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SPRING 2021



ON THE COVER: Unable to meet in person in the past year, farmers have become accustomed to Zoom calls. NSP members have taken their advocacy efforts to new levels, finding ways to make meaningful connections while still accomplishing what needs to be done on the farm. (Cover photo by Dan Atkisson)

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800-658-9808 (toll free)
806-749-9002 (fax)
www.SorghumGrowers.com

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From the CEO

Focused Forward



As we look back at the last year, it is clear necessity is indeed the mother of invention. As an organization working on behalf of sorghum in a government policy world, there was very little slow down of our responsibilities in 2020, but there were huge changes in how we had to go about accomplishing our goals.

As we approach what is hopefully the end to forced change in how we handle day-to-day business, we have the unique opportunity to evaluate what worked well, what did not work well, what needs to revert to prior procedure and what should completely change going forward.

As someone that has flown over a million miles, I am happy to say it is clear a lot of work can be done without always having to get on an airplane. On the other hand, I truly enjoyed a horrible flying experience I recently had because it meant I was able to see sorghum leaders in-person who I have not seen in over a year except on a screen. That face-to-face value will never be lost on National Sorghum Producers.

We have used technology to improve our efficiency in board meetings, which has strengthened resource allocation measures. The same can be said for committee meetings and other preparation work. We have also found ways to increase our outreach and involve more grassroots members in D.C. activities than we have ever been able to do before. It certainly does not replace those in-person encounters, but I can assure you, our efforts to represent sorghum farmers in this regard have not slowed down in the meantime.

We have used technology to get more survey input from our members than we have ever had. I think it's prevalent among our base—it takes all of our collective input to pursue a path forward that works best for Team Sorghum and our industry. Online surveys allow you to respond on your time, and as an organization, we have made a concerted effort to listen and observe during this time.

We are more focused, and we have spent more quality time with key Senators and new Administrative leaders, like returning Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, EPA Administrator Michael Regan and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai. Whether it's across a conference room table or on a laptop screen, these relationships have remained mission critical to advance sorghum priorities.

The world may look different now than it did a year ago, but NSP's core values and principles are the same. Change is a good thing, and we're better for having gone through the past 12 months. It remains an honor to serve the sorghum industry, and we thank you for your continued support.

Tim Lust, CEO

The Rural Migration

by Sam Barnett



▲ A NEARBY ELEVATOR serves as a tower transmitting an internet signal Julia Debes uses to work from home on her family farm near Hoisington, Kansas.

In March of 2020, many urban dwellers found themselves confined to the four walls of an overpriced studio in a downtown metropolis only braving the outside world for a quick grocery store run or a walk around the block to escape the solitary lifestyle they came to accept as their “new normal.” As sweeping COVID-19 lockdown measures were instituted across cities, a majority of residents decided to hunker down and stick it out. Some residents, though, decided they wanted a change of scenery to ride out the pandemic—a great migration back to the countryside began.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed nearly every facet of life for most Americans. The way we work, the way we socialize, and the way we learn has been altered, some would argue, forever. Remote work, social distancing and online learning showed many Americans that commuting to an office building would soon become a thing of the past, and employees could be just as productive in rural communities as they were in skyscrapers.

From D.C. to Kansas

Fifth-generation sorghum farmer Julia Debes moved back to Kansas from Washington, D.C., in 2014 with her husband and their first child to be closer to family. The couple knew they wanted to end up back in their hometown of Hoisington, so their children could grow up close to grandma and grandpa. When the circumstances aligned, they jumped at the opportunity. Since their move, Debes has grown her family while working as a contractor and full-time employee from their farmstead in rural Kansas.

Debes has endured obstacles while teleworking, namely connectivity and high speed internet, for the past seven years. “I did a side-by-side speed test once with a co-worker in D.C., and the internet in the headquarters office was 100 times faster than my rural internet connection,” Debes said, explaining that establishing an internet connection required neighborhood-wide cooperation and various satellite devices.

Debes said that her work as a communications professional is hindered by large file sizes, high-quality photographs and raw video. Luckily, Debes works for people who understand the limitations of her internet connection and have extended grace to her as she navigates a communications career from her family farm in Central Kansas.

While Debes has fared well teleworking from a small community, those who relocated in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic have not all shared a similar experience. She said as the rural migration continues, however, she expects to see expanded opportunities for those who chose to ride out a global pandemic in less developed regions of the U.S.

Increased telework options benefit those who chose to relocate during the pandemic while also benefiting those who permanently reside in rural communities. Online modality expands employment opportunities to people who may not be willing or able to live in large cities for their careers by bringing the office to wherever they are.

“ I believe there will be more opportunities for people to work remotely full time—maybe not for every position, but more than before 2020.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic really opened the door wide for a lot more people to better understand the opportunities and limitations of remote work,” Debes said. “I believe there will be more opportunities for people to work remotely full time—maybe not for every position, but more than before 2020.”

A relocation starts with...the Chamber of Commerce?

For many people looking to relocate, the first step is to scope out an ideal community—evaluating the economy, finding adequate housing, job availability, child care and health services. One way of sourcing this information is to request a relocation package, a marketing document containing relevant community information, to learn about what a particular city or town has to offer its residents.

“Historically, people always call the Chamber to get information about relocating or visiting the community,” Lubbock, Texas, Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Eddie McBride said. “We still get plenty of queries on a day-to-day basis to satisfy people’s interests.”

Relocation packages are becoming increasingly popular among rural communities’ Chambers of Commerce looking to take advantage of urban dwellers moving to the countryside as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consolidating trusted information—economic statistics, housing options, other relevant selling points—into accessible assets for distribution among interested parties has been a successful recruitment tool for many rural communities looking to host new urban residents.

Delivering on promises

Appointees and elected officials are feeling pressure to deliver on promises made on the campaign trail. U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack made promises to improve infrastructure to aid agriculturists coping with inefficient transportation, broadband access via 5G connectivity and with economic stimulants.

New leadership in the USDA Office of Rural Development has outlined several key initiatives to improve rural living, including telecommunications, broadband access and various programs backed by sufficient fiscal resources. Federal assistance, on both individual and community levels, aiding rural development initiatives could prove to be the catalyst in persuading past urban residents to permanently reside in improved rural areas.

Rebuilding rural America

The mass migration to rural communities we have seen as a result of the novel coronavirus has highlighted infrastructure struggles rural America has been com-

batting for decades—crumbling roadways, insufficient broadband access, outdated waterway control and unstable energy grids, just to name a few.

The Rebuild Rural Infrastructure Coalition comprises more than 250 U.S. agricultural producers, rural businesses and rural families to advocate for investment into rural America’s infrastructure. Agricultural research, healthcare, broadband, housing, energy, transportation, financing and water rank as top priorities for the coalition.

National Sorghum Producers is a proud partner of the Rebuild Rural Infrastructure Coalition. This partnership helps the association leverage the coalition’s power to make meaningful infrastructure improvements for the sorghum farmers it represents.

“Rural communities are the lifeblood of our country and need clean and safe drinking water and wastewater, affordable housing options and access to high speed internet, modernized ag research facilities, improved affordable, reliable power and repaired roads and bridges millions drive on (and our farmers rely on) everyday,” said Mark Hayes, spokesperson for Farm Credit Council and the Rebuild Rural Coalition.

Is it worth it?

Debes said her community in Central Kansas has treated her family well. There is access to affordable child care, public education, health care providers and other accommodations that make her lifestyle feasible, she said.

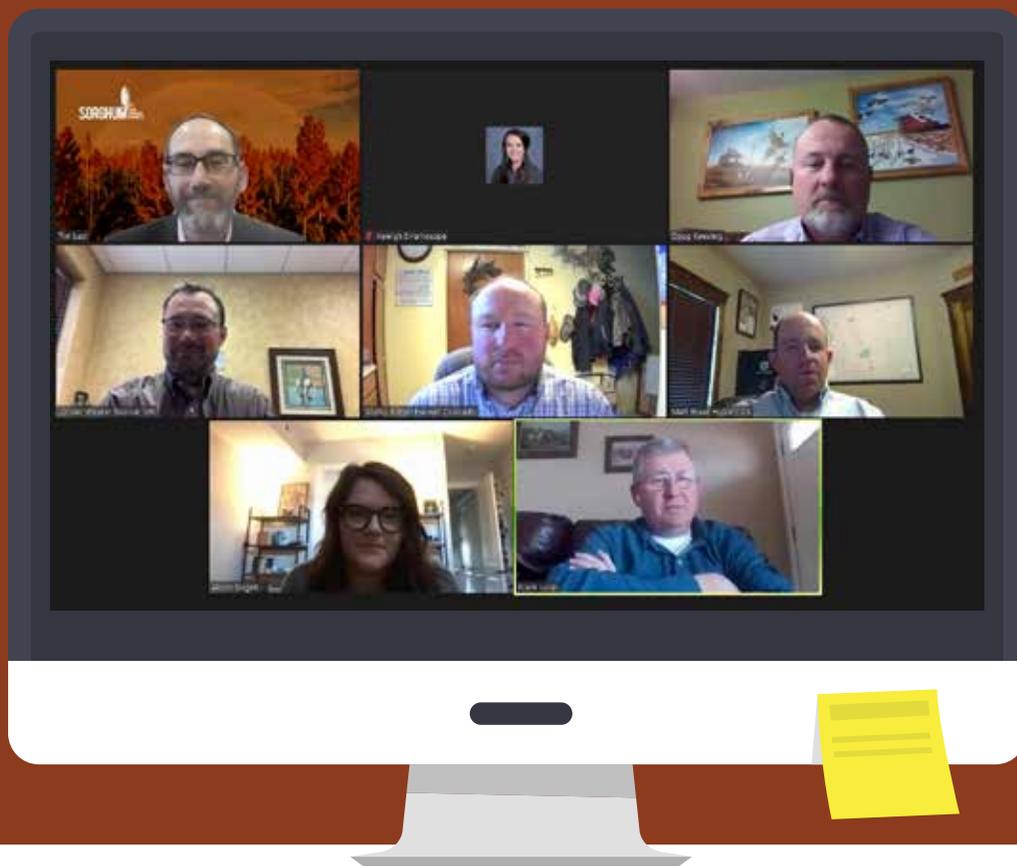
She said the move from D.C. to Kansas poses challenges for her professionally, but connectivity and rural broadband limitations seem like minor inconveniences when she watches her children grow alongside their grandparents. Her family’s interconnectedness takes their rural lifestyle from a choice to an absolutely invaluable connection within their family, Debes said.

“Moving back to our hometown was absolutely worth every trade-off,” Debes said. “[Living here] while maintaining a professional career requires a bit more creativity, but the flexibility and support are aspects of my life that would be really hard to give up.”

While this is not the case for every person who moves to a rural community, progress is being made to ensure these necessities are being met for those interested in relocating to a small town. Federal assistance, infrastructure improvement initiatives and relocation popularity amid the pandemic have acted as catalysts for urban residents to live comfortably and productivity in whatever landscape they choose, whether that be a skyscraper or the turn row while also exposing needs rural residents have had for a long time.

“We’ve put down deep roots here on the farm,” Debes said, “and we’re here to stay.”

Capitol Hill



Legislating *Virtually*

WITH U.S. CONGRESSMAN FRANK LUCAS

By Haleigh Erramouspe

For people across the globe, this past year has been one of virtual connection. Whether it was friends, family or coworkers, conversations through a screen became the norm. This reality was no different for members of Congress.

When the world came to a screeching halt in March 2020, our elected officials had to face one of the largest health and economic crises to ever occur in the United States—and just like the rest of us, they had to do it virtually. This presented unique challenges for legislators who relied on in-person meetings, hearings and town halls to connect with their constituents and colleagues.

Congressman Frank Lucas (R-OK) was elected to the House of Representatives in a special election in May of 1994, in an era where bag phones and letters were the primary points of contact outside of meeting in person. With 27 years of experience behind the dias, Congressman Lucas took the time to speak with us about how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how members connect and communicate with their constituents and other members and his hopes to return to meeting face-to-face soon.

How has adapting to a virtual setting affected the way you connect with constituents?

Lucas: We get a lot of emails and phone calls, and we still get a few letters, but I had to suspend my in-person town meetings. My custom in recent years has been to do at least one in each of my counties in my district every year, but I have not been able to have in-person meetings for essentially a year. Virtual calls are not the same as looking someone in the eye, but I think by working at it hard, myself and my very dedicated staff have been able to maintain that touch to continue to be able to work with and help our folks back home. In fairness, had we not had all of the modern electronic communications technology that's evolved over the last 25 years, this would've been really hard to have done. Now, I'm looking forward to getting back out into the world as more and more of my constituents, and other people around the country, are getting vaccinated.

You recently participated in a meeting with National Sorghum Producers members as part of our virtual DC Fly-In. What was that experience like and how do you foresee these types of advocacy efforts shaping in the future? What is your best advice when it comes to constituents and organizations who want to connect with legislators in a virtual environment?

Lucas: Well first of all, it's a two-way street, and I have a wonderful relationship with my sorghum friends going

back to my very first day in Congress. We've worked on research programs, we've worked to make sure that they were treated equitably in the various farm bills, and I think we've made great success. With any association, it's a two-way process though. Listening to the constituents, listening to those sorghum farmers out there, that's important because then you take that information and you put that together in a way that then can be presented to elected officials, whether it's members of Congress, House and Senate, or state legislature back home.

Most things in this country have a federal, state and local component too. So whether it's USDA or the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, the members of the state legislature or members of Congress, conveying those priorities and those things that are important to the producer groups to my colleagues is key now. Something that we always need to remember is members of the United States House will serve on anywhere from 1-3 committees and United States Senators will serve on maybe four committees. Members have a lot of committee work, subcommittee work and floor votes going on all at the same time, so when my sorghum friends meet with members of Congress or the state legislature, it's important if you're not able to access the actual member, when you have a chance to meet with that ag staffer or that staffer who works on the issues that are important on that day to the sorghum growers, being just as methodical and just as thorough with the staffers as you would be with the member is critically important.

How has adapting to a virtual setting impacted the way you work with other members of Congress?

Lucas: This is probably the most frustrating challenge of all because with the COVID-19 protocols adopted by the United States House, we no longer all go vote together. They have basically broken up the almost 435 members into groups of five, which means the time you spend on the floor during votes discussing issues—and some of the most profound policy discussions I've engaged in as a member of Congress, have occurred on the floor—where there was no staff and no leadership present, where we could have a very to-the-point dialogue, whether it's members of the same committee or members of the same state, different regions, whatever the issues, we can no longer have those discussions. We've lost a big part of that because we just can't be on the floor together. I understand the health component, but it has been frustrating.

By the same token, committee work is very important, but for a year now, we've done committee work by virtual meeting. While it's great to have a screen with 25 faces of people that you work with, it's not like sitting at a long dais in a committee room where you can lean over or move over and have a discussion about what's being discussed, why it's being discussed, who's presenting the information, what

would you do with this information. You can't have that kind of a free flow when you're looking at 25 other faces on a screen. Politics, the legislative process in the poli-sci books appears as science, but it is also an art form. It's your human interaction with your colleagues, your ability to gauge them, to figure out what's important and what's not important and your ability to determine when, to no fault of their own sometimes, they need more information on a point, or a perspective, or an issue, in order to make a good decision. One member providing that to other members is critically important, and it's just difficult [to do virtually]. We've got to get to the point from the vaccination program in the House where we can go back to in-person, full member four sessions, and the in-person full member committee hearings. Then we can actually legislate again.

The past year was challenging, but what is the biggest positive change or outcome you have seen as a result of the trials we've all experienced?

Lucas: Well on the firsthand, I would say sitting on the science committee and watching how dramatically the scientific community moved to create not one, not two, but three vaccines to address COVID. There are always going

to be challenges and pathogens that will attack humans, but being able to respond—and we'll respond quicker next time—feels very reassuring. You tend to take for granted everything that's good and everything that's simple when everything is positive until it's not there. This has been an opportunity for my cohorts to understand just how, not only fragile society is, but how complicated the legislative process is. I think they'll be more appreciative when we hopefully soon get back to whatever the new normal is. Otherwise, it's that we have survived as a nation because about 10 or 11 months ago when the sickness rates had exploded, when the hospitals were starting to overflow, and people were beginning to die in substantial numbers, there was a point in time there when you kind of wondered, "Can the scientific community achieve a response fast enough for the medical care community to be able to hold things together and implement it before we go over the curve, so to speak, and the economy and society collapse?" They did, and we survived. I always tell folks back home, I'm a farmer. Every time I put the crop in the ground, I expect to harvest something. I am an eternal optimist. You can't be a farmer in Roger Mills County, Oklahoma, without being an eternal optimist. I was and am still eternally optimistic, although I was a little bit unnerved almost a year ago.✂

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By Jennifer Blackburn

DAN ATKISSON

Through fortuitous timing, Stockton, Kansas, sorghum producer Dan Atkisson set up an RTK GPS system in his farm equipment before the COVID-19 pandemic started, and when the world turned virtual as a means to continue to work and accomplish goals, Atkisson turned his tractor-mounted iPad into his own virtual office.

An RTK base station sits on top of his parents' house close to the farm. Through the DigiFarm VBN network of antennas that communicate with satellites across the U.S., the RTK provider transmits data to his tractor through a cell signal. The iPad receives the data and pushes out GPS information over bluetooth to the other two devices in the cab.

Fortunately, his part of rural Kansas has excellent cell service, allowing Atkisson to take his virtual advocacy efforts on the go. His first tractor video conference experience took place last May with National Sorghum Producers, meeting with Kansas Senator Jerry Moran.

"I purposefully tilted the iPad so they could see the planter," Atkisson said. "They could see my face as well, but with the iPad, there's a lot wider camera so you could see the planter going through the field while still seeing my face."

Authenticity and Advocating for Sorghum

Since then, Atkisson has taken several video conference calls from the tractor cab. He said it provides a show-and-tell opportunity, adding a level of authenticity to the work farmers do.

In a video conference meeting with newly elected Kansas Congressman Tracy Mann, Atkisson said it was one of those days where it was bitter cold in Kansas with temperatures 10 degrees below zero, and he had cows to tend.

"I had my ear flap cap on and my hood up, freezing to death in my pickup," he said. "Of course, I apologized and said, 'Excuse my appearance. I did want to show my face though and give you the weather update from the Big First district.' [Congressman Mann] commented back, 'We appreciate what you're doing, and it's good to see that the people we're talking to still have boots on the ground.'"

Atkisson said while sitting on the tractor can be a distraction and may not be appropriate for all situations, he does feel it can add credibility to the issues farmers are bringing to the table.

"I think if a legislator is talking to someone sitting in a tractor, using no-till practices, it really adds to the knowledge factor of that conservation topic," he said. "I do think even with legislators like Jerry Moran, who are very much engaged in agriculture, it doesn't hurt for him to see the people he's talking to are seriously engaged and know what they are doing because they're doing it right then."



◀ ATKISSON USES AN IPAD to help run his RTK Guidance System, turning his tractor cab into a virtual show-and-tell office during increased video conferences as a result of COVID-19 shutdowns.

“The amount of business that we’ve accomplished over Zoom, I think is tremendous,” he said. “Before, I was so burned out sitting in the house taking those types of calls, but now I don’t have to sit still to do this. I can do it while I’m out on the tractor.”

COLIN CHOPELAS

Corpus Christi sorghum farmer Colin Chopelas has also taken video conferencing on the go. Most recently, he completed a widely viewed video interview with Successful Farming, discussing corn and sorghum planting from the seat of his tractor cab.

His setup—a phone bracket mounted to his rear-view mirror with a clip and a little farmer ingenuity, also known as Gorilla Tape®.

Authenticity and Advocating for Sorghum

Chopelas said his initial pandemic video conference experience took place last July when he spoke on a Zoom call with Chinese end-users on behalf of sorghum farmers during the middle of harvest.

“That was great because, normally, if you’re busy harvesting, you’re not going to take the time to get out of the combine and go have a meeting with somebody or sit down at a dinner meeting,” Chopelas said. “That experience was really easy because I was able to get off the combine and log into a Zoom call and talk about where the sorghum crop and harvest was in South Texas, and it was viewed by hundreds of people across the world.”

Chopelas said he wasn’t as experienced doing calls from the cab then and, in hindsight, wished he had done the update from his combine rather than his home, but still being on the farm, he felt his message about how the crop was progressing was well received.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Like Atkisson, Chopelas said he is fortunate to have good cell service in his area but recognizes there are those who do not. Other challenges Chopelas identified are not being able to read the room and have a full understanding of individuals he serves with on various boards and committees.

“I think the biggest thing you lose by not being in a meeting in person is not being able to get a feel in a boardroom about certain things, even if they are unspo-

Advantages and Disadvantages

Atkisson said there are pros and cons to this approach, and as a representative of the industry, he has always tried to make Zoom meetings as professional as possible, noting it becomes easier when there is already a relationship established between individuals on the video call.

“When you’re on a call with people you’re somewhat comfortable with, you can make the little jokes and things that make it a little more casual,” Atkisson said. “Then you get on other Zoom calls that are so stodgy, you’re scared to death you’re not muted or don’t know when to speak up or you’re afraid to say something weird.”

What’s Next for Virtual Workflow

Atkisson admitted, like many farmers, he is ready to see people in-person. There was a time he was not always excited to jump in the truck and drive to a meeting, but with what is being characterized as Zoom fatigue, he said he and his wife are elated to attend a meeting planned in Amarillo at the end of the summer.

Going forward, however, Atkisson feels virtual components to meetings are here to stay.

▶ CHOPELAS RECENTLY TOOK an interview with Successful Farming to discuss planting in South Texas, mounting his cell phone to his rearview mirror.

ken,” he said. “You understand what they just by their body language and by the way we address the subject. You can’t really get the feeling looking at a cell phone or a screen

What’s Next for Virtual Workflow

Despite these challenges, Chopelas said he hopes opening meetings and forums up to be viewed virtually continues. South Texas agriculture producers run on a completely different schedule than most other parts of the U.S., and with meetings like Commodity Classic, for example, moving online this year, Chopelas said he was able to participate for the first time.

“I’ve never been able to go to Commodity Classic even when it’s held right down the road [in San Antonio] because we’re always planting that time of year,” he said. “This year, I was able to get in all of the stuff I wanted to participate in, and I hope these large organizations and state and national organizations will continue to do that so



we can at least participate in portions of their programs.”

Chopelas said the pandemic has forced the agriculture community to take a giant leap forward catching up on technology, which is a long-term positive effect of being reliant on visual sources.

“If you would have said we’re going to have a Zoom call talking about marketing, nobody would have participated in that a year ago,” he said. “Now, it’s socially acceptable to take part in virtual learning, and that’s great because you can still function and farm, helping us become even more efficient.”



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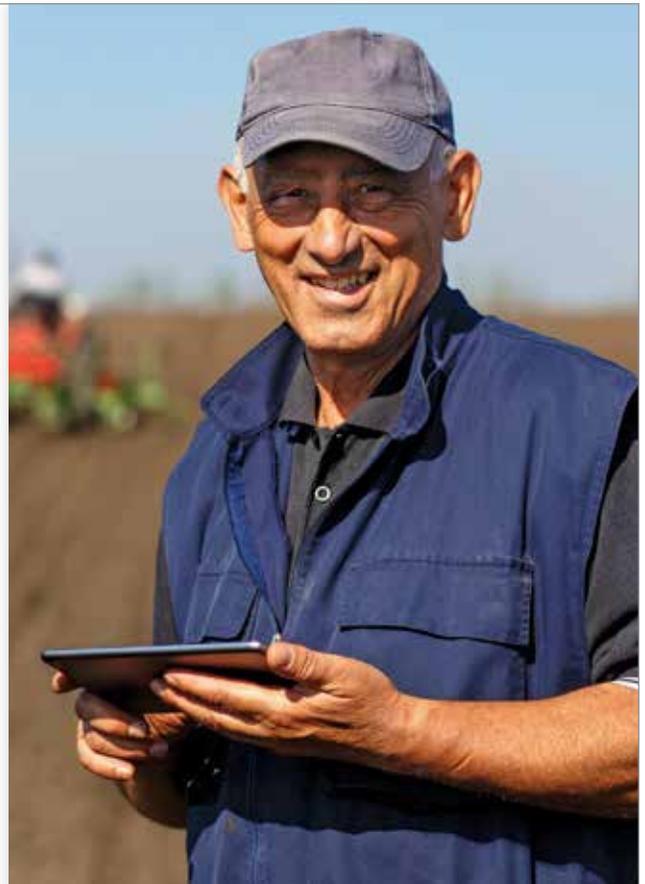
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Trade Wins

CHINA PHASE 1

NSP helped to assure sorghum farmers interests were considered when drafting the Phase 1 U.S.-China Trade Agreement. From the signing of the agreement to the end of the year China purchased 294.8 million bushels of U.S. sorghum worth more than \$1.5 billion.

VIETNAM

In May 2020, a pest risk assessment was approved by both the USDA and Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development opening the door for U.S. sorghum to flow into the country for high-value uses.

Grants & Education

1 Through collaborative work between NSP, TGSPA and bipartisan legislators, a **\$14.5 million infrastructure grant to the Port of Brownsville** was awarded to increase the facility's grain handling capacity leading to five shipments of 33,000 metric tons of sorghum to China at the end of 2020.

2 RMA Grant Concluded an educational program, giving sorghum farmers additional resources on risk management. Program was worth \$137,000.

3 NRCS Grant (KansCAT) continued collecting data on sustainability and crop inputs, which will help farmers capture market value based on their stewardship practices. Program is worth \$184,000.

D.C. Fly-In 2020

21 Participants
10 States Represented
3 Days
89 Meetings Hosted

2020 SORGHUM CONGRESSIONAL AWARDS

-  **House Committee on Agriculture
Chairman Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN)**
-  **Kansas Big First Congressional District
Rep. Roger Marshall (R-KS)**

Regulatory Activities

IMIFLEX

NSP provided ongoing support to UPL and Advanta US as needed to ensure federal and state registration approvals.

FirstAct

NSP provided support to Adama and S&W Seeds to help ensure their new product launch.

Sefina

NSP, in conjunction with USCP, continued to test this new product and promote its upcoming use for SCA control.

Atrazine

NSP advocated for and continues to work on the re-registration of Atrazine with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Glyphosate

NSP provided ongoing regulatory defense of glyphosate for its many safe uses in row crop agriculture.

Advocacy Despite Adversity

By *Haleigh Erramouspe*

In an effort to adapt to the changing environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, National Sorghum Producers transitioned its traditionally in-person spring events to online events. This included a virtual D.C. Fly-In and #SuperSorghum Virtual Industry Forum held in conjunction with Commodity Classic.

Annual D.C. Fly-In

This year's annual NSP D.C. Fly-In was hosted in a hybrid format where the majority of meetings were held over Zoom the week of February 8-11, and a select group of in-person meetings were held the following week during the U.S. House of Representatives district work week. Over this two-week period, NSP held 57 meetings with Congressional members and their staff. More than 30 NSP members and staff participated in the meetings.

Although an in-person meeting and a handshake on the Hill can never be replicated in a Zoom meeting, the move to virtual meetings has not slowed NSP's advocacy efforts. Danny Beyer, a member of the NSP board of directors from Odem, Texas, has participated in several past NSP D.C. Fly-Ins as well as the virtual fly-in held this year.

"I was pleased with how the virtual meetings went," Beyer said. "I feel like we were able to make those connections, they were listening to what we had to say and they heard some things they had not heard before. It worked out very well."

Amy France, a NSP board member from Marienthal, Kansas, said while she was concerned we would primarily be meeting with staff members, rather than Members of Congress, she was pleasantly surprised with the number of members with whom she was able to meet.

"One advantage to everything being virtual was it seemed like we were able to meet with some of the people we had not been able to meet with before," France said. "They seemed more accessible, and I was really pleased we were able to meet with and connect with certain members we hadn't been able to before on the Hill."

While NSP has adapted to the challenges caused by COVID-19, it is the hope of the staff, board and legislative committee to be back hosting in-person meetings in Washington, D.C., as soon as circumstances allow. This year has given the organization an opportunity to learn a new way to communicate with key officials and Congress-

sional members in the nation's capital, and this mode of communication will still be utilized when necessary. However, moving forward, NSP plans to be back with boots on the Capitol grounds, meeting in-person when allowed.

"From my perspective," Beyer said, "I think [D.C. Fly-In] is one of the most important things that we do. Our slogan is 'We're in D.C., so you don't have to be,' and I think we still accomplished that and will continue to in the future no matter the circumstances we are dealt."

NSP hosted another round of virtual D.C. meetings the first full week in April. This round of meetings was similar to the meetings hosted earlier in the year, but focused primarily on newly-appointed Agency officials and Senators who were unable to meet with the group during the virtual fly-in in February.

Virtual Industry Forum

NSP also adapted to the 2021 Commodity Classic moving to a completely virtual format. This necessitated not only moving key Commodity Classic events such as the general sessions and the chairman's roundtable online, but also adapting to how NSP recognized its 2020 Sorghum Yield Contest winners.

Traditionally, NSP honors these winners at a Yield Contest Gala on the final evening of Commodity Classic. Winners, industry partners, guests and staff gather to mingle and celebrate the accomplishments of sorghum growers across the nation. This year, NSP made the best of current circumstances and utilized this opportunity to honor yield contest winners and provide industry updates and insights through a #SuperSorghum Virtual Industry Forum.

The event, sponsored by Pioneer Seeds, featured a keynote with insights from Kansas Senator Jerry Moran. Reece Cannady, U.S. Grains Council manager for global trade and Sorghum Checkoff director Florentino Lopez overviewed opportunities relating to current markets and sorghum demand. This was followed by updates from Sorghum Checkoff Agronomy Director Brent Bean on the No. 1 producer requested advancement in sorghum seed technology—improved grass control with herbicide tolerant sorghum. The full recording of the event can be found on National Sorghum Producers' YouTube channel.

The 2022 Commodity Classic will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, on March 10-12. Commodity Classic



▶ NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS board, legislative committee members and staff met with 57 offices for its virtual fly-in in February. Left, is the Kansas delegation meeting with Senator Jerry Moran, and below is a meeting with Illinois Congresswoman Cheri Bustos's staff Yusuf Nekzad.

is currently planning to host the event in-person, and NSP is excited for the opportunity to once again engage with and celebrate the accomplishments of our producers at the event. 🌾



ALWAYS GLUTEN FREE

<p>INGREDIENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 cups cooked Pearled Sorghum Grain 7 Roma Tomatoes, diced 1 can Pinto Beans, drained & rinsed 1 can Black Beans, drained & rinsed 1 can Corn, drained 1 medium Purple Onion, diced 1 Green Pepper, diced 1 Orange Pepper, diced 2 Avocados, diced 1 Jalapeno, diced 	<p>DRESSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ cup Vinegar ½ cup Oil ½ cup Sugar 1 tsp Salt 1 tsp Pepper 1 tsp Garlic Powder
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INSTRUCTIONS

In a small bowl, mix together all of the dressing ingredients and set aside. Mix together the cooked *Pearled Sorghum Grain*, tomatoes, pinto beans, black beans, corn, onion, green pepper, orange pepper, avocado, and jalapenos. Pour dressing over sorghum mixture and stir until well combined. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Visit www.NuLifeMarket.com
 For free shipping on purchases over \$45,
 use coupon code: **sorghum19**



Nu Life Market's gluten free Pearled Sorghum Grain is an excellent alternative to couscous, quinoa, and pasta.





2020

Yield Contest

WINNERS

By Cason Lutrick

IRRIGATED EAST

NAME: JEFFREY BARLIEB

LOCATION: WARREN COUNTY, NJ

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 84G62

YIELD: 200.71 BU/AC

Finishing just over 200 bushels per acre, Irrigated East Winner Jeffrey Barlieb did not think his year would end as strong as it did. Despite only receiving 0.8" of rain from late May until mid-July and a small disease issue, Barlieb was able to bring back his crop with more than ample rain in late summer and help from a crop consultant. Barlieb only had to irrigate 3" inches thanks to timely precipitation. A history of trial and error, learning from the past and embracing the present is what Barlieb believes led to his success.



IRRIGATED WEST

NAME: KIMBERLY GAMBLE

LOCATION: KIOWA COUNTY, KS

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 84G62

YIELD: 223.31 BU/AC

An above average rainfall set the 2020 Irrigated West winner Kimberly Gamble up for a great year. Gamble said this was a good year for her family facing no substantial problems with her crop, receiving enough rain to not irrigate for 28 straight days.

Gamble followed practices that have proven successful on her operation like strip-till methods and a formulated combination of fertilizers. Gamble said these are things she can control and makes sure to do them correctly. The Gamble family has a history of success in the Sorghum Yield Contest. Kimberly's husband Ki was inducted into the Sorghum Hall of Fame in 2019. Gamble said her entire crop this year was exported to China.



New U.S. Dryland Record

DRYLAND NO TILL EAST

NAME: ELLA JOHNSTON

LOCATION: FULTON COUNTY, PA

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 84G62

YIELD: 245.86 BU/AC

This year was a remarkable year for Dryland No-Till East winner Ella Johnston. Even with a few hail and wind storms, Johnston said growing conditions were perfect this year. A good fertilizer program of nitrogen, phosphorus, potash and hog manure, 40" inches of rain and minimal weed pressure led Johnston to break the U.S. dryland sorghum yield record, harvesting over 245 bushels per acre. This record breaking yield was sold to a local mill that uses sorghum for birdseed. "It's an honor and a great achievement for me," 17-year-old Johnston said. She comes from a family of yield contest winners. Her mother, Winter Johnston, was inducted into the Sorghum Hall of Fame in 2020.



DRYLAND NO TILL WEST

NAME: LONG FARMS JERRY AND SUE LONG

LOCATION: WASHINGTON COUNTY, KS

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 84G62

YIELD: 186.84 BU/AC

Calculated weed control and a mild August in northern Kansas were key factors across the Long operation, said Dryland-No Till West winners Jerry and Sue Long. Using a steady rotation of wheat, sorghum and soybeans, the Longs were able to utilize wheat stubble in their sorghum field to hold moisture in the ground. This rotation played an important role as they received only 14" of rain this growing season. Chinch bugs did pose to be a slight problem this year, but the Longs were able to turn their attention to a nearby grass field, Jerry said. "[National Sorghum Producers] has done a substantial job of exploring exports," Jerry said, noting his grain sorghum is mostly exported to international markets.



DRYLAND TILLAGE EAST

NAME: SANTINO SANTINI

LOCATION: WARREN COUNTY, NJ

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 84G62

YIELD: 203.94 BU/AC

This year's Dryland Tillage East winner Santino Santini is a familiar face in the sorghum yield contest. Santini attributed his success to a good fungicide treatment and a nitrogen-focused fertilizer program. This, mixed with what Santini said was rain at the right time each week, made this year almost perfect for his crop. "[I am] proud to represent the state of New Jersey," Santini said, "and let people know we can compete with any state in the country." Santini marketed his 204-bushel yield crop to a bird seed mixer in Pennsylvania.



DRYLAND TILLAGE WEST

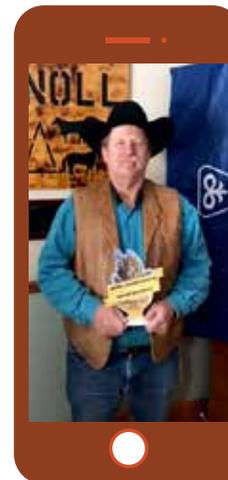
NAME: DAVID KNOLL

LOCATION: CHARLES MIX COUNTY, SD

SEED VARIETY: PIONEER 89Y79

YIELD: 205.32 BU/AC

Hard rains of early spring in South Dakota wiped out 2020 Dryland Tillage West winner Dave Knoll's initial crop, he said. Despite these heavy rains, Knoll said this became the perfect weed control with high moisture keeping the weeds out of his crop. "I've done this quite a few years, and I didn't expect this to be my better year," Knoll said. "It just goes to prove that you never know what is going to happen." Knoll focuses his operation on growing white sorghum, which led him to choose Pioneer seed variety 89Y79. Whether being sold to birdseed mixers, alcohol production or personal use, Knoll said this variety markets better in his area.



FOOD GRADE

NAME: STEPHANIE SANTINI

LOCATION: WARREN COUNTY, NJ

SEED VARIETY: SORGHUM PARTNERS SP 33S40

YIELD: 189.10 BU/AC

Stephanie Santini, the 2020 Food Grade winner, said the 2020 season maintained near perfect growing conditions for her crop. Receiving over 40" of rain during this growing season, she was able to maintain a consistent moisture profile. Santini said she selected a Sorghum Partners seed variety because it contains good genetics and is high yielding. The Santini family's competitive nature is apparent every year in the yield contest. This year, Stephanie is joined by Santino Santini, who also won his division, with several other family members placing in the Top 3 national rankings of their respective categories.



Visit

**SORGHUMGROWERS.
COM/YIELD-CONTEST**

*to view complete
list of winners*



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The HT Sorghum Breakdown



PRODUCT

Inzen from Pioneer
Corteva Agriscience

HERBICIDE TOLERANCE

ALS-Tolerant (Group 2),
specifically sulfonylureas

HERBICIDE PARTNER

Zest WDG from Corteva
(nicosulfuron)

WEED TARGET

Grasses only

SPRAY TIMING

POST only

REGISTRATION STATUS

Trait and herbicide approved for use
in the U.S.

PLANTBACK REQUIREMENTS

No sorghum planting for 18 months
after use

2021 AVAILABILITY

Limited Sales

PRODUCT

igrowth from Alta Seeds
Advanta US

HERBICIDE TOLERANCE

ALS-Tolerant (Group 2),
specifically imidazolinones

HERBICIDE PARTNER

IMIFLEX from UPL
(imazamox)

WEED TARGET

Broadleaves and Grasses

SPRAY TIMING

PRE or POST

REGISTRATION STATUS

Trait and herbicide approved for use
in the U.S.

PLANTBACK REQUIREMENTS

No sorghum planting for 18 months
after use

2021 AVAILABILITY

Five Varieties Available

PRODUCT

Double Team from Sorghum Partners
S&W Seed

HERBICIDE TOLERANCE

ACCCase-Tolerant (Group 1),
specifically fops

HERBICIDE PARTNER

FirstAct from ADAMA
(quizalofop)

WEED TARGET

Grasses only

SPRAY TIMING

POST only

REGISTRATION STATUS

Trait and herbicide approved for use
in the U.S. but no Canadian PNT,
meaning grain must be sold to a
domestic user in 2021

PLANTBACK REQUIREMENTS

No sorghum planting for 4 months
after use - do not plant Double Team
in consecutive years

2021 AVAILABILITY

Limited Sales

For more information about each of these non-GMO technologies, watch Sorghum Checkoff Agronomy Director Brent Bean's presentation (01:07:20) from the #SuperSorghum Virtual Industry Forum at [YouTube.com/SorghumGrowers](https://www.youtube.com/SorghumGrowers).

National Sorghum Producers
INDUSTRY PARTNER PROGRAM

At National Sorghum Producers, we believe in the sorghum industry, and we believe in team work. Our mission and vision indicate our commitment to leading the charge for this industry through advocacy, relationships and steadfast leadership. For an industry to realize its full potential, it takes everyone working together. Financial support from the Industry Partner Program allows NSP to be the best in the world at representing the U.S. sorghum industry and sorghum farmers.

Find out more about NSP's Industry Partner Program at www.SorghumGrowers.com/industry-partners-2.

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An Appetite for Sorghum

By John Duff

After three years of challenges, obstacles and anxiety, the eight-year relationship between U.S. sorghum farmers and Chinese grain merchandisers is back on solid footing. Sure, the risk of political meltdown is always present, and a certain amount of chilly rhetoric remains a hallmark of the two countries' public relationship. However, the Asian giant's appetite for grain is almost insatiable due to an ever-strengthening middle class growing hungrier and hungrier for a western diet centered largely on animal protein.

Figure 1 depicts daily kilocalorie supply per capita in China and the U.S. If current trends hold, China could soon overtake the U.S. in daily consumption of kilocalories per capita. Considering China is more than four times larger than the U.S., the amount of grain needed to meet such a need is nothing short of spectacular. Trade war or no trade war, political sparring or no political sparring, this demand must be met, and U.S. farmers are in the best position to do so.

Furthermore, reports indicate around 70 percent of China's pigs died during the Asian swine flu outbreak, and the country has not cut its output of poultry (which ramped up to fill the protein gap during the outbreak) as it has rebuilt its swine industry. This double whammy has led to record purchases of U.S. feed grains over the past year, and although the corn commitments have attracted most of the attention, the unspoken hero of the 2020/2021 marketing year has been sorghum basis. Figure 2 includes sorghum and corn prices on the Gulf of Mexico since late 2019.

Note the virtual dead heat that prevailed prior to the Phase 1 trade deal with China taking effect on February 14, 2020. The next few weeks saw some of the largest purchase commitments in the history of the sorghum industry, and by summer, sorghum prices were running away. Today, the premium for sorghum to corn stands at \$92.50 per metric ton or \$2.35 per bushel. This 37 percent advantage is likely to drive the largest ever national average farm price premium for sorghum. USDA is currently projecting a 2020/2021 marketing year price of \$5.00 per bushel for sorghum and \$4.30 for corn, and the 2021/2022 marketing year is already presenting similarly strong opportunities as some interior locations are bidding \$6.00 or less per bushel for new crop sorghum.

Figure 1. Supply of Kilocalories per Capita per Day



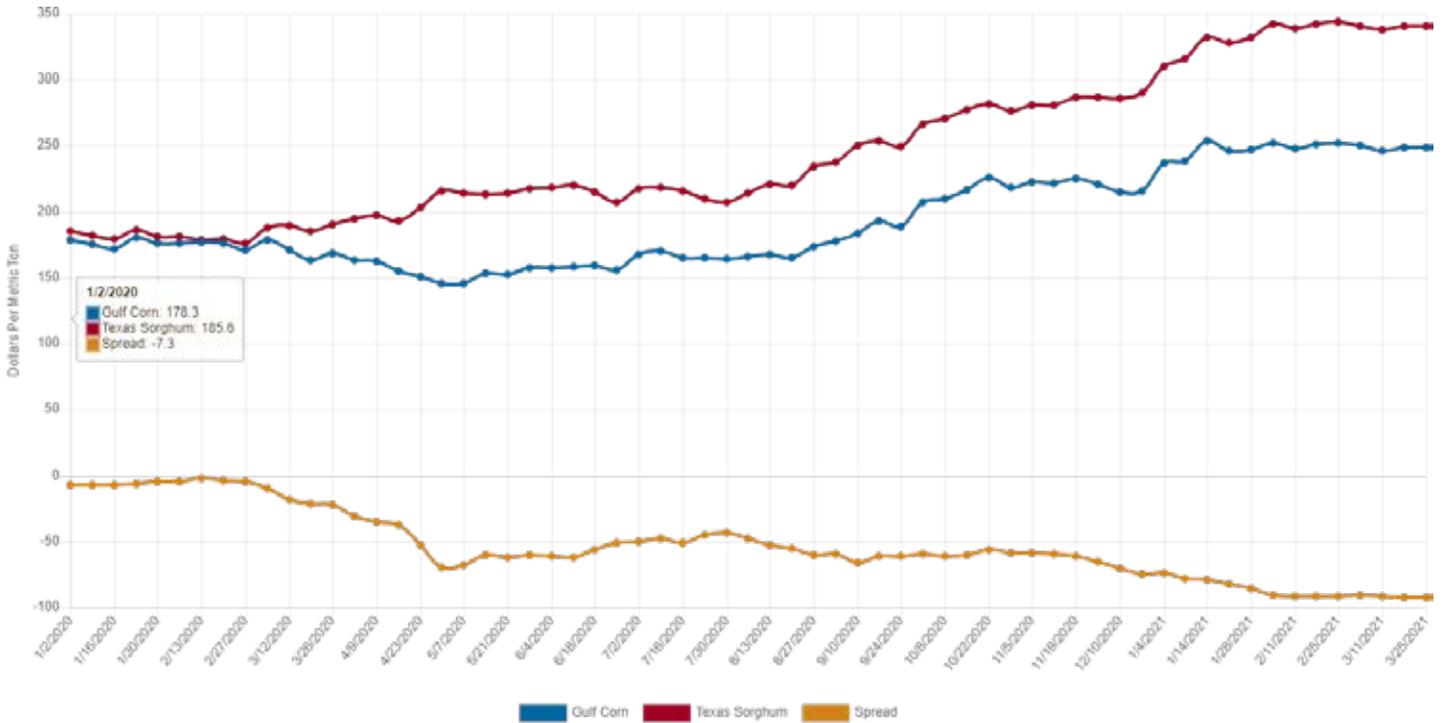
▲ IF CURRENT TRENDS HOLD, China could soon overtake the U.S. in daily consumption of kilocalories per capita.

Such aggressiveness is virtually unheard of among buyers of major row crop commodities in the U.S.

It is tempting to believe this price action is based on the requirements of the Phase 1 deal or speculation on future growth, but the data indicate otherwise. Confirming the reports of near-exponential demand growth (i.e., the double whammy), actual exports so far in the 2020/2021 marketing year are running second only to the 2014/2015 marketing year, or the largest year on record. Figure 3 illustrates this strength.

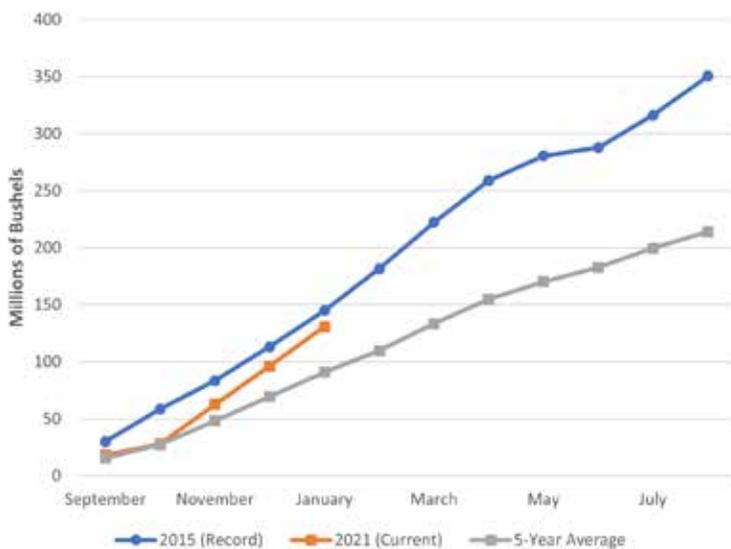
In 2015, the production increase resulting from these historic purchasing levels outstripped total demand, and the industry weathered a contraction as a result. This year, USDA's March 31 prospective plantings report indicate U.S. sorghum farmers are planning a robust—but not excessive relative to the amount of demand—18 percent increase in acreage. This restraint coupled with significant demand and aggressive purchasing are a good sign for sustained strength in the sorghum market as #Plant21 continues across the Sorghum Belt.

Figure 2. FOB Price Comparison: Gulf Corn vs Texas Sorghum

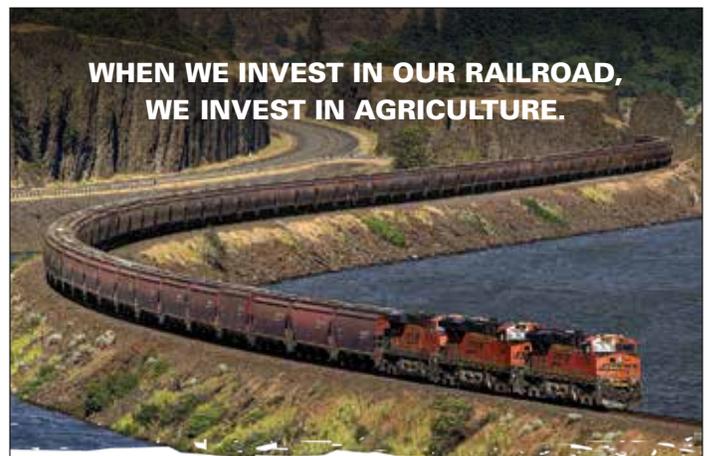


▲ THERE HAVE BEEN RECORD PURCHASES of U.S. feed grains over the past year, and despite corn receiving the bulk of attention in the media, the unspoken hero of the 2020/2021 marketing year has been sorghum basis, particularly strong on the Gulf of Mexico since late 2019.

Figure 3. Pace of Exports



▲ THE PACE OF SORGHUM EXPORTS this marketing year is running only second to the 2014/2015 marketing year



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NEWSLETTER

sorghumcheckoff.com | Spring 2021

Sorghum Checkoff Joins Sustainability Alliances

U.S. Farmers and Ranchers in Action

The Sorghum Checkoff recently joined the sustainability alliance U.S. Farmers and Ranchers in Action (USFRA) to continue positioning sorghum as a key player in the sustainability space. USFRA actively works to achieve its mission of “connecting farmers and ranchers to food and agriculture stakeholders to co-create sustainable food systems” by providing leadership to drive outcomes, tapping into farmer communities to identify solutions, facilitating collaboration across food systems, employing science to develop promising solutions and enhancing connections between farms and households.

USFRA has a strong consumer-focused voice targeted at effectively communicating the role farmers and ranchers play in the sustainable food systems of the future. Numerous other grower associations, agribusinesses and major consumer brands also sit at the USFRA table of supporters and partners. This membership will emphasize sorghum’s role within the industry and offer opportunities for increased engagement with other players in the consumer and food space. It will also highlight the

role sorghum plays globally in contributing to the sustainability of U.S. agriculture.

“We know that our growers have a strong sustainability story to tell,” said Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson. “Generations of sorghum farmers live and depend on the land, and their future is tied to the health of the soils and ecosystems that support them. This makes farmers important stewards of our natural resources, and we believe they are positioned to help lead the charge responding to pressing climate and food security challenges. Amplifying grower voices is key to ensuring that farmers are actively engaged in crafting the solutions that we need, and we commend USFRA’s efforts to help secure U.S. farmers’ seats at the table.”

USFRA’s drive for elevating farmer voices spurred the initiative Farm Table, an organized group of farmer ambassadors to serve as the voice of U.S. agriculture through various communications opportunities and avenues. The Checkoff will have a sorghum grower representing the industry as a part of the Farm Table who will be able to effectively highlight sorghum’s unique sustainability story.

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3

Powerful Pairings Punch Up the Plate and the Palette



America's Conservation Ag Movement

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program recently joined America's Conservation Ag Movement (ACAM) as its first Sustaining Level Partner. ACAM is part of Trust In Food, a purpose-driven division of Farm Journal dedicated to mainstreaming and accelerating the transition to more sustainable and regenerative agriculture practices, making every dollar invested in conservation agriculture more impactful.

ACAM brings farmers and the sustainability community together around the future of farming by bringing profitable, planet-friendly farming practices into the mainstream. The public-private partnership connects the dots, giving farmers a platform to share their journey, meet other farmers on the same path and access the resources they need to under-

take change. The Movement is organized by Trust In Food in partnership with the Farm Journal Foundation. Financial and technical support is provided by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and leading agribusinesses, food companies and nonprofit organizations.

In support of the Sorghum Checkoff, the Movement will work to:

- Communicate the sustainability story of sorghum producers across the industry and to buyers
- Secure farmers' continued license to operate and access global markets
- Ensure continued innovation that builds on the desired characteristics and uses of sorghum, as an ingredient in consumer food products, pet food, animal feed and many other markets
- Monitor and evaluate relevant sustainability activities to

deliver stories and data points that illustrate the sustainability accomplishments and progress of sorghum farmers

"The Sorghum Checkoff is honored to partner on America's Conservation Ag Movement," said Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust. "As U.S. sorghum producers successfully grow more than 400 million bushels of this crop annually for diverse uses and buyers around the world, they are doing so in a way that is attuned to excellent stewardship of soil, water and wildlife habitat. We're pleased to honor their contributions to healthy working lands and ecosystems through the Movement while also enabling sorghum producers to take the next steps on their own conservation ag journeys."

More information about Trust in Food and ACAM can be found at trustinfood.com.

Norma Ritz Johnson Named Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director

After an extensive nationwide search, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program has selected Norma Ritz Johnson as the organization's third executive director. She began her role on Jan. 12, 2021.

"Johnson brings strong organizational management with a background in agriculture and sorghum," Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust said. "I am excited to have Norma back on Team Sorghum. She has proven over the last 15 years her leadership abilities to take on major projects and

shepherd them through government and private industry processes to success."

"The Sorghum Checkoff board of directors and I look forward to working with Johnson and are extremely confident in her leadership ability to move this organization forward," said Sorghum Checkoff Chairman Kent Martin, a sorghum farmer from Alva, Oklahoma. "We believe her vast experience and past sorghum industry relationships will be beneficial in furthering the program priorities of the Checkoff



to increase the value of sorghum and improve profitability for our growers.”

Johnson most recently served as Executive Vice President for the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, a 5-Star accredited organization that represents almost 1,700 businesses and over 79,000 employees on the South Plains of Texas where she led strategic initiatives and staff communications with an emphasis on transportation, agriculture and health care. As a leader, her teams implemented programs that were awarded the national Chamber of the Year twice in the last 11 years. Norma also served as Commu-

nications Director for National Sorghum Producers in the early 2000s. Her expertise in strategic planning and leadership make her a valuable asset to the checkoff program.

“This is an amazing opportunity, and I very much look forward to stepping into this position at the Sorghum Checkoff to help build on its great foundation of success,” Johnson said. “My entire career has led me to this role returning to the sorghum industry, and I’m eager to roll my sleeves up and get to work helping to bring value to the organization and sorghum producers as we accelerate this important industry’s growth

nationally and globally.”

Johnson replaces Florentino Lopez who has served as the organization’s executive director since 2011. Lopez will continue to serve the sorghum industry in a new capacity consulting on international market development.

“I would like to thank Florentino Lopez for his strong leadership and service to the Sorghum Checkoff and sorghum farmers,” CEO Lust said. “Lopez has been a tremendous asset to our organization and our industry, and I have no doubt that Johnson will continue to lead our industry with the same level of vision and integrity.”

Powerful Pairings Punch Up the Plate and the Palette

The Sorghum Checkoff recently joined a campaign called Powerful Pairings with USA Pulses and the National Pork Board to highlight the National Family Meals Movement. The National Family Meals Movement was launched by the Food Industry Association to encourage consumers to join the movement by pledging to share one more family breakfast, lunch or dinner at home per week. With rapidly changing shopping, cooking and eating behaviors shifting consumer preferences, key commodity groups are realizing that by working together, they have a greater chance of impacting consumer perceptions, nutrition and their producers’ bottom lines.

Powerful Pairings, a collaborative marketing initiative that promotes the pairing of

whole foods to bring taste, balance and nutrition to family meals, was launched in the fall of last year. As a testament to its success, the collaboration is expanding this year to include the United Sorghum Checkoff Program.

Through the innovative campaign, the organizations connected with retailers, registered dietitians, nutritionists and consumers to encourage them to try unexpected and ingenious food pairings to power up their plate with delicious and nutritious family meals. Free recipes and resources were created, including infographics, fact sheets and nutritional information.

“Powerful Pairings makes it easy to add taste, nutrition, texture and variety to every meal,” said Becky Garrison, RDN, LD, director of domestic marketing, USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council,

American Pulse Association. “With the launch of the new 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, our campaign can help families better understand how they can make every bite count.”

In January, the FMI Foundation awarded Powerful Pairings its distinguished 2020 Gold Plate Award in the Community Collaborators category. The Gold Plate Awards shine a spotlight on programs created by suppliers, food retailers and community collaborators that encourage families to share more meals together at home.

“We are excited about the expanded partnership and the opportunity to promote how pork, pulses and sorghum can easily be part of great tasting, nutritious parts of family meals,” said Sorghum Checkoff Market Development Director Doug



| Lemon-Garlic Tenderloin with Warm Sorghum Salad

Bice. "This partnership will help lead to a greater end-user demand for sorghum by highlighting how well it can fit in everyday diets."

Learn more about the pork, pulses and sorghum Powerful Pairings initiative at *powerful-pairings.com*.

powerful + pairings
delicious + nutritious + ingenious

SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

May 31 Memorial Day
Office Closed

July 27-29 Leadership Sorghum Program I
Kansas

August 4-5 Sorghum Checkoff Annual Board Meeting
Oklahoma City, OK

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar



CONTACT US

Clint White
Director of Communications
(806) 687-8727
clint@sorghumcheckoff.com

USCP MISSION

The Sorghum Checkoff commits to reveal the potential and versatility of sorghum through increased shared value.



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A Valued Fundraising Partner of the National Sorghum Producers

By Jennifer Blackburn

Like it says in their name, Sorghum Partners® has been a valued *partner* of the National Sorghum Producers for more than 20 years. With forage and grain sorghum portfolios, Sorghum Partners has focused on grower success for decades, offering sorghum farmers high performing hybrids with superior field performance to maximize insect and disease resistance, grain and stem quality, harvestability and tolerance to extreme weather challenges.

“Sorghum Partners is one of the oldest and most loyal partners our organization has,” said NSP Industry Relations Director Jamaca Battin. “From the beginning, they have had the best interest of sorghum farmers and this industry in mind, and we value the partnership we have with their team to advocate for the growers we serve year after year.”

Through its partnership with NSP, Sorghum Partners’ contributions to the sorghum industry have created vast opportunities for NSP members and Sorghum Partners’ customers, leading to advancements

in the industry like sugarcane aphid tolerant hybrids and herbicide tolerant sorghum (see page 22).

Sorghum Partners has also been a staunch supporter of NSP advocacy efforts through sponsorship of the Sorghum Political Action Committee (PAC). Traditionally, the Sorghum PAC’s keystone fundraiser takes place at Commodity Classic in conjunction with the annual Yield Contest Awards Gala. However, as Commodity Classic moved to a virtual event in 2021, NSP created the Sorghum PAC Series, sponsored once again by Sorghum Partners, offering three fundraising opportunities for producers to give to the Sorghum PAC this year.

“The success of our Sorghum PAC hinges on the support we receive from our valued industry partners, like Sorghum Partners,” Battin said. “Sorghum Partners continues to take that support to the next level as a premiere sponsor of the PAC, and we’re grateful for their contributions that made this series possible.”

The first event in the series included an auction hosted through BigIron Auctions. It was the most successful PAC fundraiser to date taking in over \$82,000 for the Sorghum PAC. The series also included a virtual fundraiser, and the final event will be the Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament held April 24 at the Wellington Golf Club in Wellington, Kansas.

Through its sponsorship, Sorghum Partners is providing golf towels to all participants and will be present onsite to answer grower questions about their products. Mike Eade, VP Sales & Marketing Americas, will also provide remarks on behalf of the company.

Interested in the tournament? Spots are filling fast, but interested individuals can contact jamaca@sorghumgrowers.com to find out if walk-ups will be taken. More information about the tournament and Sorghum PAC series can be found at SorghumGrowers.com/pacseries. Missed a chance to contribute? Individual NSP members can make a donation online at SorghumGrowers.com/donate.

SORGHUM PAC SERIES
Golf Tournament

April 24, 2021
Wellington Golf Club
Wellington, Kansas



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Potential Emerging Markets

By Sam Barnett

The past few years have been exciting for American sorghum. The industry has seen tremendous market growth—domestically and internationally. While China has been the dominant player for international demand, the sorghum industry has its sights on many existing and new customers. Two regions that offer significant potential for U.S. sorghum farmers include Africa and India.

African Market: Old Grain, New Uses

For years, sorghum has proven to be an asset in the battle against food insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sorghum is rich in protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals and works well as a blended food ingredient—these attributes make sorghum a natural choice as nations work to eliminate food insecurity.

Sources indicate that Africa's population is increasing at the rapid rate of 2.7 percent year over year—twice as fast as South Asia and 0.9 percent faster than Latin America. If growth continues at this rate, Africa's population will double by 2050. This creates tremendous market opportunity for food initiatives and sorghum is perfectly positioned to leverage its nutrient-dense and sustainable attributes to the emerging African market. Another benefit is the African people's familiarity with sorghum as it is commonly consumed and native to the continent.

In addition to food aid efforts, the African poultry industry is set to explode on scale with expected population growth. According to Feed Navigator, a publication dedicated to reporting on feed demand globally, the Sub-Saharan African poultry and egg industries are developing quickly due to local and international interests in producing large quantities of high-quality

food. Sorghum's nutritional profile and feeding applications make sorghum an excellent option for poultry producers.

Recently, United Grain worked collaboratively with state- and national-level sorghum organizations, the U.S. Grains Council and the Port of Houston to move several vessels of grain to Africa for field trials targeting food aid efforts. These recent advancements in industry-wide collaboration and infrastructure improvements have allowed American sorghum producers to benefit from new-found markets.

Indian Market: Growing Population & Demand

The United Nations projects India's population to dramatically increase by 2050 to a staggering 1.64 billion people. At this rate of population growth, India is set to overtake China's enormous population by 2027.

The National Institute of Health reports India's preferred non-vegetarian protein is chicken. The Indian poultry industry is increasing by 10 percent annually to meet growing demand and population growth.

What does this mean for sorghum? Chickens need to eat, and sorghum can be used as a primary ingredient in poultry feed rations.

Chicken's ability to digest crude protein and amino acids found in sorghum make it a favorable alternative to comparable grains, plus sorghum's climate resilience and nutritional components make the grain invaluable to the untapped Indian market.

With over 80 percent of U.S. sorghum entering the export market, U.S. sorghum grower groups are excited for the prospects of a more robust, diverse export portfolio. There are still tariffs on U.S. sorghum into India and other obstacles to overcome before the U.S. gains market access to either region, but Team Sorghum recognizes the importance of these international markets and looks forward to the opportunity they offer U.S. producers.



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The image shows two bags of SUDAX sorghum seed. The bag on the left is orange and labeled 'SUDAX SORGHUM & SUDANESSE'. The bag on the right is green and labeled 'SUDAX KIRAZI SORGHUM'. The background is a close-up of green sorghum leaves.



Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Sorghum is on Solid Ground to Invest in our Future

By Adam York

“A high mortality rate; global infection spikes; and, with no vaccine, control efforts world-wide limited to isolation, quarantine, and limitations on personal gatherings, applied—at times—unevenly.” While that sounds like the past 12 months, those are words from an article on the CDC’s website entitled “History of the 1918 Flu Pandemic.” Yet, under this current scourge we remember and mourn those close to us whom we have lost while recognizing the economic and social challenges the pandemic presents globally.

We also remember that humanity has confronted and overcome these challenges 100 years ago. Quarantine, however, looked different in 1918 than in 2020. While phones were as big as kitchen blenders then, today, we have bleeding-edge science and tech on our side in all sectors. It is exciting to imagine where humanity will be over the next 100 years. The investments made through the generations have paved the way for today’s strong foundations. As growers working together, the same is true for sorghum farmers, who, through their Check-off and state commissions, continue to sustain momentum for their industry into the future.

According to our recent Annual Report, Kansas exported 160 million bushels of sorghum in 2020, up from 2019’s figure of 62 million bushels. Price reflects this newfound demand and basis has increased considerably throughout the Sorghum Belt. New crop research like sugarcane aphid tolerance, over-the-top grass control, and DropXL, a State of Kansas initiative to develop trait technologies for water-optimized sorghum, among other Checkoff-led initiatives, will work to ensure we can meet the markets head-on with local production, greater yields, and targeted inputs. But just as we work to engage

new trading partners, the pandemic is devastating struggling communities elsewhere.

As a result of COVID-19 globally—and on top of other crises—vulnerable populations will require global food assistance to survive famine. Chronic and acute hunger are on the rise. According to the U.N. World Food Programme, the number of people facing crisis levels of food insecurity worldwide may increase to 270 million over the next year. Pregnant and nursing mothers as well as children under the age of two are among the most vulnerable groups at risk. Sorghum is one of the most utilized grains in food insecure countries, especially among African nations where sorghum is culturally significant. While federally-directed food assistance can be a viable export market for growers to sell crops, U.S. sorghum farmers should also take pride in their work to directly alleviate world hunger, foster international goodwill, and stabilize and build new and vibrant markets for tomorrow’s generations of Kansas farmers.

Acting locally can mean leading globally. As evidence for grain sorghum’s solid ground here at home, the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission has seen incredible engagement from Kansas farmers in recent years, including multiple candidates contesting individual seats in

our annual commission elections decided by thousands of engaged voting farmers throughout the state. Our new commissioners will guide new sorghum investments from the grassroots with truly global implications.

As we embrace the change of the past year and strive to shed this global crisis through investment in technologies as well as communities at home and abroad, another decade of “Roaring Twenties” seems in sight. Simply put, sorghum in Kansas is on solid ground to invest in our future.



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Sorghum Shortcuts

Sorghum Foundation Announces 2021-2022 Scholarships

The National Sorghum Foundation has three scholarships available to students studying agriculture in the 2021-2022 school year. Each recipient will be awarded \$1,500 to be applied toward one semester of tuition. All applications must be postmarked by June 1, 2021.

Bruce Maunder Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is presented in honor of Bruce Maunder, a lifetime advocate and researcher in the sorghum industry. Maunder dedicated 37 years of his life to sorghum and crop improvement, and inspired a new generation along the way. Applicants must be a sophomore through senior and enrolled in an agriculture-based degree program to apply.

Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship

Darrell Rosenow revolutionized hybrid sorghum in the United States, spending over 40 years of his life as a sorghum plant breeder. Students applying for this scholarship must be a sophomore through senior and enrolled in an agriculture-based science program related to agronomy, plant pathology, entomology, and/or plant breeding with an emphasis on sorghum.

Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship

A leader in the sorghum industry for over two decades, Bill Kubecka leaves a legacy of dedication and service to an industry he loved. Along with the tuition award, the scholarship covers travel expenses for the student to attend the National Sorghum Producers annual legislative fly-in. Students sophomore through senior students, graduate students and law school students are eligible to apply. Applicants must be enrolled in a curriculum related to agricultural economics, agricultural policy or agricultural law.

For more information on the scholarships and applications, please visit our website at SorghumGrowers.com/sorghum-foundation.

2021 Yield Contest Available Online

The annual yield contest provides sorghum farmers the opportunity to showcase their sorghum crop.

Competition is available on state, regional and national levels and strives to improve yields, share knowledge between producers, recognize high yield achievements and identify top producers in the nation. Contestants must be a paid member of National Sorghum Producer at the time of entry and judging. More than one member of a family may enter, but each contestant must have a separate membership. Partnerships can enter under the partnership name if the partnership holds a membership. Contestants must be at least 14 years of age at the time of entry.

Contestant must be a certified FSA owner/operator (or child of owner/operator) of the entry plot. FSA Form 578 Producer Print (showing all farms in the operation) required with entry, showing a minimum of 50 sorghum acres in an operation. Multiple 10 acre entries may be entered on a farm, but each entry must be on a separate entry form. Only one winner per FSA tract number is eligible to be a state and national winner.

Online registration for the 2021 Yield Contest is now open. All forms must be completed and emailed to NSP office no later than Dec. 1, 2021. Please visit SorghumGrowers.com/yield-contest.com or contact Garrett Mink at 806-749-3478 or garrett@sorghumgrowers.com for more information.

National Sorghum Producers Opens Board Application Process

National Sorghum Producers is accepting applications from candidates who desire to serve on the NSP board of directors. Candidates must be a NSP member and must possess a desire to improve the sorghum industry, working on behalf of growers through fundraising and lobbying activities. NSP board of director positions are not limited to growers, and there is no experience required to apply. If you wish to seek a leadership opportunity within the sorghum industry through one of our three available positions, NSP encourages you to apply.

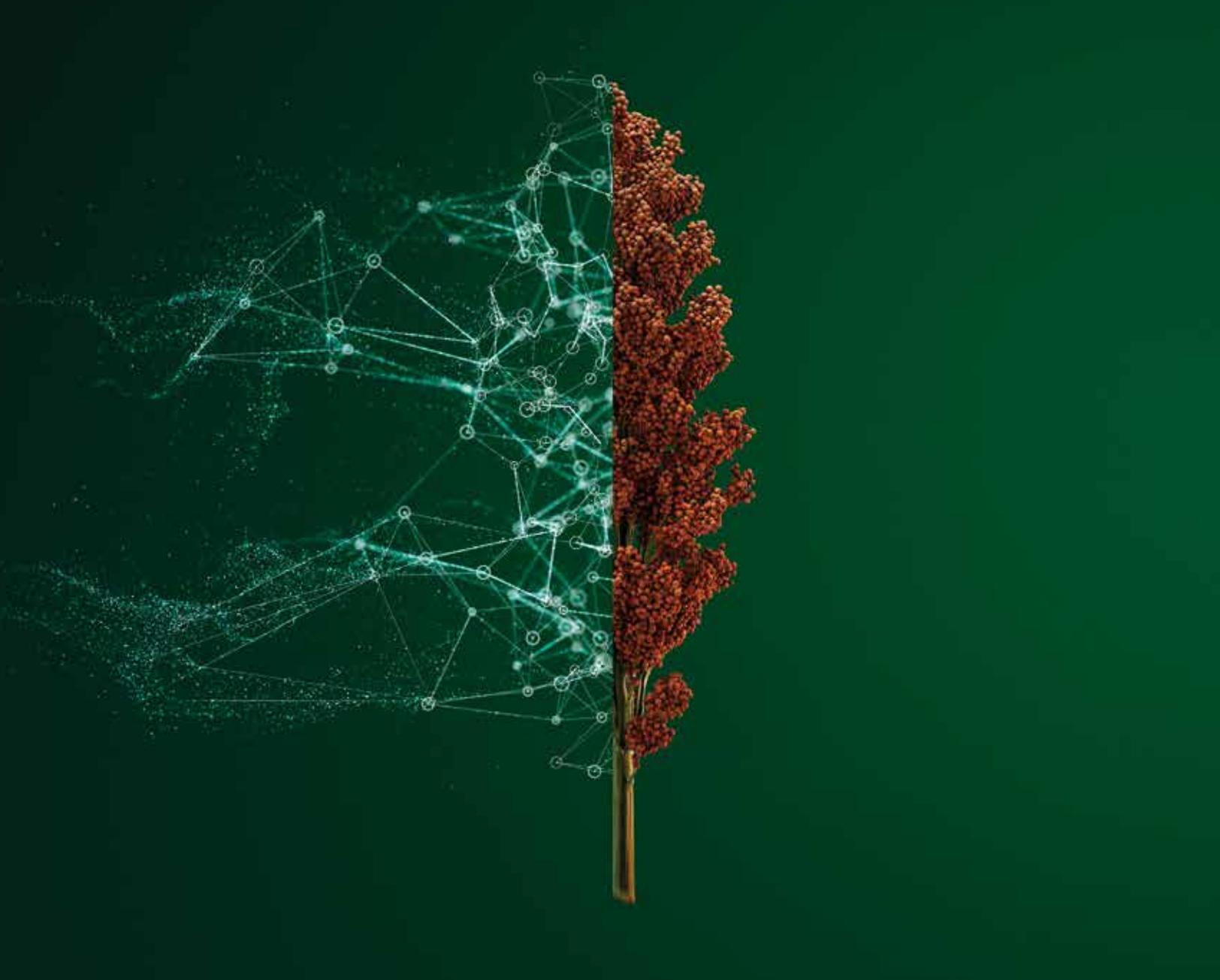
Applications are available on the NSP website at SorghumGrowers.com/leadership and will be accepted until 5 p.m. CST on May 7, 2021. For any questions regarding the applications, please contact Garrett Mink at 806-749-3478 or garrett@sorghumgrowers.com.



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