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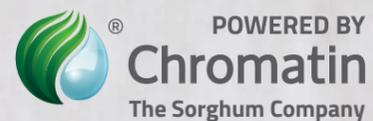


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It takes a team to win, and the sorghum industry has worked hard to build relationships that lead to sorghum champions in the consumer industry. In these pages you will read about the sorghum advocates on our side, spreading the sorghum message and building demand and value for the crop. (Photo from FNCE 2017)

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806-749-9002 (fax)
www.SorghumGrowers.com

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CEO's Desk

Perseverance to Overcome



It is hard to believe it is already fall harvest time here on the plains. This year seems to have flown by. I was always told that the older you get, the faster time passes ... I guess I am not as young as I once was.

I recently came across a quote that I thought really applied to the year. John Rockefeller said, "I do not think that there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature."

This year has reminded many of our members of the true challenges of farming. Low commodity prices and high input costs have continued to shrink or erase profit margins for many farmers. Additionally, Mother Nature has thrown some curve balls at a lot of our members. The damage by hurricanes to some of our growers was very sad, and it will take years to recover. Additionally, the fires earlier in the year and a freeze in the last month that took out some beautiful, but late, milo for a few unfortunate growers in New Mexico also presented unforeseen circumstances that our growers must work through. Sorghum producers are tenacious, though, and I know these hard working men and women will make it through.

This year has proven to be a challenging year for the association, as well. Our top policy priority for the industry this year was to get sorghum oil registered through the Environmental Protection Agency by harvest this fall so the ethanol industry could pay more for milo at harvest. Despite the efforts of National Sorghum Producers board directors, Senators, Congressmen and staff, we are not there yet. I promise you this: we will continue to work on the industry's behalf, persevering to get it done. It is likely costing sorghum farmers and the ethanol plants that utilize sorghum about \$25,000 per day every day it is not fixed. This is just one example of why policy matters and how it can impact profitability on the farm.

On a more positive note, wins from three years ago by the association are starting to pay off. In the last few weeks, more than \$373 million dollars in sorghum payments have been made to help farms through this year. That, along with another year producing a national average sorghum yield above 72 bushels and strong demand from China, will certainly help many growers this fall.

As the farm bill process heats up in Washington, D.C., I will not try to outguess Congress and predict the timing of the next farm bill. I will tell you that the behind-the-scenes work is in full force, and a new five years of farm policy is right around the corner. Know that NSP producer leaders and staff will continue to be in D.C. working on your behalf so you don't have to be.

Tim Lust
National Sorghum Producers CEO

EXPANDING Sorghum's Foodservice Footprint with InHarvest

By Shalin Pinkerton

With opportunity to reach 50 million customers in school lunch programs and another 20 million customers through colleges and universities alone, sorghum advocates are working hard to expand sorghum's slice of the foodservice marketplace.

Sorghum packs a nutritional punch and adds tremendous versatility to the kitchen, and two chefs in particular are taking measures to put sorghum in the food industry spotlight for these very reasons.

Jason Ziobrowski and Michael Holleman, also known as Chef Jay Z and Chef Mike, represent InHarvest, a company dedicated to supplying the foodservice, industrial and retail sectors with high-quality, unique ingredients. Chef Mike is the director of culinary development—a role that allows him to work with growers, procurers,



suppliers and distributors to create the best product for every market segment InHarvest serves.

The InHarvest team searches the globe for distinctive grains and legumes that add flavor, texture and versatility to any menu. InHarvest offers unique quality products in a plethora of grain blends. Among the various blends InHarvest offers, sorghum has emerged as a new key ingredient.

"Chefs always like new ingredients in the kitchen and grains have exploded because of the whole grain movement," Chef Mike said. "I think sorghum has a wonderful flavor and nutty flavor yet is still mild enough to be a blank canvas for a restaurant's recipe development. Chefs automatically gravitate toward stuff like that because they can impart any flavors they want into it."

"We've been hearing about sorghum for a while and receiving requests from chefs over time," he said. "That led to us picking up samples and working on a new blend to incorporate it."

Before a new ingredient makes it into an InHarvest blend or product, it undergoes significant internal testing. Chef Mike said InHarvest's quality assurance (QA) department conducts both typical and blind taste tests. Once a product is identified, their QA department writes a specification based on raw ingredient qualities as well as cooked characteristics. Raw ingredient qualities comprise of moisture levels, foreign material, percentage of brokens and color variation. Cooked characteristics comprise of both flavor and aroma.

Upon the completion of testing, InHarvest incorporated sorghum into their Naked, Wild & Free blend, which contains both red and white sorghum, naked oats and wild rice. The blend creates a spotlight for sorghum and is touted as a great mixture for breakfast porridge, hearty soup and pilaf recipes.

"We have gotten huge reception on the sorghum blend to the point where we are actually scrambling right now to get it back into production because we have surpassed

◀ CHEFS MIKE AND JAY Z joined the Sorghum Checkoff at the Food Nutrition Conference & Expo in Chicago, Illinois, where they showcased sorghum through multiple cooking demonstrations for attendees.



Photo credit: InHarvest

the sales forecast," Chef Mike said. "We are trying to avoid an out-of-stock issue because it has been moving so well for us."

As sorghum awareness increases, so does user familiarity and adoption. InHarvest Chefs Mike and Jay Z are advancing sorghum and expressed their desire to fully establish sorghum in the foodservice industry.

"Sorghum is becoming a very trendy food," Chef Jay Z added, "and we want to train the public to become familiar with it."

The InHarvest team is continually searching for new ways to utilize sorghum and has already created recipes that have boosted consumers' exposure to the grain. InHarvest's recipes to date include Thai Sorghum Pilaf; Sorghum Porridge with Tomato and Goat Cheese; Cheddar, Beer and Broccoli Soup; and Spiced Salad with Fried Cheese. Chefs Mike and Jay Z see many more opportunities for sorghum in the future and continue to seek those out.

"I am proud to be working with sorghum and finding new ways to be creative with it," Chef Mike said.

"Sorghum is different from other grains because of its unique texture, and because sorghum is a whole grain, it has nutrients that are great for you. I recently served it to a group of chefs in a sorghum gumbo as a substitute for rice and it was a hit. Additionally, we have used it in a classic meat sauce as a protein substitute with other lentils."

To further expand sorghum's footprint in the foodservice industry, InHarvest's plan consists of introducing sorghum to new industries and markets based on several factors. One strategy is to evaluate a target group based on age and then market sorghum accordingly.

In nursing homes, the older generation prefers tradition; therefore, InHarvest introduces new ingredients more slowly than they would in a college or university. Students are more current with food trends and are generally more open to trying new ingredients. Tactics such as this provide opportunity for sorghum to become mainstream and can broaden adoption of sorghum in the foodservice industry.

"We already have sorghum in healthcare, colleges and universities and corporate dining, but once we get it into a private-label package and it is on a grocery store shelf, then that is the next important step to achieve," Chef Mike said. "We are constantly looking to break into new seg-

◀ INHARVEST'S CHEDDAR, BEER and Broccoli Soup features sorghum in two ways - as part of their Naked, Wild & Free™ grain blend and as a popped garnish.

ments with sorghum and each time we are successful in that, we have reached a benchmark."

Consumers are demanding quality nutrition and more gluten-free whole grains making sorghum an even more attractive option for foodservice professionals. From a functionality standpoint, Chef Mike also highlighted the unique hardness sorghum offers—providing chefs preparation advantages.

"Although sorghum has a longer cook time, that can be an advantage for operations that are not cooking or heating to order such as catering," he said. "Sorghum can be held in an oven for an hour or more without the integrity of the grain diminishing."

InHarvest is driven to advocate for and promote whole grains such as sorghum and educate people about the benefits they have to offer. InHarvest is focused on increased sorghum adoption and continued education and awareness.

"Sorghum is so different from any other grain because of its ability to be popped and sets itself apart with the multiple varieties and colors," Chef Mike said. "It is definitely overlooked and underused in the U.S. as a nutritional powerhouse. We are slowly changing the way Americans eat, and grains like sorghum are an essential part of that."



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Growing

Appetite for Sorghum

By Faith Smith, Sorghum Checkoff

Whether you are dressed to dine savoring an exquisite meal at a five-star restaurant or frantically running through the drive-thru on your way out of town to take food back to the field, there is a chance you may encounter a new ingredient on the menu—sorghum. A relatively recent ingredient to the restaurant scene, Datassential's 2016 Trending Grains Report indicates sorghum is now included on 1.7 percent of menus across the nation. Considering the National Restaurant Association reports there are more than one million restaurant locations

throughout the U.S., sorghum's growing inclusion is making an impact. In fact, sorghum has grown 256 percent on menus over the last four years alone. Why are restaurants looking to sorghum? Cathy Nash Holley, publisher and editor-in-chief of Flavor and the Menu, a media brand focused on communicating culinary trends, said they identified sorghum as a trend with traction on menus for multiple reasons. "Grains themselves have had great advances on menus and have been called out by their variety and varying attributes to consumers, health and what it means on the menu build,"

Holley said, "and sorghum is definitely getting some attention." In addition to being inherently gluten-free, Holley said sorghum is also benefiting from an American and southern halo that is inspiring culinary influences. The United States is the largest producer of sorghum in the world. While consumption of sorghum as a whole grain and flour is more common over the last 5-10 years, sorghum syrup has been a staple throughout the south, dating back to World War II. "Versatility in product form and its usage are also really unique to sor-

ghum. Few ingredients have the versatility that sorghum has," Holley said.

From fine dining and cafes to fast food and delivery, the many forms of sorghum can be found in all types of culinary creations. Find sorghum flour on the breakfast menu as a pancake or as a cake batter on the dessert menu. Discover sorghum syrup in mixology or used in a protein marinade. Spot whole grain sorghum in a grain bowl or in a savory soup. Happen upon an appetizer or salad garnished with popped sorghum. With various applications, Holley said there is a big opportunity for chefs to utilize sorghum in creative ways.

"[Sorghum] has culinary champions promoting its use like Shaun Brock and Ed Lee," Holley said. "These are these high-profile chefs that tend to bring attention to lesser-known ingredients."

Exploring menu offerings across America, one can find restaurants of all sorts coast to coast serving up delicious dishes made with sorghum. From a fast-food perspective, sorghum recently made its debut on menus, making it available nationwide.

Chick-fil-A announced the countrywide addition of a gluten-free bun on their menu during summer 2017. The bun, which is made of sorghum, quinoa and amaranth flour and is lightly sweetened with molasses and raisins, comes individually packaged and can be ordered with any of the chain's sandwich offerings. The texture resembles the chain's multi-grain bun.

After successfully beta-testing the product in five metropolitan areas, Papa John's has introduced a new, naturally gluten-free pizza crust to the popular pizza chain across the country. The crust is made with ancient grains, including sorghum as the main ingredient, teff, amaranth and quinoa.

On the west coast in Hollywood, California, at Hugo's Restaurant, sorghum flour can be found in many of their breads and pastry recipes. Tom Kaplan, CEO of Hugo's Restaurants and Hugo's Tacos, said they like to utilize sorghum because of its low water usage, sustainable qualities, versatility and price.

"It's part of our gluten-free flour mix," Kaplan said. "We buy whole grain sorghum and grind it ourselves."

Jumping over to the east coast, sorghum has landed a spot on the Benjamin Bar and Lounge's menu inside the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. Executive Chef Oliver Beckert said the restaurant has utilized both puffed sorghum and sorghum syrup in dishes.

Visitors to the nation's capitol and locals alike can swing by the Benjamin Bar and Lounge to enjoy their current offering made with sorghum on their appetizer menu – Smashed Avocado with lime, cilantro and puffed sorghum.

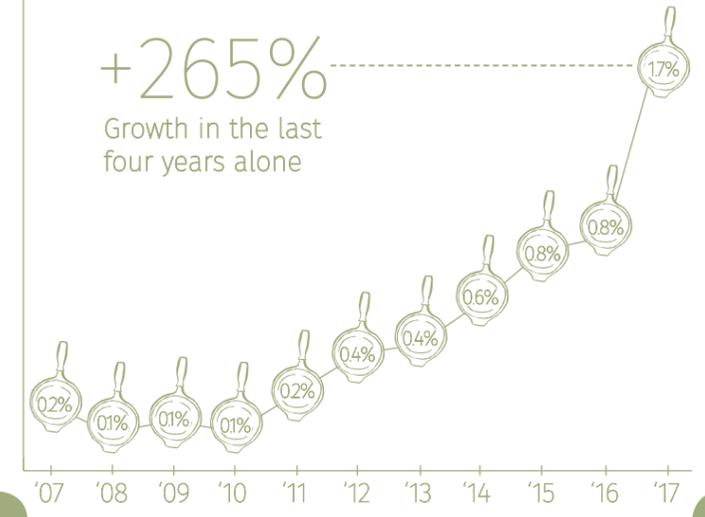
Beckert said he decided to add sorghum to the menu because it is a tasty, nutritious alternative. Customers are also responding positively.

"Many do not know [sorghum] and are curious to taste and learn about it," Beckert said.

Heading south to Charleston, South Carolina, Chef

Historic Sorghum Restaurant Growth

+265%
Growth in the last four years alone



Trey Jackson of Sorghum and Salt said they have used sorghum as a syrup and flour in pasta and baking. Their current entrée menu features a house made sausage with blackberry gastrique, a type of sweet and sour sauce, fermented collards and topped with popped sorghum.

Heirloom grains, also known as ancient grains, frequent the Sorghum and Salt kitchen, and Jackson said sorghum fit right in because it grows well in their local area. While sorghum is built into the restaurant name due to its own ancient grain history and growing characteristics, the reasoning for its inclusion is somewhat of an heirloom itself.

"[Sorghum] is also kind of engrained in my past since older generations of my family have been serving it for years," Jackson said. "I remember my dad and grandparents always having it around."

Restaurant goers who have tried Sorghum and Salt's sorghum offerings have enjoyed the uniqueness of this newer restaurant ingredient that the Jackson family has been enjoying for generations.

"It's a sense of whimsy with the popped sorghum, and the other reactions are nuanced," Jackson said.

Looking to new opportunities, sorghum can also fill other unconventional roles in the restaurant and foodservice industry.

Sorghum bran, an ingredient rich in antioxidants and fiber, currently serves the food preparation industry as a meat extender and preservative to replace traditional chemical preservatives. Sorghum syrup can also be utilized as a flavor modulator to enhance taste benefits to specific food types. Both of these out-of-the-box uses can easily be transferred to meet specific needs of the restaurant industry.

Next time you find yourself scanning a menu for a delicious bite to eat—be it a fast food or full-service restaurant—be on the lookout for sorghum for a one-of-a-kind dining experience.

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Creating Demand One Shot at a Time

by Taylor Dodson

The smell hits you first—a distinct, yet sweet smell that clings to the inside of your nose. Before even opening the doors, you know you are at a Chinese liquor distillery. Visiting the distillery feels like stepping back in time due to the rich history of the liquor being produced.

For more than 5,000 years, the unique distilling process has stayed the same. The process begins in a room where grains are left to ferment for months. As steam floats in the air, the workers stir the mixture of grains to keep the liquid form that is being produced. The liquid is then sent off to its destined place depending on the quality of the batch.

The result is China's most popular spirit, a clear liquor that tastes unlike any other with a burning sensation at first followed by the smooth, grainy flavor the incredible ingredients give it.

The result is baijiu.

Baijiu, pronounced bye Joe, is the drink of choice in China. There are many different types and different flavors, but they all have one thing in common—sorghum is one of the top ingredients.

In China, baijiu is a traditional spirit consumers drink on special occasions or holidays.

Different sorghums are utilized to make baijiu, meeting the needs of all household income levels. From standard No. 2 sorghum to waxy sorghums and high-quality white sorghum, there are many opportunities for producers to meet Chinese baijiu production needs.

Jim Massey, a Sorghum Checkoff board director and sorghum producer from Robstown, Texas, recently traveled to China with Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Florentino Lopez to explore baijiu market opportunities.

"The baijiu market for sorghum in China is so large," Massey said. "It could potentially use up the entire current U.S. sorghum crop if it wanted to."

An estimated 17 billion liters or 4.49 billion gallons of baijiu were produced in 2016. The amount of total grain needed to produce this amount of baijiu would exceed 1.3 billion bushels, which is four times the current U.S. sorghum crop.

Acting on this opportunity, the Sorghum Checkoff has partnered with the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) to further market expansion of U.S. sorghum.

"The opportunity to pursue this market is very large," Massey said. "It would be foolish for U.S. farmers to not take advantage of it."

Together, the Sorghum Checkoff and USGC are working on a project that highlights the value of U.S. sorghum in baijiu while also maintaining the larger, existing China program that works in all markets to further enhance export opportunities for U.S. sorghum as well as other grains and grain products. USGC China headquarters is in Beijing, creating a reliable market relationship between baijiu companies, suppliers and U.S. sorghum producers.

The Sorghum Checkoff set a strategic goal in 2016 to enhance U.S. sorghum exports specifically for use in baijiu. The baijiu market is a way for the Sorghum Checkoff to strengthen its position in a marketplace that is already the number one importer of U.S. sorghum.

While it is hard to determine the exact amount of

sorghum currently going into baijiu from U.S. sorghum imports, the opportunity for growth and expansion is clear. U.S. sorghum's quality and availability make it the smart choice in satisfying Chinese needs, and Massey feels this project will create new opportunities for U.S. sorghum farmers.

The Sorghum Checkoff is funding research conducted by Jiang Nan University to examine different formulations and processes for creating baijiu with U.S. sorghum. The study will compare U.S. sorghum varieties to domestic Chinese sorghum throughout the distilling process.

"I enjoyed seeing the beginning stages of the baijiu project," Massey said. "Brainstorming and coming up with ideas to increase this market was an important step."

The standard shipping method to China is on a bulk vessel. Usually the specific, high-end sorghum that is sourced for markets like baijiu may be shipped in containers. The difference in these sorghum qualities de-

pends on which baijiu market the grain will be utilized.

Some grain buyers are looking for very specific sorghum varieties that are not currently mass produced in the U.S. From the research currently being conducted at Jiang Nan, the Sorghum Checkoff will gain a greater understanding of the types of sorghum needed for China to buy more U.S. sorghum for use in baijiu and to help build a transportation logistics profile.

Alvaro Cordero, manager of global trade for USGC, said baijiu can be a reliable market in China for U.S. sorghum, and opportunity exists beyond Asia, as well.

"We are taking the steps to a blooming product," Cordero said. "That will go from being a domestic market in China to a global market."

Massey's trip to China resulted in favorable visits with importers and end-users who are pleased with the quality of U.S. sorghum. Sustaining these relationships is key to increased demand and realized potential in the baijiu market.

The baijiu market for sorghum in China is so large, it could potentially use up the entire current U.S. sorghum crop if it wanted to.



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Value Beyond a Commodity Label

by Jennifer Blackburn

Food sorghum is a consumer demanded, rapidly growing market poised to create a paradigm shift in the sorghum industry. It is no longer a fad. Consumers are learning and understanding the value sorghum brings to their plate, and it is happening not only on tables in the United States but around the world. Gone are the days sorghum is considered a low-cost livestock feed ingredient. Instead, a valuable opportunity for U.S. farmers is heating up.

Peter Guidry with Guidry Liason International, Inc., a bulk and processed products food supplier, said the sorghum industry needs to think beyond its commodity label.

“You are a commodity,” he said, “but you do not have to get paid like a commodity seller.”

Farm Economics

Sorghum farmers with the ability to decide where to sell and when to sell place price power in their own hands. As of May 2017, the average price received for sorghum by producers who market directly is \$3.11 per bushel compared to an average merchandiser price of \$2.66 per bushel.

If the entire U.S. sorghum crop were direct marketed, the \$0.45 per bushel margin increase can equate to an approximate \$208 million additional value to the entire U.S.

sorghum crop. Moving more bushels that are marketed by merchandisers to being directly marketed by producers stands to benefit the industry overall.

Most sorghum utilized for food is direct marketed, and when analyzing all domestic use marketplace values in the sorghum industry, it is no surprise the value for food sorghum tops the charts at an average of \$5.11 per bushel. Industrial use is second at \$4.48 per bushel, followed by exports, pet food then poultry feed.

Considering food products currently only make up 3 percent of U.S. sorghum demand, it is easy to label food as a niche market, but unseen demand says otherwise. Remember the days before Certified Angus Beef® became popular? Sorghum has that same opportunity. What once started as a niche is the new normal.

Consumers Want Sorghum

“The future is now,” Guidry says. “Scale up, produce the [type of sorghum] the market wants, and [farmers] will make money.”

Guidry has been in the food business since 1990, working now with custom sorghum blender AgVanced Enterprises in New Cambria, Kansas, and feels sorghum is a truly unique crop with exactly the attributes the industry is searching for

today. He says the key is to not try to be everything to everyone but to focus on what consumers are demanding.

Brian Forster, general manager for Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), said sorghum stands out as an ancient grain that is gluten-free while readily available and reasonably priced.

“Sorghum meets a wide variety of the wants we hear from our customers,” he said. “Sustainability is very important to many customers today, and sorghum meets this requirement due to the sorghum plant’s efficient conversion of water and nutrients into starch and protein.

“When selecting the proper varieties, sorghum has flavor, color and texture that our customers require. It is readily available from domestic growers, and ADM Milling has the processing capabilities to serve a growing market.”

Forster says ADM sees continued growth for sorghum in cereals, baked goods and sweet goods, but exponential growth in the next five years is expected in the snack and beverage industry segments—a vision shared by United Sorghum Checkoff Program market development strategists, as well.

Sorghum Checkoff Investments

From 2012-2017, the Sorghum Checkoff invested almost \$1.7 million in consumer market development and marketing efforts. Education and awareness have been key efforts along with establishing critical relationships with influential industry players and major entities in the food space.

The Sorghum Checkoff funded a study this year with the Agribusiness, Food, and Consumer Economics Research Center to analyze sorghum farmers’ return on investment in sorghum research, promotion and information.

The report indicates that since the 2002/2003 marketing year, food, seed and industrial use is up from 1 percent to 19 percent. It also states that as a non-GMO, gluten-free grain, sorghum is favored in markets sensitive to these issues both domestically and abroad.

The report also points to a 2017 U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services study on advertisements of new food and beverage products in the United States. It found that in 2009, a total of 1,121 new products claimed to be gluten-free. By 2016, that number had grown to 6,123 new gluten-free products—a 446 percent increase in seven years.

◀ THE AVERAGE PRICE FOR FOOD tops marketplace values in the sorghum industry at \$5.11 per bushel as of May 31, 2017, according to Sorghum Checkoff assessment data.

While ADM has been engaged in sorghum processing for industrial applications for many years, Forster said the company introduced Harvest Pearl sorghum flours in 2011, specifically in response to growing demand for high quality gluten-free flours.

Forster said ADM believes the industry needs to look for new ways to reach target audiences, and farmers educating food companies and consumers on the benefits of sorghum as a food ingredient will be key. He also expects

enhanced international opportunities as consumers become more aware of sorghum’s benefits.

International Demand Rising

As health-conscious consumers around the world look at U.S. food trends, interest for sorghum in international food marketplaces is already expanding.

“The world is looking for sorghum,” Guidry said, further explaining it is no longer just white sorghum consumers are demanding. Markets exist for red, black and yellow sorghums, as well.

Tetsuo Tommy Hamamoto, Japan director for the U.S. Grains Council, said Japanese consumers are seeking health oriented food ingredients, and sorghum is one of them. While white sorghum is currently the predominant market in Japan, he said colored sorghums are being sought by some companies in their food ingredients, but supply is tight.

“Japanese businesses want to know how they can source white sorghum in a stable manner,” Hamamoto said. “We tell them, and it is true, the U.S. is the only stable source of white sorghum, but we need more.”

Hamamoto and his staff in Japan have been focusing on sorghum expansion in Japan for close to five years now, successfully hosting multiple cooking demonstrations among other endeavors. The most recent demonstration included 60 chefs in western Japan. They plan to host a similar event in Tokyo in preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and will approach hotels that directly interact with tourists for the event.

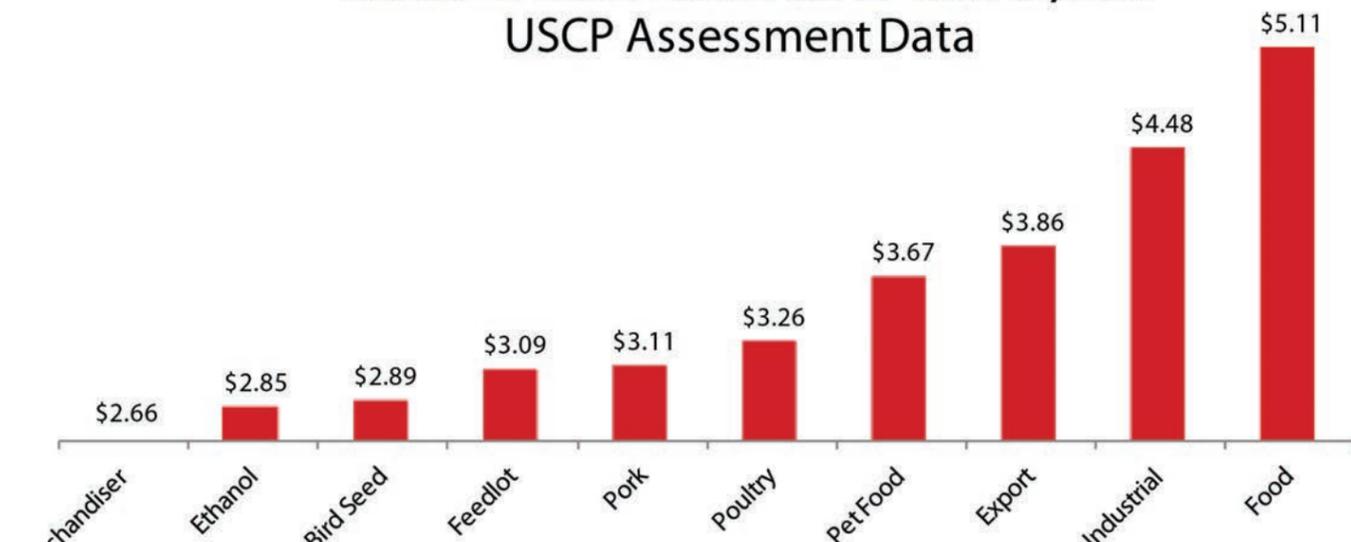
“That will be an even greater, bigger market,” Hamamoto said. “For the Olympics, we only have a couple years, so we are accelerating our efforts to promote food sorghum to the Japanese food industry.”

Whether it is a whole grain dish in Japan, an elite spirit in China, a flour ingredient in a foodservice kitchen or a popped seed in a snack bar, sorghum’s expansion into food and beverage industries across the globe has created astonishing awareness for a crop once considered as a low-cost cattle feed.

“There’s money there for everybody,” Guidry said. “[The sorghum industry] just needs to get there first and hold onto it.”

MARKETPLACE VALUE AS OF MAY 31, 2017

USCP Assessment Data



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NUTRITIONISTS SELLING SORGHUM

By Mollie Dykes

The internet is inundated with messages about what to eat, what is healthy and what is not. From a marketing standpoint, it can be a struggle to get a new product noticed and from a consumer standpoint, it can be hard to know who to trust when making these decisions. Insert nutritionists.

When it comes to promoting sorghum as a food product, several nutritionists have become the sorghum industry's boots on the ground. Through blogs, cooking demonstrations, social media and grassroots conversations, these nutritionists have been able to promote sorghum as more than just a trendy food. Using their influence and expertise, they have successfully put sorghum in front of groups who may have been unreachable otherwise. These individuals see the value of sorghum and promote it on a daily basis as part of their personal mission to help consumers choose healthy whole grain products.

The Sorghum Draw

Whether it is the craving for another creative whole grain option, the desire for easy, healthy meals or the need for something that will fit into a well-balanced diet, nutritionists all around are drawn to sorghum.

Lauren Harris-Pincus, MS, RDN, founder and owner of Nutrition Starring YOU, LLC, had just begun working as a consultant for a company who uses sorghum in their products when she came across the Sorghum Checkoff booth at the annual Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo (FNCE) in 2014. Until this point, she said she had barely heard of sorghum, but it was during that initial meeting that she became more interested in sorghum and started to see how it fit into her work focus on weight and diabetes management.

"I say to patients, 'when you are going to eat something, ask yourself, does my body need this?' and 'Is there something in this that is going to give my body the fuel and the nutrition it needs to help me be healthier and prevent disease?'" Harris-Pincus said. "Sorghum absolutely answers those questions."

Kathy Siegel, MS, RDN, CDN, and Tracee Yablon Brenner, RD, CHHC, managing partners at Triad to Wellness, are both working moms and quickly discovered sorghum is an easy and healthy option for this demographic.

"We are very passionate about sorghum for many reasons, including the health benefits and its versatility. It takes on the flavor of what it is cooked with and is great for one-pot meals that working moms like us love. We are now working hard on getting people to understand the benefits of it and the many applications it can be used in," Siegel and Brenner said.

Sharon Palmer, RDN, a nationally recognized nutrition expert who is also known as The Plant-Powered Dietician, focuses primarily on plant-based eating. She notes that people are regularly seeking new ingredients and flavors to include in their diets

"People are always looking for new alternatives, so that it is not the same old thing every time," Palmer said. "I love that sorghum is very nutrient rich, it is grown in the United States and it is sustainable. It fits well into what I recommend, which is having at least three servings of whole grains a day and not just in whole grain breads, but also consuming in-tact whole grains, such as sorghum."

Putting Sorghum on the Map

In marketing, there is a rule called the Rule of 7, which states a prospect needs to hear or see a message at least seven times before they will take action to buy a product or service. These nutritionists are employing a variety of

methods to achieve the Rule of 7 and make sorghum more of a household name.

Recipes are the number one searched item on the internet, which is why emphasis is being placed on recipe development in the Rule of 7 plan. Each of these nutritionists have developed sorghum recipes or taken popular recipes and incorporated sorghum to display its versatility, many of which can be found in the Sorghum Checkoff's consumer brand, *Sorghum. Nature's Super Grain*®, materials. They are all taking it a step further, though, by using those recipes as an educational tool.

"We like to educate through cooking," Siegel of Triad to Wellness said. "When [consumers] are finding the different recipes that incorporate sorghum into their favorite dishes, Tracee and I use that opportunity to educate them about the health benefits and how it is a sustainable grain."

Social media has become a hub for sharing recipes, particularly recipe videos, and serves as a medium for educating the masses. From Facebook to Twitter and Instagram to Pinterest, social media is allowing these nutritionists to connect with consumers in new ways. They are sharing the recipes they have developed and answering one of the most important questions, "What do I do with it?," which is one question Palmer said she gets frequently.

Cooking demonstrations have also been key to answering that question. At conferences and expos such as FNCE, the Sorghum Checkoff partners with nutritionists to promote sorghum and perform cooking demonstrations. As a result, viewers are able to not only learn its health benefits and how to cook the grain, but also how it's grown and about the growers producing it. Palmer says demonstrations always spark in-depth conversations, particularly with other nutritionists who are then able to share with their own networks, creating a snowball effect of increased awareness.

"I think allowing people to see sorghum close up and to taste it helps them buy into [sorghum]," Palmer, The Plant-Powered Dietician, said. "A lot of people have never heard of it, but they always love sorghum at the end."

Harris-Pincus said she does whatever she can on every level when it comes to promoting sorghum. One method that has proven successful for her is keeping a large bag of sorghum in her office to give clients a sample to take home and cook. She provides cooking instructions and directs them to the Sorghum Checkoff consumer-focused website www.SimplySorghum.com for recipe ideas. She sees it as an easy way for clients to experience the product without personal risk or investment and as a way to encourage them to seek out sorghum next time they grocery shop.

These nutritionists are also taking a grassroots approach by connecting with restaurants and supermarkets. They are providing businesses with sorghum samples and discussing the many benefits sorghum offers hoping they will begin incorporating sorghum into recipes and stocking their shelves with sorghum and sorghum products.

"Having them taste the sorghum is the most important thing," Brenner and Siegel said. "They need to taste it to understand how versatile and delicious it is."

Sorghum Grower Relationship

Through their efforts, these nutritionists are helping sorghum growers build high-value demand for their harvested crop. They are promoting the many health benefits, the efficiency of the crop and its versatility to chefs, grocery stores and consumers, and they are able to tell the sorghum story and provide the transparency of the crop that so many of today's consumers desire.

"Transparency with a commodity is so important," Siegel said. "I think health professionals working closely with farmers to help spread that message

I think health professionals working closely with farmers to help spread that message and educate the public is so important. When transparency is provided, demand for the grain grows.

and educate the public is so important. When transparency is provided, demand for the grain grows."

On the flip side, sorghum growers are providing nutritionists with a sustainable, healthy grain that aligns with their mission as nutritionists. This relationship works both ways and as long as nutritionists continue to be the boots on the ground for the industry, sorghum will be more than just a trend.

"I don't think it's trendy," Harris-Pincus of Nutrition Starring YOU said. "I think it's going to be one of those things that once people realize how good it is not only for you, but also for our farmers, our country, our economy and our environment, people will start to embrace it more."

Siegel added, "Trends come and go. Sorghum is not a trend."

To Sorghum and Back Again

By Christi Stulp

It has been a few years since I last wrote to you in this magazine I was blessed to help start in 2008. I took almost a decade off to have two kids, establish a new farm in southeast Colorado with my husband and pursue some other fun career opportunities.

Like most other farm families in this great country of ours, we are producing below the cost of production, and we are trying to pay for land, equipment and inputs—challenges you know all too well. This led to a decision to email my former boss, Tim Lust.

I left National Sorghum Producers in 2008, a few months shy of becoming fully vested in a retirement plan, and since my husband and I threw our combined pre-coming-back-to-farming-as-a-way-of-life savings at the farm this year, I figured it might be a good time to start back to work again, as in gainfully employed and not just working the long, hard hours required of all of us in farming.

Tim happened to follow up to my email with a call at the wrong time, which in the end was lucky for my husband and I. I told him we could talk about a job later. Right then, we had an issue with our newly minted Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contract. One of our enhancements was being scaled back from a five-year to a one-year payment. Tim said he might have someone who could help, that being the former Chief of NRCS. Our problem was fixed within a week and meant about \$65,000 to us over the course of five years—and untold millions to others across the country. We all know the value of those dollars in the ag economy that we have right now. That was enough to re-sell me on coming back to work again.

My adventure with NSP began in 2004. My parents were long-time members who were introduced to the association



through the sorghum yield contest. I was looking to get back closer to home after studying and working in agriculture in the southeast, Midwest and Texas Brazos Valley. I was also a Texas Tech Red Raider, so returning to Lubbock was a perk.

Team Sorghum, as we call ourselves now, dropped to five full-time staff at its leanest and was fully engaged in urging bureaucrats and industry alike to increase their investment in sorghum and treat the drought-tolerant crop equally as well as corn. We encouraged sorghum use in ethanol, feed and food production and crisscrossed the back roads obtaining letters of support for the enactment of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program.

I went on the road from South Texas to South Dakota touting the virtues of NSP's work in the 2002 Farm Bill that increased the national loan rate. I was a budget hawk and as a traveling, single, career woman, I stayed in many dives with worn-out carpet and the like. However, my travels introduced me to some of the finest people across the Sorghum Belt, and the work challenged me in new and interesting ways.

The lure back was real, and I am gratefully returning to foster relationships with partners and members once again across the Sorghum Belt.

From farmer to a farmer, thank you for investing in sorghum. Every penny you invest gets you dollars back in benefits. I look forward to working

again on your behalf and getting caught up on what you have been doing the last decade on your farm and in your business.

▲ CHRISTI STULP BEGAN her position with National Sorghum Producers in September as Relationship Manager. She will lead efforts of the Industry Partner and Elevator-Member programs.

ADVERTORIAL

Five Steps for Managing Sugarcane Aphid Without Sacrificing Yield or Agronomics

GRANT GROENE, MS
TECHNICAL PRODUCT MANAGER
DUPONT PIONEER

HYBRID SELECTION REMAINS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MANAGEMENT DECISION

Sugarcane aphid was first observed in grain sorghum fields in 2013. Since then, the pest has spread rapidly across Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. The sugarcane aphid reproduces exponentially on sorghum in a matter of days, severely stressing plants by sucking moisture out of leaves and depositing sticky honeydew that causes mold to grow, reducing photosynthesis.

As you look ahead to your 2018 crop, remember these five steps for managing sugarcane aphids:

1. SELECT THE RIGHT HYBRIDS

When making sorghum hybrid decisions, remember the most important considerations to help maximize yield potential:

- Placing the right product on the right acre — and managing fertility and planting rates accordingly
- Selecting hybrids for important agronomics like standability, head exertion, disease resistance and drought tolerance

No sorghum hybrid is “aphid proof” but Pioneer® brand hybrids are available in a range of maturities, and several have demonstrated tolerance to sugarcane aphids.

2. CONTROL VOLUNTEER SORGHUM AND WEEDS AFTER HARVEST

Sugarcane aphids can overwinter on volunteer sorghum plants and weeds such as Johnsongrass, setting up the following year's sorghum crop for an early infestation.

3. HAVE A PLANTING PLAN

Aphids tend to become more active as temperatures increase. They seek out the newest sorghum plants. Planting early can give seedlings a head start before aphid populations multiply; planting too late can make the field more of a target for hungry aphids.

4. SCOUT EARLY AND OFTEN

Sugarcane aphid nymphs are yellow; winged adults develop stripes and green wings. In high numbers, both can cause significant yield loss.

Scout for aphids once a week after emergence and at least twice a week after aphids appear. Aphids tend to feed first on the underside of leaves and then move to all plant surfaces.

5. APPLY INSECTICIDE AT THE RIGHT TIME

An insecticide seed treatment can provide early protection from aphids without harming beneficial predators.

During the growing season, consider spraying an insecticide when thresholds reach 50 to 125 aphids per plant on 25 percent of plants in a field. Spraying earlier could result in problematic aphid infestations before harvest.

Avoid spraying pyrethroid insecticides, which are harmful to beneficial insects.



Infested sorghum leaf with all stages of sugarcane aphids present.

DUPONT PIONEER: INDUSTRY-LEADING SORGHUM RESEARCH

DuPont Pioneer researchers are continually developing new sorghum hybrids from our elite germplasm with enhanced sugarcane aphid tolerance traits. They go well beyond field observations to help ensure yield potential under aphid pressure.

- Cutting-edge breeding program is focused on identifying aphid-tolerant markers
- More than 60,000 data points have been collected on aphid tolerance in the last three years
- Aphid tolerance screening is conducted at three dedicated nurseries and in dozens of on-farm trials
- Our entomologists screen up to 400 hybrids per month for aphid tolerance



Ask your local Pioneer sales representative about the best sugarcane aphid-tolerant sorghum hybrids for your acres in 2018. Learn more about sugarcane aphid biology and management at bit.ly/PioneerSCA.

The foregoing is provided for informational use only. Please contact your Pioneer sales professional for information and management suggestions specific to your operation. PIONEER® brand products are provided subject to the terms and conditions of purchase which are part of the labeling and purchase documents. ®, ™, SM Trademarks and service marks of DuPont, Pioneer or their respective owners. © 2017 PHIL.

Sorghum Recipe

THANKSGIVING SORGHUM STUFFING

Make this recipe

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 cups sweet potato, peeled, chopped
1 - 8 ounce package mushrooms, sliced
1 large green apple, cored, chopped
1 large red apple, cored, chopped
1 cup carrots, peeled, chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
1 bunch kale, torn
1 large red onion, sliced into thin wedges
1 lemon, sliced
2 sprigs fresh rosemary

2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 stick butter, cut into 8 pieces
3-4 tbs olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
8 cups **cooked** whole grain sorghum
2 tbs fresh parsley, snipped
2 tsp fresh sage, snipped
1 cup toasted pecans, chopped

Lemon-Garlic Dressing:

1/2 cup olive oil
3 tbs lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Preheat oven to 400 F. Line a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with foil. Spread squash, mushrooms, apples, carrots, celery, kale, onions, lemon, rosemary and thyme over foil.
- 2 Top vegetables with butter pieces. Drizzle with olive oil and seasoning with salt and pepper. Roast vegetables for 25-30 minutes or until tender, tossing occasionally.
- 3 Meanwhile, in a small bowl whisk together 1/2 cup olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper. Set aside.
- 4 In a large serving bowl, combine roasted vegetables, sorghum, parsley, sage and pecans. Drizzle with lemon-garlic dressing.

For this recipe and more, visit:
SimplySorghum.com



Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission Funds

KGSC invests \$700,000 in 2017 research projects

The Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission (KGSC) is committed to ensuring grain sorghum is a long-lasting, profitable crop for Kansas. Research investments have always been a priority and continue to lead the portfolio. Market development activities ramp-up to meet the demand.

"The Commission invests heavily in research and is encouraged by development in programs, especially when we can leverage investments and see results in the field," said Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission Executive Director Jesse McCurry. "Kansas farmers want to see results in the seed bag. We are all focused on not only that priority, but also the need for markets."

Key 2017-2018 Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission Research Investments:

- Germplasm screening and lodging resilience for stalk rot diseases
- Improving early-season cold and drought tolerance with genomics
- Development of sorghum parental lines with enhanced drought and cold tolerance
- Breeding sorghum for improved dryland productivity and utilization
- Mechanism of tolerance to mesotrione (HPPD-tolerant sorghum)
- Sorghum doubled haploid technology for Kansas farmers

The board approved nearly \$700,000 in research. The KGSC will fund the above listed projects October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018. Additionally, the KGSC con-

tinues its important investment with USDA-ARS in Lubbock, Texas. That proposed work will center on sugarcane aphid research, a priority defined by the KGSC.

Market development was also identified as a growing priority. The KGSC is becoming increasingly involved with partners to develop additional market opportunities, including the U.S. Grains Council and International Grains Program (IGP) Institute. The KGSC frequently supports in-bound trade teams and recently initiated seminars on the prospect of container shipments of sorghum from Kansas.

The KGSC is a major funder and sits on the advisory board of The Collaborative Sorghum Investment Program housed at Kansas State University. Together, we are working to enhance sorghum yield, demand and value.

The KGSC invests in Kansas Farm Food Connection (KFFC), a joint effort of eight Kansas agriculture organizations who seek to be a resource on how farmers raise food and why they grow it the way they do. You can follow KFFC on Facebook at [@kansasfarmfoodconnection](https://www.facebook.com/kansasfarmfoodconnection).

For more information about the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, visit our website at www.ksgrainsorghum.org, or contact your commissioner. District 1 – Lonnie Wilson, Colby; District 2 – Greg Graff, Marienthal; District 3 – Mike O'Brate, Ingalls; District 4 – Stephen Bigge, Stockton, Chairman; District 5 – Clayton Short, Assaria, Vice-chairman; District 6 – Jay Zimmerman, South Haven; District 7 – Nathan Larson, Riley, Secretary/Treasurer; District 8 – Kevin Kniebel, White City; District 9 – Gary Kilgore, Chanute, or contact KGSC staff at 785-477-9474.

Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, 501 Dawn Lane, Colwich, KS 67030
785-477-9474, www.ksgrainsorghum.org

paid advertisement

NEWSLETTER

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SORGHUM BREEDING PROCESS ACCELERATES

The Sorghum Checkoff is in the process of developing a new technology that will accelerate the breeding process for new sorghum hybrids. The Sorghum Checkoff is collaborating with DuPont Pioneer to continue these efforts for sorghum by licensing the recently discovered doubled haploid inducer lines and developing a full breeding system for the crop. These two processes will continue the efforts made by the Sorghum Checkoff to bring highly desired traits and sorghum hybrids to farmers' fields faster.

Earlier this year, the Sorghum Checkoff and DuPont Pioneer announced the discovery of two sorghum haploid inducer lines. At the time patent-pending and a first-of-its-kind in sorghum, these haploid lines were a crucial step to cultivating a breeding process for sorghum with a reduction in the time traditionally spent on new hybrid development. Now, DuPont Pioneer has placed these inducer lines up for licensing to both private and public domestic sorghum breeders. Under a licensing agreement via DuPont Pioneer, breeders would be able to explore the inducer lines to accelerate the breeding process in search of desired traits such as sugarcane aphid tolerance, standability and increased yield. In some instances, the process that used to take five years to produce finished parental lines may now only take one year.

"Bandwidth is crucial in any plant breeding system," said Justin Weinheimer, Ph.D., Sorghum Checkoff

crop improvement director. "The Sorghum Checkoff recognized that an increase in sorghum breeding bandwidth, or the capacity to study the crop, was one way to achieve higher performing hybrids that producers want and need."

In addition to the licensing agreement for the doubled haploid inducer lines, the Sorghum Checkoff and DuPont Pioneer collaborated together to finish the development of a full doubled haploid breeding system for sorghum. This summer, the Sorghum Checkoff board of directors approved a \$1.7 million project to finalize the breeding system using DuPont Pioneer's in-house technology. The project also will allow for the drone-screening of sorghum in the field to measure breeding conditions and yield projections of developing hybrids. This is the largest single investment made by the Sorghum Checkoff, and it is projected to have a tangible, positive effect in the long run for farmers.

"This is an opportunity to take a look at more material for breeding, looking at a number of different crosses to create better sorghum hybrids for our farms," said Daniel Krienke, Sorghum Checkoff board director from Perryton, Texas. "We take the responsibility of dispersing checkoff dollars very seriously, and this will put a more concentrated effort on sorghum research to create better hybrids for our producers sooner than we've had before."

This project initiating an accelerated breeding program for sorghum

has been in the works for almost four years. The collaboration first launched in 2014 with an initial investment of \$800,220 to begin breeding research. The time, energy and effort poured into this project is a reminder of the dedication to meeting the needs of sorghum producers across

the country. Other crops like corn have been using doubled haploid technology for years, and now sorghum is able to work on a similar playing field when it comes to developing newer hybrids, a process that will have concrete results for sorghum producers. ✓

DEMAND CONTINUES TO GROW IN DELTA, MID-SOUTH REGIONS

The Sorghum Belt is often referenced as the hub of sorghum production and is considered the region from South Texas north to South Dakota. This region typically sees the highest numbers in sorghum production and harvested acres, but the demand for sorghum covers more than just this belt. Consistent growth is being generated in regions outside of the typical Sorghum Belt, particularly in the Delta and Mid-South regions where non-traditional markets such as bird seed and pet food are making waves for sorghum producers and creating new demand for this versatile crop.

The region covering Mississippi, Georgia and Alabama all the way up to Ohio, Indiana and Illinois is an emerging production and market region for sorghum. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the region planted nearly 260,000 acres in 2016, and production is only expected to increase as demand from local businesses grows. Sorghum Checkoff Regional Director Brent Crafton covers this expansive area and continues to see the need for more sorghum.

"I visit with grain buyers across all these states and am constantly told about their demand for sorghum and their difficulty sourcing it," Crafton said. "Whether it be for pet food, bird seed or even poultry, sorghum is a grain in demand for many states in the Delta and Mid-South as evidenced by local basis."

Consolidated Grain and Barge Company is one of many businesses on the search for sorghum grain. Trader Doug Chumbler covers the region of southern Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and northern Kentucky where he works to source sorghum for regional customers or international markets. Basis for sorghum in this region is higher than for other grains like corn, and even higher than other sorghum-producing regions in the U.S., due to the increase in market demand from pet food industries.

"We supply sorghum for pet food pretty much year round," Chumbler said. "Whether we bring it down from Chicago or up by barge, we do what we need to in order to meet the demand when we are shorter on supply. We are able to rail it in or get it

in by barge depending on where the supply is."

Chumbler said the demand for sorghum over the years has stayed pretty consistent, the only thing changing is the supply. Craig Byrd also sees a constant demand for sorghum in his role as a buyer for Peco Foods spanning across Mississippi and Alabama. Peco Foods sources sorghum and other grains in the area for use in support of live operations for broilers.

"We usually buy all the sorghum we can near us and are constantly looking for more as we buy near 20,000-30,000 bushels a year," Byrd said. "There is definitely a demand for sorghum here, and we would love to see more grown so we can work directly with producers and remain a producer-friendly operation."

Sorghum is a crop of choice for businesses in the Delta and Mid-South region who are seeking the grain's nutritional benefits and processing qualities. Sorghum is a truly versatile grain as evidenced in its use in industries from pet food to livestock feed and consumer food to ethanol. The Sorghum Checkoff is committed to pursuing new markets for sorghum producers and creating increased demand across the entire U.S., not just the traditional Sorghum Belt.

Producers are encouraged to seek out market opportunities in their region, whether in popular sorghum-growing areas or in lesser-known production areas, such as the Delta or Mid-South, as sorghum continues to be a smart choice with increasing demand.

"If you are a sorghum producer considering your market options, contact the Sorghum Checkoff to find out what opportunities are in your region," Crafton said. "Our job is to find market opportunities for all sorghum producers across the U.S., and we are here to answer any question you have."

If you have questions or want more information on market opportunities in the Delta and Mid-South regions, contact Brent Crafton at brentc@sorghumcheckoff.com. ✓

SORGHUM SHOWCASE: 2017 FOOD AND NUTRITION CONFERENCE AND EXPO

Sorghum Checkoff staff represented Sorghum Nature's Super Grain™ at the 2017 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo™ (FNCE) in Chicago, Illinois, in October. During the 100th anniversary of the show, sorghum was on display for more than 12,000 dietitians, nutritionists, policy makers, health-care providers, foodservice professionals and students to learn about the health benefits, versatility and production of the whole grain. This was the checkoff's most successful outreach in promotion efforts for sorghum within the consumer food market.

With an inviting atmosphere, attendees received the full sorghum experience at the Sorghum Checkoff tradeshow booth. Upon entering, guests sat at picnic tables decorated with sorghum floral arrangements and sorghum grain, flour and popped kernels, and they enjoyed numerous sorghum recipe samples, educational material and conversation with sorghum staff, dietitians and chefs.

InHarvest, a company who provides support to the foodservice industry through products and recipes, utilized sorghum in their grain medley with naked oats and wild rice, serving attendees quesadillas, Thai bowls, barbecue pilafs and smoothies made-to-order as they sat inside the sorghum booth.

"Nutrition has become front and center for all segments of the food industry, and attending this conference on behalf of sorghum is an opportunity to bring key players in this industry like Sodexo to

our booth and learn about sorghum," said Michael Holleman, InHarvest director of culinary development. "We are seeing not just individuals, but colleges and universities, business and industry, and healthcare all talking about nutritional content and creativity in meal portions, and sorghum is a great fit in these segments."

Triad to Wellness, a nutrition communications consulting company, also promoted sorghum at the booth. Registered Dietitians Kathy Siegel and Tracee Yablon Brenner shared sorghum's nutritional portfolio, demonstrating that it is not only a tasty grain but also a healthy one. Sorghum is considered an excellent source of fiber, phosphorous and vitamin B6 in addition to being considered a good source of protein, magnesium, niacin, iron, potassium and selenium. These nutritional qualities promote the health benefits of eating sorghum, such as help with digestive health regulation, immune system enhancement and improved blood circulation.

Registered Dietitian Sharon Palmer served up her original sorghum recipes to attendees and shared her experience and love for sorghum. Palmer conducted a cooking demonstration where she served a stir-fried Thai sorghum bowl, spicy avocado sorghum salad and a berry sorghum breakfast porridge. Along with receiving samples and educational information, attendees talked one-on-one with industry experts and learned more about why they utilize sorghum.



"A lot of people may not have tried sorghum before or realize that this is an alternative whole grain that they can recommend to clients," Palmer said. "It is really important that they are able to taste the grain, learn how to use it in different recipes, learn what its nutritional content is and talk to people who have worked with sorghum before."

The sorghum booth was constantly filled with attendees requesting samples and information on how to utilize sorghum in their cooking and how to share it with clients. FNCE was a highly successful trip for the Sorghum Checkoff as it provided addi-

MCUISTION JOINS SORGHUM CHECKOFF AS ANIMAL NUTRITION DIRECTOR

The Sorghum Checkoff recently named Kim McCuiston, Ph.D., as the organization's animal nutrition director. In this role, McCuiston will assist with efforts relating to animal nutrition, market development and end-user relations.



McCuiston has worked closely with the sorghum industry over the years, utilizing sorghum products in grazing, feedlot and dairy cattle diets. Her dissertation work focused on forage sorghum in cattle diets, which was incorporated into decision support tools for beef and forage producers in the Texas Panhandle. McCuiston also served as a member of the High Value Markets Committee in 2011-2017 and traveled to several international meetings on

tional information to numerous dietitians, nutritionists and other professionals in the foodservice industry who already have a small but growing awareness of sorghum's uses. This was a major opportunity for staff, chefs and registered dietitians to share sorghum's story with others in the consumer food industry and continue to build understanding of sorghum's benefits. The relationships cultivated at this event will move on to create connections and opportunity for sorghum in the consumer food industry, allowing producers another option to consider when marketing their sorghum. ✓

behalf of the U.S. Grains Council and Texas Grain Sorghum Producers.

"This is an exciting time to join the team at the Sorghum Checkoff," McCuiston said. "I hope my efforts will lead to greater end-user demand for sorghum by highlighting how well it can fit in animal diets, and I hope to target high-value animal feed markets, sharing the benefits sorghum can bring to their operations."

McCuiston comes to the Sorghum Checkoff from her position as the Interim Dean of the Honors College at Texas A&M University - Kingsville where she also served as a faculty member in the Department of Animal, Rangeland and Wildlife Sciences and the King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management. The Sorghum Checkoff is excited to welcome McCuiston to the team and believes she will be a valuable resource in promoting sorghum and educating the industry on sorghum's nutritional benefits for use in animal nutrition programs. ✓

SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

Nov. 23-24 - Office Closed for Thanksgiving
Lubbock, Texas

Nov. 28-30 - Amarillo Farm Show
Amarillo, Texas

Dec. 3-5 - Texas Grain Sorghum Board Meeting
Rio Grande Valley, Texas

Dec. 4 - Oklahoma Sorghum Association
and Commission Meeting
Stillwater, Oklahoma

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

CONTACT US



Jennifer Blackburn
External Affairs Director
(806) 687-8727
jennifer@sorghumcheckoff.com

SORGHUM CHECKOFF MISSION

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

The Sorghum PAC Difference

By Terry Swanson

With another farm bill debate underway, farmers must keep in mind the connection between good policy and political engagement. While discussing political contributions and active involvement in elections is not always a comfortable topic for some farmers, the fact is campaigns are expensive and time-consuming, and anti-agriculture groups are growing more influential by the day. Our elected representatives want to remain in a position where they can help us, but measures to get reelected can necessitate spending less time where they would like to be, helping farmers fend off attacks. The more we can do to help alleviate these situations, the more effective U.S. farm programs will be.

National Sorghum Producers has spent more than 60 years cultivating relationships in Washington, D.C. The Sorghum PAC started in 2010 to further these relationships and support candidates and promote federal legislation positively affecting sorghum farmers. Contributions have steadily grown from \$9,175 during the 2009-2010 election cycle to \$120,456 during the 2015-2016 election cycle. While this growth is very positive, the Sorghum PAC must continue growing for two reasons.

As mentioned, political campaigns are expensive and consume an increasing amount of elected representatives' time. An average campaign for a Member of the House of Representatives costs \$1.7 million as significant television and other media presence is no longer optional for candidates. The lower chamber is scheduled to be in session for 146 days in 2017, so the 115th Congress will likely see approximately 280 days of legislative activity in the House of Representatives. Accord-

ingly, the average Member must raise just under \$6,100 each day the chamber is in session. In the Senate, the average campaign costs \$10 million, so contributions to Senators must total almost \$30,000 each day the chamber is in session.

Unbelievable as this might sound, some representatives actually spend 2-4 hours per day combing through donor lists and personally soliciting contributions via phone. The Republican and Democratic National Committees have gone as far as setting up call centers in party offices to facilitate these calls when the House of Representatives is in session.

Helping alleviate this fundraising burden is an important role for committees like the Sorghum PAC, and the support shown by our contributions gives sorghum farmers a direct relationship with these representatives. It is evident now more than ever that if

farmer groups do not cultivate these relationships, other groups assuredly will.

The second reason the Sorghum PAC must continue growing is anti-agriculture forces are increasingly defining agriculture in America not on farmers' terms but on their own, often politically-driven terms. Traditional farm trade associations have spent decades fighting for traditional farm policies often worth \$40 per acre. While farm programs are still the most important aspect of any commodity's policy strategy, American agriculture must think even bigger—take pesticide approvals for example and the challenges we have recently had getting those through. The Sorghum PAC must build on the successes of the last three election cycles. With farm bill discussions underway and attacks coming at an increasingly rapid pace, the elected representatives telling the sorghum story need support now more than ever.

▶ TERRY SWANSON IS a sorghum farmer from southeast Colorado near the town of Walsh. He has lived there his entire life and currently raises 300 head of cattle on 10,000 acres of ranchland and farms grain sorghum, wheat and corn on close to 7,500 acres. He is a past chairman of the National Sorghum Producers board and currently serves on the Sorghum PAC board.



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Be in Anaheim for the 2018 Commodity Classic—America's largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show.



Established in 1996, Commodity Classic is America's largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show, produced by the National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Sorghum Producers and Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

Sign up for email updates at: CommodityClassic.com





Sorghum Shortcuts

National Sorghum Producers and BASF Scholarship DEADLINE SOON

The National Sorghum Producers and BASF have partnered for a second year to create a joint scholarship program for two students seeking an undergraduate or graduate degree in an agriculturally related curriculum. Students must be a child or grandchild of a NSP member, and undergraduates must be entering at least their second year of study by the 2018-2019 academic year.

The scholarship opened to students for application August 1, 2017, for the 2018-2019 academic year. The scholarship will include an award for tuition as well as cover the recipients' cost to attend the 2018 Commodity Classic in Anaheim, California.

Interested students can apply at SorghumGrowers.com/sorghum-foundation by **Dec. 1, 2017**. For questions or to submit materials, contact Debra Lloyd at debral@sorghumgrowers.com or 800-658-9808.



The 2016 winners for the NSP and BASF joint scholarship were Abigail Arthaud of Oklahoma State University and Cody Nedbalek of Texas A&M University.

The 2016 winners for the NSP and BASF joint scholarship were Abigail Arthaud of Oklahoma State University and Cody Nedbalek of Texas A&M University.

Don't Forget! Yield Contest Forms Required by Dec. 1

Did you enter the National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest? Don't forget all forms must be received in the office no later than **Dec. 1, 2017**.

The NSP Yield Contest provides sorghum farmers with the opportunity to showcase your sorghum crop, competing with farmers across the Sorghum Belt. This contest allows our industry to recognize some of the best growers in the U.S. and helps farmers to grow and learn from one another.

NSP Yield Contest winners are recognized each year at an awards banquet in conjunction with Commodity Classic, to be held next year in Anaheim, California. They are also recognized in the spring edition of *Sorghum*

Grower magazine, NSP's weekly e-newsletter Sorghum Notes and on the NSP website.

We Need You!

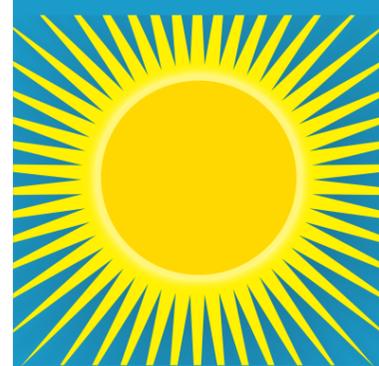
Do you grow sorghum for food uses? Whether it is food-grade sorghum, waxy, high antioxidant, organic or best varieties for popped sorghum, we want to get to know you. Connecting farmers with consumers and end-users who are seeking sorghum is crucial to our success as an industry. With growing interests from companies such as Walmart, PepsiCo, Nestle and other business-to-business entities, we want to connect our farmer growers to game-changing opportunities.

We are also taking a proactive approach to telling the sorghum story, showcasing good stewardship practices and successes that ensure a sustainable future with this critical food a fuel crop. Building profiles of our hard working growers, their families and farms is important to this story. If you are interested in being a part of this or want to know more, email faiths@sorghumcheckoff.com.

▼ KANSAS FARMER Jeff Zortman on display at a Taste Sorghum event in New York, New York, where dietitians, chefs and food bloggers sampled sorghum.



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70% Less Sugar
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We call ONYX "Sun-Sorghum" because sunshine makes this special antioxidant stronger as it grows in the hot sun. The darker ONYX gets, the healthier it becomes. The darker ONYX sun sorghum gets, the more antioxidants, the more fiber and the more sugar control. Grain Berry grows ONYX in West Texas summers where the sun is powerful and strong.

More Powerful Antioxidants!
More Plant-Based Fiber!
Slows Sugar Absorption!



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