, the price to the farmer and export premiums decreased significantly, creating an untold financial impact on producers across the Sorghum Belt.

NSP, working closely with the USGC, set in motion a strategy to respond to the announcement of AD and CVD investigations into imports of U.S. sorghum by the Chinese government. NSP released a statement announcing NSP will participate fully in the investigations to demonstrate U.S. sorghum farmers do not dump products into China or elsewhere and that U.S. sorghum is not unfairly subsidized. NSP also pointed to the industry's long-standing relationships with valued Chinese partners.

NSP's fly-in strategy quickly adapted to the issue at-hand, and the approximate 100 meetings slated with the White House, USDA officials, Members of Congress and their staffs were utilized to explain the action being taken by the Chinese government and the value of the markets U.S. sorghum producers have established in China.

Building a Case

NSP hired Hogan Lovells, an international law firm headquartered in Washington, D.C., which specializes in international trade cases, including two distillers grain cases and an airline case—all with China. NSP and Hogan Lovells have diligently stepped through the different phases of the case, working closely together with sorghum farmers, the grain trade, USGC, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Trade Representative.

The past two months have been demanding. Sorghum staff has spent countless hours in the office and on the road, collecting farmer data from a representative sample of growers to develop a defense on behalf of U.S. sorghum producers.

NSP was advised the entire process typically takes 12-18 months. At press time, NSP stands at an April 4 deadline with a response more than 2,000 pages in length. This was vigorously compiled in the last 60 days. Also at press time, additional potential future tariffs were announced by the Chinese government further escalating this trade situation. Although we continually find ourselves in uncharted territory, Hogan Lovells' experience and collaboration with our partners in the sorghum industry have been instrumental in getting us to this point. Hopefully there is resolve to this situation sooner rather than later.

Please know NSP is working hard on your behalf as we walk through this difficult situation together. There is a tremendously long list of people to thank for the accomplishments of the last 60 days, and we expressly show our gratitude to the growers who answered the call to be a part of this case on behalf of their fellow producers.✍️

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A Path to Washington

Young leaders stride to success after a start with sorghum

By Jennifer Blackburn

Yasmin Rey was a shy young woman. Growing up in Lubbock, it was a natural decision to stay close to home and pursue a college education at Texas Tech University. She chose a degree in agriculture because her dad's family farmed in Mexico, and she desired to carry out the American dream set forth by her parents in a career field she felt gratitude toward.

Plant and soil sciences is where she began her secondary education. Rey found a job as a lab assistant with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service where she quickly discovered she did not necessarily enjoy the repetitive nature of her work. Nonetheless, she was committed to a path working in agriculture and changed her degree to agricultural communications.

Her reserved but determined spirit for fulfillment and individual success led Rey to another life-guiding decision. Her sophomore year she applied for the congressional internship program in Washington, D.C. She didn't get it.

Opportunity knocked Rey's junior year when



a communications internship announcement with National Sorghum Producers came across her inbox. She applied, and her passion to work hard and make a difference landed her the job.

Rey still had her sights on the congressional internship program, and her time with NSP gave her the experience and confidence she needed to pursue that dream. Her second application took her to Austin during the 84th Texas legislative session. Her sights on D.C. remained.

Garrett Kays

Growing up in rural southeast Kansas on his family's beef cattle operation, Garrett Kays was a sharp and likeable farm kid. His family, generations deep with purple pride, led to an unquestionable decision to plant his first set of roots off the farm in Manhattan at Kansas State University where he studied agricultural economics.

Kays took a student position in the office of government affairs at K-State. His first internship was with the Kansas Department of Agriculture where Kays saw for the first time how public policy shaped agriculture and the role state agencies play in promoting farmers and ranchers.

Thirsting for more knowledge about public policy and professional improvement, Kays sought an opportunity from the National Sorghum Foundation through what was then called the Sorghum Challenge Scholarship. He was awarded a stipend toward tuition plus a trip to Washington, D.C., with NSP during its annual legislative fly-in, his first trip to the U.S. Capitol, stirring a desire to return one day.

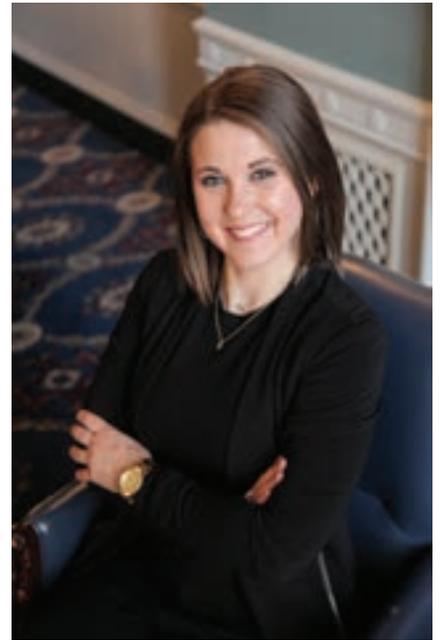


Shelbi Knisley

Shelbi Knisley's first exposure to agriculture was through 4-H and FFA programs growing up in Corsicana, Texas. She fell in love with agriculture through these pursuits and chose to attend Texas Tech University where she studied agricultural economics and general business—an accounting career in mind.

An assured and competent freshman student, Knisley was approached during the summer by one of her economics professors with an opportunity to work for the firm Combest Sell & Associates. That was her first exposure to agricultural policy, and suddenly, accounting no longer held her attention.

Following this newly sparked interest in ag policy, Knisley was advised in a new direction by her professor. He told her to intern at NSP. She trekked to Washington, D.C., with staff to meet with other commodities during the 2013 GMO wheat scare in Oregon. Harkened to passionate agriculture producers and representatives, she developed a will to be a future advocate for their cause and an aspiration to return to Washington.



Fulfilling a Dream to go to DC

Rey, Kays and Knisley were all on a path to intern in D.C. Rey and Knisley worked for the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture—Knisley for Frank Lucas (R-OK) when he was at the helm of the committee during the 2014 Farm Bill and Rey for Mike Conaway (R-TX) after he became chairman. Kays interned for his home-state Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS).

Each one attributes a portion of their success and this step in their careers in public service to experience with NSP and producer advocacy.

"I think my sorghum internship really sparked my interest in going to Washington," Knisley said. "I just knew that was where I was supposed to be working, and I wanted to get involved and work with farmers, knowing that whatever I am doing is for them."

Kays said he had never seen what a national organization does on behalf of its members, and his key take-away from his trip to Washington with NSP was that farmers are smart and passionate people who care not only about the issues but relationships within the industry.

"I distinctly remember a Kansas farmer named [Larry Dahlsten] spending so much time with me and making sure that I learned and had a good experience. He seemed very invested in me," Kays said. "Larry cared about me and showed how in ag we build long-term relationships."



Rey said her internship with sorghum directly correlates to her success and where she is today.

“That’s where it all started,” she said. “I would not have been able to go to Austin without the experience I had at sorghum, and I know that was something that set me on a path to succeed because I was very shy and needed to get out of my box.”

Once each had a taste of what life is like living in D.C., their fate was sealed.

Kays’ Path to Trade Policy

Kays finished college in Manhattan, working for Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS). He graduated then moved to Moran’s Washington office. In 2017 he was hired by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and now works as the confidential assistant to the recently appointed Chief Agricultural Negotiator Gregg Doud. With current action on China’s anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigations into imports of U.S. sorghum, Kays has found his background and experience with sorghum particularly valuable.

“Being able to go to an agency that advocates for sorghum producers and being

able to speak eloquently on some of their issues but also just the basics of the crop has been valuable for me,” Kays said. “Where sorghum is grown and the unique issues that face sorghum are all things I have literally taken and used during my time here at USTR.”

Rey Takes on First Farm Bill

At the completion of Rey’s internship with the House Agriculture Committee, she was offered a chance to stay and work as a staff assistant, a typical starting position for interns looking to remain in Washington, D.C.

“It was just such a great experience that I couldn’t turn [the offer] down,” Rey said. “I never imagined I would stay here as long as I have or be doing what I am, working on nutrition right now. It has been a crazy road to get here, but it’s been great.”

Working on one of the more controversial farm bill titles, Rey is in the thick of current policy making decisions on nutrition benefits. She said working at sorghum taught her the flexibility she needs to survive times like these, and she is glad to still have sorghum in her corner.

“As far as the different projects that helped me the most in my legislative assistant portfolio,” she said, “it’s knowing that every single day is different, and you’re going to have to jump from project to project and be ready for whatever pops up that day.”

Knisley Brings Data to International Market Decisions

Knisley obtained a master’s degree, focusing her research on the sorghum trade market in Australia. In her job search, she came across an opportunity at USDA’s Economic Research Service—a position that was similar to her grad work.

Soon after, she transitioned to the international grains market working on oil seeds. That led to her cur-



Editor's Note

National Sorghum Producers is proud to honor the achievements of these three young people and commends their ongoing efforts to serve others through their respective interests. These are only a few of many former interns and scholarship winners we consider members of our extended sorghum family, and we take courage knowing future decisions that impact sorghum farmers and the agriculture industry are in their hands. It is important as an industry we continue to give back and invest in young, talented individuals like these who understand the sorghum industry, rural America and the challenges we face as we strive toward something better on behalf of sorghum farmers and the industry each day. To learn more about current scholarship opportunities, read page 34 or visit www.SorghumGrowers.com.

rent, wheat-focused position at USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. She still works with producer organizations and individual farmers as she set out to do with the addition of promoting the U.S. export program overseas.

"I have to use all of my background, and I have to know the policies," Knisley said. "That's where my experience at Combest Sell and working with the sorghum group come in. All of that knowledge built on top of each other helps me understand the market better, so I can

“
The generosity of farmers in rural areas, especially toward rural kids, is greatly undersold from the appreciation that rural students have.
”

put out good information that farmer groups can use to advocate for their industry.”

Knisley said aside from the knowledge she gained, a passion for what she does came from observing a sorghum industry that cares.

"It's very motivating for interns to see how excited the sorghum guys are about what they are doing," she said. "It's just a reminder to me to remember that you need to be excited and passionate about what you're doing."

Investing in the Future

Kays said the passion and understanding farmers have for long-term public policy impacts and what makes a strong and sustainable agriculture industry are two things he has seen from producer organiza-

tions like NSP. Advocating for yourself is investing in your future, he said.

"The generosity of farmers in rural areas, especially toward rural kids, is greatly undersold from the appreciation that rural students have," Kays said. "The generosity of sorghum producers helped enable me the ability to do these kinds of internships in D.C. where sometimes other people may not have had the opportunity.

"I would not be here today if it was not for the generosity of so many people, including sorghum producers."✍

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The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the sources and do not necessarily reflect any official policy or position of any U.S. government employer.

Sorghum Grows Beyond at 2018 Commodity Classic

By Delanie Crist

Anaheim, California, hosted more than 8,000 agricultural producers, leaders and advocates during the 2018 Commodity Classic. America's largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show was held over a three-day period, Feb. 27-March 1, 2018. The annual convention is presented by the National Sorghum Producers, American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

Team Sorghum had a full schedule, including a spring board of directors meeting, the 2017 NSP Yield Contest Awards Dinner and Program and the Sorghum PAC Fundraiser. Sorghum board directors and staff were continually engaged throughout the week, working the trade show booths and attending a variety of meetings and learning sessions.

Classic General Session

During the Classic General Session on Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue delivered

a keynote address, which covered topics like trade, the Renewable Fuel Standard, farm bill action and his commitment to helping U.S. farmers.

Following Secretary Perdue's remarks, NSP Chairman Don Bloss and leadership from other Classic affiliate organizations took the stage to talk about current issues pertaining to each industry. Bloss took

the opportunity to address NSP's action on behalf of growers relating to the ongoing China investigations as well as progress made on the completion of a sorghum oil pathway.

"We continue to communicate with our producers on a regular basis about this case. We understand the importance to your farms and your business," Bloss said. "It's not all positive because it is difficult, but we are committed to letting you know exactly what's going on."

Lastly, the General Session included remarks from U.S. Army Ranger Staff Sergeant Keni Thomas. Thomas and his fellow rangers were part of the elite mission that was later shared in the successful novel and movie "Black Hawk Down." Drawing from his experiences on the battlefield, Thomas encouraged the audience to





achieve greatness by emphasizing the value of outstanding leadership.

NSP Yield Contest Dinner and Presentation

This year's NSP Yield Contest Awards Dinner, sponsored by DuPont Pioneer, highlighted 2017 NSP Yield Contest national and state winners. The evening began with the introduction of national winners in each of the 10 categories (see winners on page 18). Following the introductions, NSP recognized the state winners of each category. The night was full of entertainment by emcee Mark Mayfield, plus information sponsored by the Sorghum Checkoff highlighting sorghum's progress and milestones accomplished in the past years. NSP celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, and Tim Lust also gave a state-of-the-industry address concerning progress made related to the China investigations.



Sorghum PAC Casino Night

The annual Sorghum PAC Casino Night Fundraiser kicked off at the conclusion of the NSP Yield Contest Dinner. Throughout the night, there were a variety of raffles, auctions and casino games for guests to enjoy. In 2010, the board of directors established the bipartisan political action committee, the Sorghum PAC, to further promote the legislative interests of sorghum producers. During this year's fundraiser, more than \$70,000 were generated to support NSP political endeavors.





Trade Show

Approximately 8,000 farmers and agribusinessmen, including a record number of first-time attendee producers (1,533) filled the trade show floor this year. Producers from across the nation and several international countries made appearances in educational sessions and booths throughout the Anaheim Convention Center.

The NSP and Sorghum Checkoff booths were full of fun and food this year. Guests were able to sample popped sorghum and play for prizes in our five-hole sorghum board game, highlighting prizes available to growers who reach the 250-bushel threshold in the NSP Yield Contest. Exhibitors visiting the sorghum booths were able to converse with fellow growers, staff and board members.

Time to Shine in Orlando

Commodity Classic will return to Orlando, Florida, for the 24th annual convention. Join NSP on the east coast Feb. 28-March 2, 2019. Take part in the great events and programs related to Classic, along with the annual NSP Yield Contest Dinner and Sorghum PAC Fundraiser. For more information, visit www.CommodityClassic.com.

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a Farm Wife's Hustle



By Matthew Winterholler

Farm wives across America keep farms and families running. They juggle many chores and responsibilities like caring for their children and running errands for the farm. In this current age, many find themselves as an advocate for their farm, the crops they grow and for the way they choose to farm and raise a family.

For Kim Baldwin, a farm wife from McPherson, Kansas, being an advocate is a priority in her busy life. She is a teacher, a mother, and she is also doing her part to promote sorghum both in the field and in the kitchen.

“Historically, sorghum has always been in the rotation on the farm,” Baldwin said. “We do a lot of dry land farming here in our area, and it’s a crop that works for us and our conditions.”

Not only has sorghum proven to be a crop that fits agronomically well for the Baldwins, but new markets have also given the Baldwin family an advantage to having sorghum in their rotation.

“When the Chinese market opened up a few years back, we were able to take advantage of that market,” Baldwin said.

The Baldwins’ 2017 sorghum crop is also going toward high-value markets in other countries. Knowing where their crop is going and what it is being used for is something that is exciting for the family, Baldwin said.

The farm’s use of sorghum in their crop rotation is not the only impact the crop has had on the family. Baldwin uses sorghum throughout her nightly meals for the family and farm hands because it is an easy and versatile ingredient she enjoys cooking.

“We grow it, so we might as well be eating it, as well,” Baldwin said. “I just like the texture of it and the flexibility of incorporating it in recipes.”

For Baldwin, using an ingredient that the family grows leads to a sense of pride.

Baldwin said she has been cooking with sorghum for 6-7 years now. She enjoys sorghum because it is easy to prepare in a number of recipes, and with her pressure cooker, she can have pearled grain sorghum ready in only 15-20 minutes.

“It kind of takes on whatever flavor you give it,” Baldwin said. “If I wanted to add cinnamon or vanilla, it

would take on that flavor as opposed to it working against those flavors.”

That versatility of sorghum as an ingredient has inspired Baldwin to create unique, yet popular dishes.

“One of my favorite dishes that I make is actually with pearly grain sorghum, and it’s similar to Arroz Con Leche—like a rice pudding,” Baldwin said, “It’s a warm, yummy dessert that is good in the winter because it’s good and warm, but at the same time you can serve it with whipped topping and cream and serve it in the summer months. The guys on the harvest crew really appreciate it in the summer, as well.”

Baldwin said she also enjoys sharing her sorghum recipes with new people—a chance to showcase the benefits of sorghum in the kitchen. She also looks to others for inspiration for new recipes. She said she

often finds recipes on *Simply-Sorghum.com* and adds her own unique twist as well as looking to social media.

“There’s a registered dietitian named Cara Harbstreet,” Baldwin said. “She has really taken onto sorghum, and what’s really cool is we’ve been able to connect through social media. She’s one I kind of look to for inspiration.”

Baldwin’s advocacy through social media has spread the word to different people, like Cara Harbstreet, about using sorghum as an ingredient.

Baldwin’s efforts have shown how sorghum can become a central ingredient



in many meals for the working family.

Even though much of Baldwin’s time is split between teaching English and communications, taking care of two young children and keeping the farm afloat, she is also an outspoken advocate for agriculture.

Baldwin manages the Alive and Well in Kansas Facebook page, Instagram account and

blog, advocating for agriculture and different commodities like sorghum. Social media has played a significant role in connecting agriculture with moms and dietitians across the country, Baldwin said. The impact of social media on developing relationships with consumers makes it important to keep up with developments and innovation within the social media realm.

“I’ve been trying to be as proactive as possible when a new social media trend starts hitting,” Baldwin said. “We’ve hosted a number of blogger tours out on our farm, which are mostly mommy and millennial bloggers.”

That passion for showing her agricultural lifestyle to others has also allowed the Baldwin family to host guests from around the world.

“We’ve hosted a number of Chinese groups over the

years,” Baldwin said. “Last year there was a group of Australian farmers and sorghum producers that stopped in. It’s been really fun to connect with people from different parts of the world, to expose

“ I just have to recognize my commitment and remind myself that I’m not superwoman. ”

our kiddos to those individuals and to recognize that we’re all coming together because of this crop, because of sorghum.”

Whether she’s educating international buyers about sorghum and other crops or investing her time in youth in her local community, Baldwin instills a spirit of rural America and agriculture awareness no matter her classroom.

“I teach in a rural school district,” Baldwin said, “We’re surrounded by fields of different crops, but you’d be surprised by how many kids drive by those fields every single day and cannot identify if it’s a field of wheat or a field of sorghum.”



▲ PEARLED SORGHUM, SPINACH & Strawberry Salad made by Baldwin and posted on her blog, Alive & Well in Kansas.

The disconnect between American farmers and consumers is what drives Baldwin to continue to advocate. “Continuing to tell the story of what we’re doing on our farm and what American agriculture is doing and how it is benefiting everyone is a really important deal for me,” Baldwin said.

Being involved in so many different efforts, time management is essential for Baldwin.

Planning around busy times on the farm allows her to set her priorities and choose what she wants to focus on during the busy season.

“I just have to recognize my commitment and remind myself that I’m not superwoman,” she said, “even though sometimes I think I am.”

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2017
Yield Contest Winners





WINTER JOHNSTON
FULTON COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA

Dryland Conventional-Till

Winter Johnston has been growing sorghum alongside her husband for the past two years. Winter said, "We were pretty competitive this year." Winter and her husband Harry each tried different foliar on their fields this year, and it worked out in their favor, as Harry won a different division, as well. Winter owes a lot of her success to the abundance of rain she had. "We are hoping to get 250 [bushels]," Winter said. "That's what we are striving for."



STEPHANIE SANTINI
WARREN COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY

Dryland Double Crop

Stephanie Santini and her father started growing sorghum seven years ago. They saw the demand at their local bird seed company and needed a grain to fill a rotation. A year with plentiful moisture resulted in a national win in the dryland double crop division of the contest. "I am still learning with it," Santini said. "It's a crop that you can grow a lot of bushels if you treat it with care." They are looking forward to this upcoming growing season and are ready to try new things to increase their yields.



HARRY JOHNSTON
FULTON COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA

Dryland No-Till

Harry Johnston and his wife Winter both came out on top this year. Harry has been growing sorghum for four years and has been actively submitting yields to the contest for the past three. This year, with his national win, he contributed all success to the rain they received. As an agronomist, Harry provides unique attention to his sorghum. He plans to do the exact same thing he did last year in the upcoming growing season, and hopes rain will come again, providing another successful crop.

228.07 BU/AC

Pioneer 84G62

Safener: Concep

Plant Date: 5/29/2017

Population: 140,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Soybeans

Rainfall: 30in

Herbicides: Bicep II Magnum,
2.5 qts, pre-emerge

Harvest Date: 10/26/2017

Total Acres: 10



192.11 BU/AC

Pioneer 85Y40

Safener: Cruiser & Concep III

Plant Date: 5/17/2017

Population: 130,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Rye

Rainfall: 37in

Herbicides: Lumax, 2 qts,
pre-plant

Harvest Date: 10/18/2017

Total Acres: 10



226.31 BU/AC

DEKALB DKS37-07

Safener: Concep

Plant Date: 5/29/2017

Population: 140,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Soybeans

Rainfall: 30in

Herbicides: Bicep II Magnum,
2.5 qts, pre-emerge; Credit Extra,
1.5 qts, pre-emerge

Harvest Date: 10/26/2017

Total Acres: 10



ROBERT SANTINI JR.
WARREN COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY

Dryland Reduced-Till

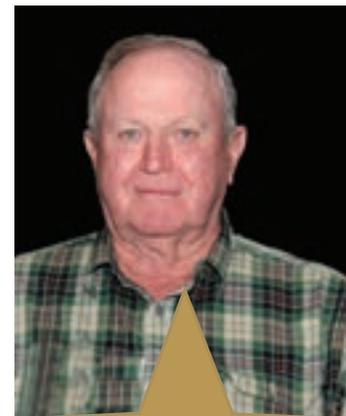
Robert Santini Jr. began planting sorghum a few years ago and said he likes to plant in areas on the farm where deer are very populated because they do not bother sorghum during the early growing stages. Excessive rains, Santini Jr. believes, limited his top yield potential. Santini Jr. says, "The sun makes everything happen," and that this upcoming growing season he plans to, "push the 250 [bushel] bubble."



BALL FARMS
CANYON COUNTY,
IDAHO

Irrigated Conventional-Till

Michael Ball started growing sorghum three years ago when his neighbor, who runs a bird farm, was looking for a feed source. Ball was looking for a different rotation, so he decided to grow sorghum for his neighbor. "Every year we have gotten better, and every year we increase some," Ball said. "We had a few hurdles, but overall growing conditions were very favorable this year." This coming growing season Ball may feed some of his own cattle with his sorghum, as well.



JEFF SCATES
GALLATIN COUNTY,
ILLINOIS

Irrigated Double Crop

What started as a crop to place in a flood spot has now turned into 10 years of growing sorghum. Scates Family Farms say, "We try to grow some every year now just to keep doing a better job." Scates family farms may have been a little late planting, because of an early flood, but that did not stop them from getting a national yield. "Fungicides really help keep the plant healthy longer through the growing season," Scates Family Farms believe is the reason for such high yields.

198.00 BU/AC

Pioneer 84G62

Safener: None

Plant Date: 6/4/2017

Population: 120,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Corn

Rainfall: 50in

Herbicides: Lumax, 1.75 qts, pre-plant

Harvest Date: 10/18/2017

Total Acres: 15.56



212.70 BU/AC

Pioneer 87P06

Safener: Concep II, Cruiser

Plant Date: 5/16/2017

Population: 120,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Wheat

Rainfall: 11in

Herbicides: Round-up Power Max, 24 oz, pre-emerge; Outlook 12 oz, pre-emerge; Atrazine 4L, 1 qt, pre-emerge

Harvest Date: 11/1/2017

Total Acres: 15.65



188.22 BU/AC

Pioneer 84G62

Safener: Concep II

Plant Date: 6/12/2017

Population: 130,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Wheat

Rainfall: 20in

Herbicides: Aatrex, 1 qt, pre-emerge; Lexar 1.5 qts, pre-emerge

Harvest Date: 11/10/2017

Total Acres: 135.38



ROBERT SANTINI SR.
WARREN COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY

Irrigated No-Till

Robert Santini Sr. said expanded market opportunities are the initial driver for his increased sorghum acreage. Santini said, "We do a good job growing it, and it works in a lot of areas that we have." Santini is always trying to shoot for the 250 bushel yield, but shares the same sentiment of his other family members in that, "I think we would have done better with less rain." Santini plans to increase his population this growing season in hopes to achieve 250 bushels per acre.



Adam Heskett accepted the award on behalf of Mike.

MIKE BAKER
HITCHCOCK COUNTY,
NEBRASKA

Irrigated Reduced-Till

Mike Baker started growing sorghum in 2001, after graduating college. All thanks to the weather, Baker said, "Crop-wise, it probably was some of the better conditions we have had." Baker also owes manure his success to winning, he said. "He used cattle manure this past year on his sorghum for added nutrients. Baker is excited about this upcoming growing season and said he plans to increase his population and change the spacing of his sorghum.



RON ROBISON
HARLAN COUNTY,
NEBRASKA

*Irrigated & Non-Irrigated
Food Grade*

Ron Robison started growing sorghum for consumer use once he realized the high demand for non-GMO products. Robison said consumers want to know where their food comes from, and it is worth it to provide traceability. Winning both food-grade divisions, Robison believes it was all due to rain and timing. Growing food-grade sorghum, Robison wants to, "supply something into a niche market that will help the food chain, which people are looking for."

220.49 BU/AC

Pioneer 85Y40

Safener: None

Plant Date: 6/6/2017

Population: 130,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Sorghum

Rainfall: 50in

Herbicides: Lumax 1.75 qts

Harvest Date: 10/31/2017

Total Acres: 12.45



202.25 BU/AC

Fontanelle G6192

Safener: Concep

Plant Date: 5/15/2017

Population: 120,000 seeds/ac

Previous crop: Soybeans

Rainfall: 19in

Herbicides: BASF Verdict, 13 oz, pre-plant; Parallel Plus, 1 qt, pre-plant

Harvest Date: 10/25/2017

Total Acres: 112.3



191.43 BU/AC
161.88 BU/AC

Paydirt J300

Safener: Concep

Plant Date: 5/23/2017

Population: 110,000/45,000

Previous crop: Corn

Rainfall: 26in

Harvest Date: 11/17/2017

Total Acres: 116.2/32.11

Outstanding Service to the Sorghum Industry

By Natalie Allcorn

During the Sorghum Improvement Conference of North America Jan. 30 in St. Louis, Missouri, National Sorghum Producers recognized two recipients for Outstanding Service to the Sorghum Industry. The 2018 awardees, Bill Kubecka and William Rooney, Ph.D., exemplify the dedication and service to the sorghum industry this award represents.

Bill Kubecka, a sorghum producer from Palacios, Texas, the first non-researcher to receive this award, has worked tirelessly on both the National Sorghum Producers and United Sorghum Checkoff Program board of directors as well as the U.S. Grains Council board, representing the interests of sorghum producers.

“My time with sorghum has been similar to a lifetime of learning a multitude of knowledge, relationships and hard work,” Kubecka said, who volunteered with the sorghum industry for more than 20 years.

Kubecka led by example and set high standards for fellow board members and staff.

“You cannot complain if you are not willing to get involved and willing to work hard toward a better outcome and change,” he said.

Kubecka was instrumental in policy changes for the sorghum

sorghum industry during tight financial times for association and rarely ever turned in an expense.

“I cherished getting to meet people from many areas of the world,” said Kubecka. “In the big scheme, we are all not that different. We grow a good product, supply the industry’s need and receive a respectable compensation.”

His dedication, sacrifice and service to the sorghum industry is well-documented and highly valued. Kubecka expressed his gratitude for the award.

“This award was a huge honor for the times of being deeply involved in the sorghum industry and for the things accomplished for sorghum producers,” he said.

NSP is honored to recognize Kubecka as the first producer award recipient and feels his leadership is symbolic of the importance producers have influencing policy and building relationships in our industry and across the world.

Dr. Bill Rooney is a Professor of Soil and Crop Sciences at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. For the past 23 years, Dr. Rooney has devoted his career



▲ BILL KUBECKA IS JOINED by NSP CEO Tim Lust and former fellow board directors Gerald Simonsen, Earl Roemer and Bill Greiving after receiving his award for Outstanding Service to the Sorghum Industry at the Sorghum Improvement Conference of North America.

industry in the 2002 Farm Bill. He traveled to Washington, D.C., hundreds of times on behalf of the sor-



▲ DR. BILL ROONEY WAS presented his award for Outstanding Service to the Sorghum Industry for his contributions through sorghum research.

to sorghum, specializing in sorghum breeding and genetics.

Much of his research as a professor centers on sorghum enhancement, specifically focusing on the productivity and profitability of sorghum as a grain, forage and bioenergy crop. His research has directly led to innovation in the sorghum industry, and Dr. Rooney said he does sorghum research to provide information that someone else is able to utilize for future improvement.

Dr. Rooney is responsible for the mentoring and training of young, high-quality breeders, many of whom have gone on to have impactful careers in the sorghum industry. Dr. Rooney is a perfect example of the kind of innovation and leadership the sorghum industry is striving for. Dr. Rooney plans to continue to push his research team toward expansions that effectively improve the sorghum industry.

“We appreciate the sorghum producers group recognizing our efforts,” Dr. Rooney said. “It’s been a fun crop, and I very much enjoy working in a crop where there are a lot of things to do.”

Since 1961, National Sorghum Producers has recognized exemplary service through the Outstanding Service to the Sorghum Industry award. This award was first presented in 1961. Recipients include, among others, the forefathers of the modern hybrid sorghum industry. As of January 30, 2018, 59 individuals have received this award. With great dedication, recipients of this award have gone over and above in their efforts to improve sorghum to benefit sorghum growers.

It is with great pride that the National Sorghum Producers recognizes these two outstanding individuals for their contribution to the sorghum industry. Their efforts to further the sorghum industry are greatly appreciated by all.✂

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SORGHUM AND GRILLED SHRIMP LETTUCE CUPS

Make this recipe

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
1 teaspoon cumin
2 limes, juiced
Zest of one lime
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt (divided in half)
1/2 teaspoon pepper (divided in half)
1 teaspoon chipotle powder
1 cup whole grain sorghum, cooked
1 cup plum tomatoes, diced
1 cup corn
10 shrimp, peeled and deveined
10 Boston Bibb lettuce leaves

DIRECTIONS:

- 1 In a medium bowl add cilantro, cumin, lime juice, lime zest (optional), olive oil, salt, pepper and chipotle powder. Whisk together until dressing is emulsified. Add whole grain sorghum, tomatoes and corn. Mix until well until combined. Set aside.
- 2 Season shrimp with a 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and grill for 2-3 minutes on each side. Once cooked through, place on a plate and cut into bite-sized pieces. Set aside.
- 3 Wash the lettuce leaves with cold water. Slice the bottom off leaves and discard. Place the sorghum mixture on lettuce and top with the grilled shrimp.

For this recipe and more, visit:
SimplySorghum.com



Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Getting to Know Dr. Geoffrey Morris

Assistant Professor | Crop Genetics and Genomics - Kansas State University

What fueled your interest in sorghum?

I've always been fascinated by how the natural world works and wanted to understand it. That's why I trained as a geneticist. A genetics discovery feels a bit like X-ray vision, like you see things working underneath. Still, I knew the ultimate test of any scientific discovery would be out in the real world—can it make a practical impact? For me, sorghum genetics has been the perfect opportunity to do cutting-edge science with real world impact.

What are you doing and who are you working with?

It's an exciting time to work in sorghum improvement. Genetic tools for sorghum breeders have advanced by leaps and bounds in the last few years—think rotary phone to iPhone X. Still, collaboration between breeders and geneticist will be essential to get the most from these technological advances. A tool like a genetic marker is just a way to distill insights from a field breeding program to drive selection more rapidly and in more locations. Other tools like gene editing take insights from lab-based plant biologists and get them working for breeding programs—and ultimately for growers. To



meet the needs of growers and end-users, my team is working with breeders at K-State and USDA to customize molecular breeding tools for their programs.

How do you manage your funding needs?

As a university scientist, a big part of my job is to do basic research and training, funded by federal science agencies, that will drive innovation for the long term. For the near term, it's really the support of sorghum growers, through their feedback and funding, that lets us work directly toward solutions in their seed bag.

What is your connection to growers?

Since I joined the sorghum research community in 2012, sorghum growers have been very generous helping me understand the perspective from the combine. One experience stands out. George Poland, a grower in Chapman, Kansas, and father of K-State wheat geneticist Jesse Poland, took me and my young son along for milo harvest and a trip to the grain elevator. Seeing the scale ticket, with the [assessment] that supports my team's research, was a humbling reminder of the trust that growers put in us and the responsibility we have to deliver value.

What's next?

Looking ahead, I think our best shot to deliver value comes from greater collaboration across public programs. We've seen benefits of public-sector collaborations in the past from stay-green drought tolerance to the sequencing of the sorghum genome. What could we accomplish if the most promising new genetic tools and germplasm spread quickly across public programs? It's worked for other crops, and I would love to see what it could do for sorghum.

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NEWSLETTER

SORGHUM CHECKOFF CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF INNOVATION

The Sorghum Checkoff kicked off its 10-year anniversary celebration with growers at Commodity Classic when a new *Generation Sorghum* video and Sorghum: The Smart Choice™ logo were unveiled along with educational resources for producers, showcasing the organization's advancements over the past decade. This year, the Sorghum Checkoff reflects on a decade of innovation in sorghum genetics and breeding, market expansion, increased research efforts and educational resource development and distribution.

"The Sorghum Checkoff was originally started so it could collectively do what individually the groups that existed at the time could not," said Tim Lust, Sorghum Checkoff CEO. "The industry at that point in time had significant needs from a research and development standpoint, and the Sorghum Checkoff was an avenue to accomplish these goals and carry out the work needed to improve the industry."

Investments in crop improvement led to ground-breaking technology for sorghum, such as the discovery of doubled haploid inducer lines, which will allow new hybrids to reach farmers' fields faster than ever before. The Sorghum Checkoff collaborated with organizations like DuPont Pioneer, Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and Texas A&M AgriLife Research to seek out attributes, qualities and other factors in sorghum capable of increasing productivity and demand.

"We have made great strides in research, technology and market opportunity thanks to producer investments," said Verity Ulibarri, Sorghum Checkoff chairwoman. "The Sorghum Checkoff

will continue to listen and work with producers and industry partners to meet the needs of our growers and pursue opportunities that make sorghum a smart choice."

The Sorghum Checkoff recently received an independent evaluation that analyzed the organization's role in providing positive returns on investments for sorghum producers. The evaluation examined the Sorghum Checkoff's investment into program areas such as crop improvement, high-value markets, food and industrial uses and renewables.

Crop improvement investments demonstrated a slight increase in sorghum yields, moving from an average 57.6 bushels per acre from 1960-2008 to an average 65.2 bushels per acre during the time of the checkoff program (2008-2017). The farm value of U.S. sorghum production increased by an average of \$12.6 million per year during that same time period, given estimated production and price impacts of Sorghum Checkoff investments. These investments show a tangible benefit to producers evidenced by the evaluation that for every Sorghum Checkoff dollar invested in crop improvement, the net return to producers was \$8.57.

Efforts by the Sorghum Checkoff to invest in food and industrial uses have also been successful as sorghum use in these markets increased by an average of 6 million bushels per year from 2008-2017. This equates to a total of 47.8 million bushels of additional sorghum sales since the checkoff began.

Demand for sorghum in food, alcohol and industry increased significantly since 1975, jumping from an average use

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Celebrates 10 Years
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of 16.7 million bushels between 1975-1998 to an average of 86.6 million bushels between 2018-2017. This increase in demand can be seen through the growing number of retail food products containing sorghum, which now totals more than 1,000. Sorghum is also included on 1.7 percent of restaurant menus across the nation, an eightfold increase over the last four years, and popular restaurant chains like Chick-fil-A® and Papa John's® now include sorghum on their menu.

"Sorghum continues to be of high interest to buyers in the consumer food market as demand for ancient and gluten-free grains continue to rise," said Doug Bice, Sorghum Checkoff market development director. "The Sorghum Checkoff has worked to not only raise awareness of sorghum's use in this industry but has also worked to make sorghum available to consumers for purchase."

The Sorghum Checkoff's investment into high-value markets and renewables combined to enhance the farm value of sorghum sales by \$107.4 million. The net return to the producer in this area is nearly \$11.60 thanks to investments in research and promotional programs.

Sorghum: The Smart Choice™ was featured at the JAG 350 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series in Fort Worth, Texas, as a result of the Sorghum Checkoff's investment in the Biofuel Infrastructure Partnership (BIP). The Sorghum Checkoff, Texas Grain Sorghum Producers Board and Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission invested a total of \$250,000 into the program as a way to aid states in delivering higher blends of renewable fuel by nearly doubling the number of blended fueling pumps nationwide, significantly increasing the market for sorghum use in ethanol. The Department of Energy invested nearly \$90 million in sorghum through the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E) program over the last two years alone. Sorghum is being researched as a model feedstock through the Transportation Energy Resources from Renewable Agriculture (TERRA) program.

In addition to research and market investments, the Sorghum Checkoff developed educational tools

and resources to assist producers in sorghum management. The Sorghum Checkoff developed regional production guides, livestock feeding guides and information sheets on specific topics like water use, sugarcane aphid management and exports to educate farmers on best-management practices.

On SorghumCheckoff.com, more resources can be found for producers in the Agronomy Library, which houses information on a wide array of agronomic topics, such as seeding rates, tillering, heat stress and the use of harvest aids, to name a few.

"I am proud of the work we have done as producers and board members to advance our crop and management practices," said Jim Massey, Sorghum Checkoff vice chairman. "This year, we celebrate a decade of hard work and dedication in the sorghum industry and look forward to more progress and growth to come."

The release of an updated Sorghum: The Smart Choice™ logo extends the brand utilized by the Sorghum Checkoff to relay the message that sorghum is a smart choice for producers, livestock feed, ethanol and other new, growing markets.

The Sorghum Checkoff celebrates 10 years of innovation alongside sorghum producers. It is thanks to our farmers' dedication to the industry and investment in the grain that has made these achievements possible. ✓



SORGHUM THE SMART CHOICE



Watch our anniversary video at <https://youtu.be/QbTWH7Ayejo>.

DUCK TRIAL RESULTS REVEAL NEW MARKET FOR SORGHUM

More than four years ago, the Sorghum Checkoff set out to find new, high-value market opportunities for sorghum producers when the expansive duck market in Asia caught the eye of several

producers. In 2013, China produced 694 million layer and broiler ducks for market, opening an opportunity for the inclusion of sorghum in their nutrition programs. In an effort to enter this market, the Sorghum



Checkoff partnered with the U.S. Grains Council to begin a two-year duck feeding trial to examine the use of sorghum in duck nutrition programs.

"We were on an international trade mission when the idea first came up to explore sorghum's use in feeding ducks," said Adam Baldwin, former Sorghum Checkoff board director from McPherson, Kansas. "In looking at the potential size of the market for U.S. producers, we wanted to move forward but quickly realized there were no research studies done with ducks and sorghum."

The Sorghum Checkoff board of directors decided to conduct a duck feeding trial, and the results were recently made available. Two separate trials were conducted to investigate meat duck and layer duck production with sorghum

substituted for corn in treatment rations.

The trial revealed positive results for ducks that consumed feed rations made with sorghum. Meat ducks fed a ration where sorghum was the main energy source, completely replacing corn, had the highest weight gain efficiency and the lowest feed cost. When a portion of corn was replaced with sorghum in the layer duck rations, egg weight and productivity were maintained. Sorghum inclusion in duck rations reduced feed costs, and as a result, sorghum can be cost-effective for both duck meat and egg production to meet consumer demand in Asian markets.

"Due to the size of the international duck market and these positive trial results, sorghum's use in duck nutrition programs is a great market opportunity for producers," said Kim McCuistion, Ph.D., Sorghum Checkoff animal nutrition director. "This feeding trial was the first step to accessing this new market for growers and educating potential buyers across Asia."

The Sorghum Checkoff will continue to educate international customers on sorghum's nutritional value in duck feed and will begin to promote its use overseas. For more information on the results of the duck feeding trial, visit SorghumCheckoff.com. ✓

FIELDALE FARMS PROVIDES NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWERS

Grain sorghum production in the U.S. is expanding in the southeast corner of the country thanks to strategic market development efforts in Georgia and the surrounding states. Targeted meetings with producers and businesses are taking place with the intent to increase production and meet demand for new markets. One market in particular, poultry and broiler nutrition programs, is kick-starting the regional growth with the help of Fieldale Farms.

Fieldale Farms is a family owned and operated poultry production corporation. Serving customers who desire poultry products raised on locally-sourced and sustainable products, Fieldale Farms collaborated with the Sorghum Checkoff to utilize grain sorghum in their poultry feeds. As a drought-tolerant crop with lower input costs than comparable grains, sorghum is a perfect fit for in their nutrition programs and local growers.

"Our interest in alternative feed ingredients has been ongoing for 20 years," said Dave Wicker, Ph.D., Fieldale Farms nutritionist and vice president of live production. "Our recent interest in sorghum came when we looked at sorghum grown in eastern North Carolina and thought if it could be grown in

that region then maybe we can grow it here."

Wicker and others at Fieldale Farms spoke with the University of Georgia Extension and other livestock nutrition programs to find alternative crops that would fit well in crop rotations for local farmers. With a customer base who desires poultry raised on local grains, Fieldale Farms started examining grain sorghum and its potential to be successfully grown in the region. After reading other sorghum trials and production research from similar areas, Fieldale Farms decided to partner with the Sorghum Checkoff to reach out to local farmers to consider growing sorghum. Fieldale Farms is currently seeking as much grain sorghum as they can gather for their nutrition programs.

"It makes an excellent fit since it has lower input costs, drought resistance, different herbicide and pesticide needs, and it fits in the rotation for many winter-time crops," Wicker said. "Plus, the people that buy our chicken love it because it's supporting local farmers."

The Sorghum Checkoff partnered with Fieldale Farms over the past year to provide not only nutritional information for optimal inclusion rates, but also to provide growers with production informa-

tion and best-management practices. Sorghum Checkoff staff met with Fieldale Farms and several local growers from the region to host an educational session covering topics, such as planting dates, hybrid selection, pest management, herbicide treatments and regional market opportunities.

"We met with producers and talked to them about how to grow grain sorghum since many of them have never grown sorghum before," said Brent Crafton, Sorghum Checkoff regional development director. "We also wanted to educate produc-

ers not only on the market opportunity with Fieldale Farms but also on other opportunities in the region, such as consumer food."

Over the coming year, Sorghum Checkoff staff will continue to provide producers in the area more management information on scouting techniques, harvest and storage. The Sorghum Checkoff will continue to work with Fieldale Farms and local producers to facilitate sorghum production and marketing opportunities in the region, creating more options for growers in the expanding region. ✓

SORGHUM CHECKOFF WELCOMES NEW COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

The Sorghum Checkoff recently named Shalin Pinkerton as the organization's new communications manager.

In this role, Pinkerton will provide and implement strategic communications planning for all non-consumer program areas, such as crop improvement, agronomy and renewables. Pinkerton will also assist in other related organizational programs and projects for the Sorghum Checkoff.

"We are happy to have Pinkerton join Team Sorghum again," said Jennifer Blackburn, Sorghum Checkoff external affairs director. "With Shalin's previous experience as an intern with the Sorghum Checkoff and a growing passion for the industry, we believe she will be a great asset in advancing our communications efforts."

Pinkerton will graduate in May with her bachelor's degree in agricultural media and communication from West Texas A&M University. She will also graduate with a Leadership Certificate obtained through the Rogers LEAD WT program. Pinkerton was previously a communications intern for the Sorghum Checkoff and National Sorghum Producers where she gained valuable

insight into the sorghum industry and day-to-day communications operations. Through this opportunity, she was named WTAMU 2017/2018 Intern of the Year.

Additionally, Pinkerton has gained communications experience through internships with the Texas Pork Producers and Triangle Realty. In preparation for her new role, Pinkerton also attended the 2018 Commodity Classic with Team Sorghum. She will begin with the Sorghum Checkoff mid-May.

Pinkerton steps into this role previously held by Elisa Alvarado. She and her husband, Trey, recently moved to Big Spring, Texas, where Trey took a position as student pastor at a newly planted Hillside Christian Church campus. The Sorghum Checkoff wishes the Alvarados the best as they take this exciting, new step together! ✓



SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

May 3-5 - California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting
Pomona, California

May 4 - Deadline to Nominate Sorghum Checkoff Board Directors

June 22 - McLennon County Row Crop Tour
McGregor, Texas

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

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SORGHUM CHECKOFF MISSION

To efficiently invest checkoff dollars to increase producer profitability and enhance the sorghum industry.

Young Leadership



Carlton Bridgeforth



Kent Martin



Josh Birdwell



Craig Poore

By Delanie Crist

As producers diversify and many are beckoned to fill leadership positions and expand their knowledge through advocacy at a younger age, enthusiasm for next-level education opportunities has become essential. Through Leadership Sorghum, many young farmers are providing a new face to the sorghum industry, stepping up to meet this call-to-action.

Kent Martin, a sixth-generation sorghum farmer from Carmen, Oklahoma, applied to Leadership Sorghum to gain a more complete understanding of the sorghum industry.

“I wanted to go through the program, so I could understand all of the details about the industry,” Martin said. “I wanted to

know more about nurseries, planting, harvesting, movement overseas and all of the other aspects that are happening behind-the-scenes, including political issues.”

At the time he applied to Leadership Sorghum, Martin was serving on the Oklahoma Sorghum Association board of directors, looking to take his leadership abilities to the national level. While Martin was in the program, Oklahoma gained a designated seat on the Sorghum

Checkoff board of directors with the state’s acres taking over Nebraska’s as third in the nation. This created a more streamlined opportunity for Martin to serve on the board as opposed to applying to an at-large seat.

For Texas sorghum grower Josh Birdwell who farms alongside his grandparents in Hill County, his decision to become involved and apply to Leadership Sorghum stemmed from a desire to better himself.

“My granddad always geared me toward being involved in the community, being a leader and having the right people on boards,” Birdwell said.

Setting up a board with the right people at the right time can have a substantial impact on an industry. As sorghum producers push forward

with new innovations, enhanced crop technologies and expanding markets, a Generation Sorghum campaign emerged two years ago that takes aim at a renewed look at the crop and is highly representative of these new, young leaders being churned out of Leadership Sorghum.

Craig Poore, a producer from Osborne County, Kansas, is another Leadership Sorghum graduate who took a position halfway through the program on the Kansas

“ I have found myself consistently using what I have learned during my time in the program. ”

Grain Sorghum Producers Association board. While he gained valuable experience on his state board and hoped to participate on a larger scale in the future, the opportunity to advance to the national level happened quicker than he anticipated.

“Toward the end of my program, I had the honor to be selected for the [Sorghum] Checkoff board,” Poore said. “I was not seeking a position when I started the [Leadership Sorghum] program, but it was the icing on the cake for me.”

Like Poore, neither Martin nor Birdwell anticipated serving on a board so soon, but each attributed the program for creating these new opportunities and providing the knowledge and background they needed to be successful.

Martin said Leadership Sorghum prepared him to lead on a much deeper level beyond building his personal network and becoming better able to grow and market his crop.

“What’s neat is on the outside, it’s a sorghum program,” Martin said, “but embedded under it is the core leadership values.”

Martin now serves alongside Poore on the Sorghum Checkoff board of directors. Another producer, Carlton Bridgeforth—who returned to the farm in Tanner, Alabama, after a stint on Wall Street—was the first Leadership Sorghum participant to be appointed to the Sorghum Checkoff board.

“I have found myself consistently using what I have learned during my time in the program to help make informed decisions as a board member,” Bridgeforth said. “Leadership Sorghum gave me a very good overall impression of how the crop is grown, how crop improvement goals are met, as well as how sorghum is marketed and used worldwide.”

Birdwell serves on the Texas Grain Sorghum Board, meeting the organization’s executive director for the first time through Leadership Sorghum. He said representation in his area is critical.

“Serving on the Texas sorghum board has been a good experience,” Birdwell said. “Some of those old-timers on the board have really taught me a lot.”

Transferring knowledge from one generation of board directors to the next is as important as farm succession for the longevity of the sorghum industry, and investment in young leaders



is a deliberate action taken by the founding directors of the Sorghum Checkoff board from the long-term strategic plan of the National Sorghum Producers.

“This is clearly something current sorghum leadership places value on,” Martin said, “as they have spent much time, effort and priority developing the next generation of leaders both in the sorghum industry as well as the farm community.”

Steps needed to maintain and advance the sorghum industry are continuous. Fortunately, ready and willing leaders are available to step in and guide the industry. Birdwell, Bridgeforth, Poore and Martin, alongside other Leadership Sorghum graduates, are valuable components to this new generation of sorghum.

“From the sorghum industry perspective, it is great to see younger people get excited about sorghum production and especially leadership in the sorghum

industry,” Martin said. “The foundation of the industry has been well established by the great leaders of the past, but the future is in the young generation, emerging to move the sorghum industry forward.”

Leadership Sorghum Class IV

Leadership Sorghum Class IV will be announced May 1. Starting in the fall, class members will be exposed to various aspects of the sorghum industry from basic and applied research to international marketing. Through both hands-on and classroom-style education, participants will gain an understanding of how sorghum moves through the value chain, how checkoffs and interest organizations interact on behalf of the industry and what the future holds for the crop. The program also provides professional development training and networking opportunities. Learn more at LeadSorghum.com.

Controlling Herbicide Resistant Weeds in Sorghum

By Brent Bean

Overall, sorghum growers in the U.S. have fewer issues with herbicide resistant weeds than farmers who grow other crops—not because they have less resistant weeds, but because they never became dependent on glyphosate to achieve satisfactory weed control.

Even so, the resistant weed control practices that have been implemented for other crops should also be used in sorghum to not only control resistant weeds that are present but to also prevent weed resistance from developing or becoming worse.

These control practices include the use of multiple classes of herbicides applied in tank mixes and/or rotating the use of herbicide classes whenever possible. Growers should use a rate high enough to achieve optimum weed control results. Every effort should be made to control weed escapes to prevent weeds that may be resistant from producing seed and propagating the problem.

In sorghum, a successful pre-emergence weed control program is essential. This usually starts with the use of herbicides from two mode-of-action

classes, the photosynthesis (PS) inhibitors and the fatty acid inhibitors.

Atrazine is the PS inhibitor most often used by sorghum growers and has been around since the 1960s. It has many advantages, including its effectiveness on several key broadleaf weed species, season-long soil residual and can be used both pre- and post-emergence.

Although weed resistance to atrazine is present in many fields, it remains a stalwart for weed control. In many fields, growers believe they have atrazine resistance, but what is often the case is that soil weed seed numbers, particularly palmer amaranth, have gotten so high that achieving 99 percent control still leaves enough emerged weeds to be an issue.

Because atrazine is inexpensive, it almost always pays to add it to any pre-emergence program. There are some regions where atrazine cannot be used and includes areas with soils classified as sand, sandy loam, loamy sand or where the pH is higher than

8.5. In these soils, atrazine can usually be applied early post-emergence.



The second class of herbicides, the fatty acid inhibitors or chloroacetamides, include the active ingredients metolachlor, acetachlor and dimethenamid, which are sold under the popular trade names of Dual Magnum, Warrant, Outlook and others. These have been around since the 1970s, but surprisingly the development of resistance to this mode-of-action class has remained relatively low compared to others.

When not restricted by soil texture or pH, it is best to use a pre-mix of one of these herbicides with atrazine. These are sold under the trade names of Bicep Magnum, Cinch ATZ, Degree Xtra, Fultime XLT and others. Dimethenamid (Outlook) is most often mixed in the field with atrazine rather than purchased as a premix.

The chloroacetamide herbicides generally give good control of a number of annual grass species but are not as effective on many broadleaf weeds. Fortunately, they do give relatively good control of pigweed species, including palmer amaranth. Their soil residual is relatively short and often only provides satisfactory weed control for 40-60 days. The use of these herbicides is seldom restricted by soil type.

For this reason, applying two-thirds of the herbicide treatment prior to emergence and the remainder early post-emergence can be a good practice to lengthen the time of control. This practice can be particularly beneficial if heavy rains occur soon after planting and leach the herbicide(s) below the soil seed zone, due to the fact that most weeds originate from seed in the top inch of soil.

Mesotrione is a HPPD herbicide that is labeled for use in sorghum and provides a third mode-of-action class. Mesotrione is sold in a three-way premix with atrazine and metolachlor under the trade names Lumax and Lexar. Until recently, these premixes were priced higher than what many sorghum growers were willing to pay, particularly in dryland areas where growing season precipitation is low. Recent price drops have made these more affordable. Some growers are mixing mesotrione sold by itself as Callisto or as a generic with atrazine and metolachlor. This three-way mix can be very effective on most weeds. Soil restrictions will be similar to those found for atrazine.

Saflufenacil (Sharpen) is a PPO mode-of-action herbicide that has gained popularity in sorghum in recent years. Saflufenacil is most often used in a premix sold as Verdict that contains dimethenamid. In order to improve the effectiveness of Verdict, most growers will add an additional 10 ounces of Outlook to the mix. One advantage of Verdict is that it has good post-activity of small emerged weeds that may be present at planting.

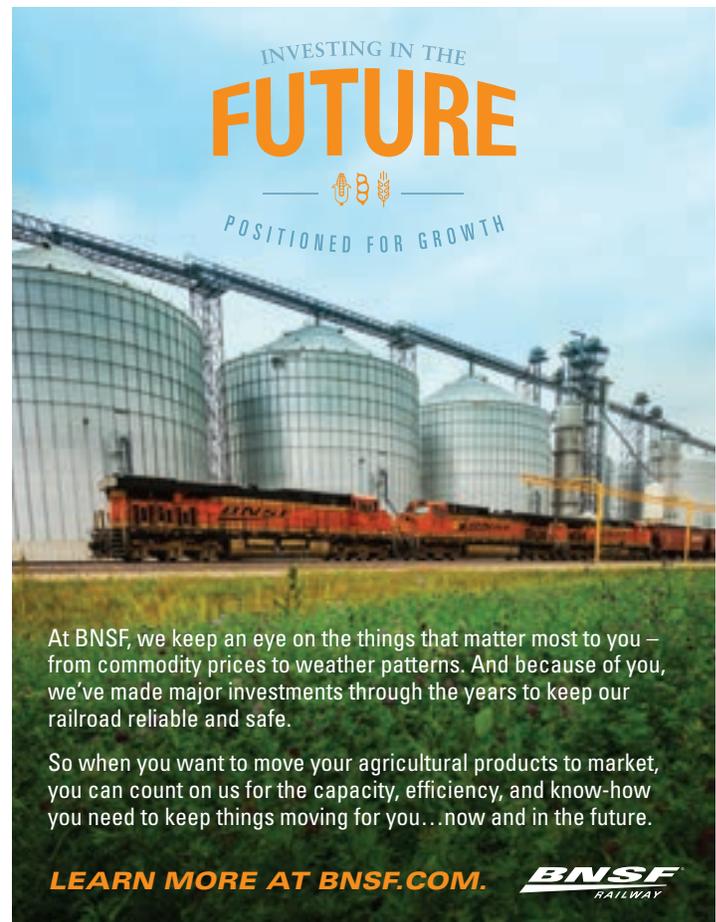
As is always the case, treating weeds when they are smaller achieves better control. To control any weeds that

may have escaped the pre-emergence treatment, there are several post-emergence options. Common post-emergence options are atrazine, 2,4-D and dicamba (growth regulators), prosulfuron (ALS) that is sold as Peak and Huskie, which contains pyrasulfotole (HPPD) plus bromoxynil (PS inhibitor).

Atrazine plus crop soil should always be considered, especially if it was not used pre-emergence. Soil restrictions generally do not apply when atrazine is used as a post treatment. Dicamba and 2,4-D should be the next option, but growers should be careful to follow the label and apply accordingly to prevent crop injury. Peak has some crop rotations that should be considered and is best applied with dicamba or atrazine. Also, many fields have ALS resistant weeds, particularly palmer amaranth, that may make Peak ineffective.

Huskie can be effective on most broadleaf weeds, but growers should expect some sorghum injury in the form of leaf burn and yellow flashing in the whorl. Sorghum will quickly grow out of these injury symptoms.

By combining these pre-emergence and post-emergence weed control strategies, growers can greatly enhance their ability to prevent weed resistance from developing or becoming worse. 🌾



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Sorghum Shortcuts

NSP Accepting Board Director Applications

National Sorghum Producers is accepting applications from candidates who wish to serve on the board of directors. Candidates for the board must be a member of the National Sorghum Producers and have a passion for working on behalf of sorghum growers through lobbying and fundraising activities. The NSP board is not limited to growers, and there is no experience necessary to apply. If you have a desire to improve the sorghum industry through one of the four available leadership positions, NSP encourages you to apply.

Applications are available on the NSP website and will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. CST on May 11, 2018. Contact Debra Lloyd at 806-749-3478 if you have any questions.✂

Applications for Sorghum Scholarships Now Open!

The National Sorghum Foundation has three scholarships available for college students studying agriculture for the 2018-2019 school year. The scholarships include \$1,500 to be applied toward one semester of tuition expenses. All applications are due June 1, 2018.



Bruce Maunder Sorghum Leadership Scholarship:

The scholarship includes an award for tuition and covers recipient's trip to Washington, D.C., with

the National Sorghum Producers during its annual legislative fly-in.

The Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship:

Applicants (sophomore-senior) must be pursuing an undergraduate degree in an agriculturally based department related to agronomy, plant pathology, entomology, food science and/or plant breeding with an emphasis on sorghum.

Sorghum Feed and Food Scholarship:

Applicants (sophomore-senior) must be pursuing an undergraduate degree in an agriculturally based department related to animal science or human nutrition with an emphasis on sorghum.

Please visit our website at SorghumGrowers.com/sorghum-foundation/ for more information and applications.✂

2018 Yield Contest Changes

Changes to the 2018 National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest were announced at the 2018 Commodity Classic in Anaheim, California.

Entries will be divided into east and west regions with the dividing line following the eastern state borders of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Changes were also made to the division categories.

The 2018 Sorghum Yield Contest divisions are as follows:

Irrigated No-Till
Irrigated Tillage
Dryland No-Till
Dryland Tillage
Food Grade

A Bin Buster award, as has been done in the past, will be awarded to the grower with the highest yield. The Go For 250 awards will be given to growers with 250 bushel yields or more. Only one national award will be given in the Food Grade Division.

Please visit our website at SorghumGrowers.com/yield-contest/ for more information and 2018 applications.✂

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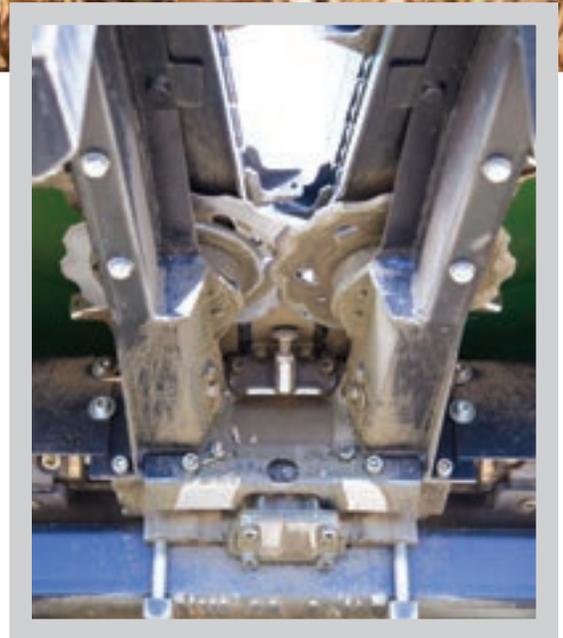
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