



NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

SORGHUM *Grower*

Spring 2013

Award Winning Yields

Yield contest winners shine in challenging year

One-on-One with Chromatin
CEO Daphne Preuss

Company Uses Sorghum to
Produce Fiberboard

From the NSP Chairman:
Sustainability & Relevance

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FEATURES

Award Winning Yields 10

Yield contest winners shine in challenging year

One-on-One with Chromatin's CEO 16

Daphne Preuss and company focus on sorghum

DEPARTMENTS

Chairman's Desk: Sustainability and Relevance 5

NSP Update: Commodity Classic 2013 6

Sorghum Markets: Sorghum Used for Fiberboard 20

Yield Contest: 2013 Rules and Entry Form 21

Capitol Hill: Farm Bill Update, DC Fly-In Recap 23

Lab to Cab: Drought is Part of Our History 28

Sorghum Shortcuts: NSP Website Gets a Face Lift 30

on the cover



Despite another challenging crop year due to drought throughout much of the Sorghum Belt and the U.S., winners of the 2012 NSP Yield and Management Contest prove once again just how tough grain sorghum can be.

Find out how the national winners earned their yields on p. 10. For more information on the NSP Yield and Management Contest, visit www.SorghumGrowers.com

Photo by Lindsay Kennecdy

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Sustainability and Relevance

By Terry Swanson, NSP Chairman, Walsh, Colorado

All of us have a morning routine. Mine consists of coffee, e-mail and checking the weather. There was a reminder in my e-mail inbox the morning of March 19 that it was National Ag Day. That email made me wonder if many farmers (who comprise less than 1.5 percent of the U.S. population) even know such a day exists. Or, for that matter, do many consumers of our ag products know if the day exists?

Then, as my rambling mind has a tendency to do, I was drawn back to our recent experience at the 2013 Commodity Classic earlier this year. The underlying tone of this year's Classic, which features the commodity groups of sorghum, wheat, soybeans and corn, was are we sustainable as commodities, do we as individuals and organizations have relevance, and what are we doing for our constituents? These are big questions that deserve consideration from those who represent most of the 1.5 percent.

Sustainability is a nebulous term for a lot of people, and it certainly means different things to different people and their interest groups. I have struggled with the definition and have reached out to others for clarification. I was fortunate to have a visitor to the NSP booth during Classic who was an expert on sustainability and represented the Sustainability Consortium. I asked what their definition of sustainability was, expecting final enlightenment, only to discover the short answer was identical to mine—*profitability over a lengthy continuum*. Well, at least now I had some experts to back me up on this definition. The next day, in front of a rather large audience at the Classic General Session, I was asked what sustainability means to me and the sorghum industry. I modified my answer to include profitability of the industry over many generations of producers and consumers. And, I can go with that definition, but it gets complicated real quick when you get to the *why* and *how*.

Asking a person "Are you relevant?" can be somewhat threatening, or if asked, intimidating. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has asked that question to many farm groups and commodity group representatives, and I have to say, I found the question very humbling. But I have to respond, "Of course we are relevant!"

As part of the body of God's creation, we all have purpose and merit. Now, not all of the consuming American public agrees on the degree of purpose we have in agriculture, and there in lies the sticky question, "Are you, as a farmer,

politically relevant?" Again, I reply, "Of course!"

The world just needs to be reminded we are relevant, and it is up to us to do the reminding. That is the charge given to your national commodity organizations, of which National Sorghum Producers is privileged to represent you.

This leads us into the third charge we were given as an organization—What have you done for me lately? This is a legitimate question I cannot in this short column begin to do justice to, so I say "trust me."

No, that won't work either.

In my address during the Sorghum General Session at Commodity Classic, there were three slides emphasizing a portion of NSP's efforts over the last year. First, EPA approved a grain sorghum pathway under the Renewable Fuels Standard in Dec. 2012. In laymen's terms, this action clears the way for domestic production of advanced biofuels using grain sorghum as envisioned in the 2007 Energy Bill. In Terry Swanson terms, this equates to a huge marketing opportunity for grain sorghum produced on my farm and delivered to regional ethanol facilities. This contributes to the sustainability of my farm by encouraging buyers of grain sorghum to offer a higher basis for my sorghum, thus a more profitable situation. The 34-month long effort put forth by NSP staff and directors exhibits their good judgment, tenacity and skill in dealing with multiple agencies within the federal government.

Crop insurance price elections were also on that list of accomplishments. By bringing the price election of grain sorghum in line to that of corn, those who grew sorghum and sustained losses in 2012 (and who did not?) were able to pocket an additional \$0.32 per bushel difference between the old calculation and the current method. That equaled \$17.1 million for U.S. producers during the 2012 crop loss period. That is money in the pocket of the producer, and that is quantifiable.

continued on p. 29



Sorghum Shines at 18th Annual Commodity Classic

By Lindsay Kennedy and Jennifer Blackburn

Sorghum growers from across the nation attended another record setting Commodity Classic Feb. 27-March 2 in Kissimmee, Fla.

An attendance of 6,214, with 3,324 of those being sorghum, wheat, soybean and corn farmers, convened for the 18th annual Classic to learn more about the issues concerning U.S. commodity producers.

National Sorghum Producers joined the National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and the American Soybean Association as hosts of the annual Classic.

Sorghum General Session

Producers, end-users and industry partners heard from a variety of

speakers during the annual Sorghum General Session at Commodity Classic.

This year's speaker line-up further exemplified the level of excitement felt throughout the sorghum industry.

Advanced biofuels status brings opportunity to sorghum

Western Plains Energy CEO Steve McNinch discussed why grain sorghum is the key feedstock for his ethanol plant in Oakley, Kan.

Western Plains Energy is in the process of adding biodigesters to their ethanol production facility, which, once completed, will qualify them to be the first U.S. ethanol plant to produce advanced biofuels using grain sorghum.

"Attaining advanced biofuels status was a game changer for sorghum," McNinch told the audience at the Sorghum General Session. "NSP worked hard to help make the grain sorghum pathway possible, and I thank them."

McNinch said Western Plains Energy currently produces 50 million gallons of ethanol and will soon become the largest producer of advanced biofuels in the United States, providing a great market opportunity for farmers.

"We will pay what we need to pay to get grain sorghum in the plant," McNinch said.

Chromatin focused on sorghum

Chromatin Inc. CEO Daphne Preuss also took the stage during the Sorghum General Session and explained why her company is 100 percent focused on all three types of sorghum - grain, sweet and biomass.

"We will need 20 million new acres in the world by 2020 to meet demand for biomass feedstocks and 70 million by 2030," Preuss said. "That feedstock demand ultimately led us to sorghum, because crops that conserve water will play a critical role in meeting that demand."

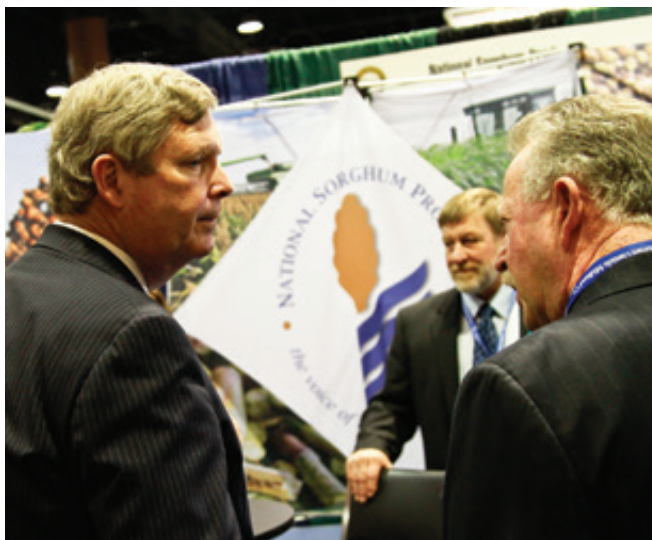
"Sorghum is the one crop that can make starch, sugar and cellulose. When water is an issue, it's hard to beat sorghum," she said. *Read more about Preuss on p. 16.*

Sorghum marketing panel

The Sorghum Checkoff sponsored a sorghum marketing panel, which



NSP Chairman Terry Swanson took center stage again this year during the Commodity Classic General Session, joining the grower leadership from corn, wheat and soybeans before an audience of nearly 2,000. Swanson discussed how sorghum plays a pivotal role as a sustainable, water-efficient crop. (Photo by Jennifer Blackburn)



(Left) Western Plains Energy CEO Steve McNinch spoke at the Sorghum General Session about how his Kansas-based ethanol plant is gearing up to produce advanced biofuel from grain sorghum. (Center) Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack visited the NSP booth at the Commodity Classic trade show to discuss issues pertaining to sorghum with members of the NSP board of directors. (Right) Secretary Vilsack delivered the keynote address during the Commodity Classic General Session.

focused on the increasing sorghum acres in North Carolina and the Mid-Atlantic region, which are largely due to marketing opportunities created by swine feeder Murphy-Brown.

The panel featured representatives from different sectors of the supply chain, including North Carolina grower Charles Rose, marketing consultant Mike Karst from Entira, and Terry Coffey, chief science and technology officer for Murphy-Brown.

For more on the sorghum marketing panel, see the Sorghum Checkoff newsletter on pgs. 24-27.

Classic General Session

NSP Chairman Terry Swanson took the stage during the Classic General Session, along with the grower leadership of the national corn, wheat and soybeans associations. Swanson addressed the meaning of sustainability and the advantages to growing sorghum.

The keynote address was given by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack who discussed how sequestration was going to affect the USDA and ultimately all who are involved in agriculture. Vilsack said although \$700 million to \$1 billion will be cut from the USDA's 2013 fiscal year budget, the cuts will be done as equitably as possible.

Trade show

NSP was one of 1,010 exhibitors at the Commodity Classic trade show and experienced renewed farmer interest in growing sorghum from many areas

outside of the Sorghum Belt. Secretary Vilsack even stopped by the NSP booth during the trade show and met with members of the NSP board of directors.

Head to San Antonio in 2014

Join us next year in San Antonio, Texas, for the 19th annual Commodity Classic, Feb. 27-March 1, 2014. The event will have all the great programs associated with Classic, including NSP's Sorghum General Session, the NSP Yield and Management Contest Awards Dinner, and more! Visit www.CommodityClassic.com for details and updates. 📌



**Watch more from NSP
at Commodity Classic!**

www.SorghumGrowers.com



Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Leadership and Education Opportunities for the Sorghum Farmer

Program Preps Next Generation of Kansas Sorghum Industry Leaders

Leadership Sorghum, a program sponsored by the Sorghum Checkoff, has grown into a very beneficial program, educating producers to be leaders to carry our industry forward in the future.

Class I, which has seven members from across the state of Kansas, participated in its third session in Washington, D.C., Feb. 11-14, and was given the opportunity to learn about government's roles in sorghum, checkoffs and interest organizations. The Leadership Sorghum program is a great stepping stone for producers interested in represent-

ing the sorghum industry with state- and national-level organizations.




Leadership Sorghum Class I has seven of its 15 members from Kansas. Visit SorghumCheckoff.com/leadership to learn more.

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program board of directors will have four vacant positions available in Dec. 2013 with two of those positions available to Kansas-based sorghum growers. The remaining vacant seats will be available to one at-large position (non-state specific) and one Texas-based sorghum grower seat.

As Kansas organizations certified to nominate producers to serve on the board, the Kansas Grain


Sorghum Commission, Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association and Kansas Farm Bureau are collectively searching for sorghum producers interested in appointment to the United Sorghum Checkoff Program board of directors. The term for these seats will expire at the board's winter meeting in Dec. 2016.

If you are a Kansas sorghum grower interested in more information about being nominated to the United Sorghum Checkoff Program board of directors, please contact KGSC at jill@ksgrainsorghum.org or visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com. Nominations must be submitted by May 1, 2013. This will allow time for the certified producer organization to review and select names submitted before the USDA deadline. If you are interested in being part of the second Leadership Sorghum class, please visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com/leadership for more information. 

Sorghum Education Resources Available

Sorghum education has been a hot topic here in the beginning of 2013. The Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission sponsored six sorghum schools in Kansas in February. K-State Research and Extension provides resources covering much of the material presented during the Kansas sorghum schools. A large portion of this information has come from the KSGC in sorghum research.

Visit <http://www.agronomy.ksu.edu/extension> and click "2013 Sorghum Schools" in the right-hand column for more information and resources from the schools.

Sorghum U, a farmer-focused educational program sponsored by the Sorghum Checkoff, also kicked off this year with a session in Dodge City in January. The materials and resources from the session can be found at SorghumU.com. 

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2012 National Sorghum Producers **YIELD & MANAGEMENT CONTEST WINNERS**

Each year at Commodity Classic, NSP recognizes the winners of its annual sorghum yield and management contest, highlighting the exceptional production practices exhibited by sorghum growers from across the nation.



To learn more about the NSP Yield and Management Contest or for information on how you can enter the 2013 contest, visit www.SorghumGrowers.com. Contest rules and entry form can be found on p. 21.

IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER AWARD & REDUCED-TILL IRRIGATED WINNER



Tom Taylor

Kiowa County, Kansas | DEKLAB DKS53-67

Score: 213.33

Yield: 213.33

Previous Crop: Beans

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Seeds/Acre: 120,000

Plant Date: May 15

Harvest Date: Oct. 16

Irrigation: Spring, 13 in.

Rainfall: 14 in.

Insecticide: 1/2 pt
Lorsban broadcast

Herbicides: Pre-emerge:
1.5 qt Lumax; Post-emerge:
2/3 pt Dual, 14 oz Huskie®,
1 lb Atrazine

Fertilizer: 175 lbs/a liquid
N, 60 lbs/a dry potash, 30
lbs/a liquid phosphorous

Tom Taylor was not only the 2012 Irrigated Bin Buster winner, but he also took home honors as the national Reduced-Till Irrigated award winner for his 2012 sorghum crop. Tom attributes his success to great weed control with Huskie® combined with atrazine. After harvest, he capitalized on the great value of sorghum stalks by bailing stalks for hay.

"If you want high yields, you've got to have high plant populations," Tom says. He recommends planting as high as 140,000 seeds/acre if adequate irrigation is available. He plans to plant more sorghum acres in 2013 instead of soybeans due to continued dry conditions in southwestern Kansas. Tom markets his crop to both Conestoga Energy and ADM Milling in Kansas City.

NON-IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER AWARD



Steve Feight

Cloud County, Kansas | Pioneer 84P80

Score: 62.17

Yield: 160.37

Previous Crop: Wheat

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Seeds/Acre: 56,000

Plant Date: June 5

Harvest Date: Nov. 12

Rainfall: 20 in.

Insecticide: Cruiser
seed treatment

Herbicides: 3 qt. Lexar
pre-emerge

Fertilizer: 100 lbs/a
liquid N

Steve Feight of Clyde, Kan., proved you can get bin-busting sorghum yields on dryland acres — even in a challenging year. Feight's no-till, non-irrigated grain sorghum crop in northeastern Kansas earned top honors in the 2012 NSP Yield and Management Contest as the Non-Irrigated Bin Buster Award winner.

CONVENTIONAL IRRIGATED & IRRIGATED FOOD-GRADE NATIONAL WINNER



Ki Gamble

Kiowa County, Kansas | Pioneer 84G62

Score: 210.85

Plant Date: May 21

Insecticide: 4 oz. Mustang
Max broadcast

Yield: 210.85

Harvest Date: Oct. 25

Previous Crop: Corn

Irrigation: Spring, 12 in.

Fertilizer: 100 lbs/ac NH_3 ,
50 lbs/ac liquid N, 50 lbs/ac
liquid phosphorous

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Rainfall: 8 in.

Seeds/Acre: 80,000

Herbicides: Pre-emerge:

1 pt. Milo Pro, 1.33 pts Dual II

No stranger to success in the NSP Yield and Management Contest, Ki describes his yields in 2012 as comparable to previous years when he has been a winner, despite dry conditions in his area. In fact, he believes heat might actually have helped his yields last year. Ki, who farms near Greensburg, Kan., was the recipient of two national yield awards in 2012 with 210.85 bu/ac in the Conventional-Till Irrigated category and 196.48 bu/ac* using NuSeed NUS 345 seed in the Irrigated National Food-Grade category. Ki decided to grow food-grade sorghum for the first time in his operation because of good premiums and the opportunity to sell directly to the end-user. He says his success this past season comes from an intensively managed crop. *To see Ki's production details for his food-grade entry, visit www.SorghumGrowers.com.

NON-IRRIGATED FOOD-GRADE NATIONAL WINNER



James Vorderstrasse

Thayer County, Nebraska | Fontanelle W1000

Score: 59.64

Plant Date: May 21

Fertilizer: 120 lbs/a
liquid N

Yield: 131.94

Harvest Date: Nov. 6

Previous Crop: Beans

Rainfall: 18 in.

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Herbicides: 18 oz/ Verdict preplant, 24 oz Roundup
Ultramax burndown, 12 oz Banvel burndown

Seeds/Acre: 59,758

Hebron, Neb., farmer James Vorderstrasse has been growing food-grade sorghum since 1999. Although 2012 was a dry production year on his southeastern Nebraska farm, James attributes his yield success to a couple of timely rains and production practices like no-till and side-dressed nitrogen applications.

James has a dryland operation and calls sorghum his "most important crop" because of its drought tolerance.

NO-TILL NON-IRRIGATED NATIONAL WINNER



Bob Shearer

Lancaster County, Penn. | Pioneer 84G62

Score: 68.55	Plant Date: N/A	Fertilizer: 60 lbs/a liquid N, 700 gal/a hog manure
Yield: 140.85	Harvest Date: Nov. 6	
Previous Crop: Alfalfa	Rainfall: 42 in.	
Row Spacing: 15 in.	Herbicides: 1.8 qt. Bicep burndown, 2 qts. Credit Extra preplant	
Seeds/Acre: N/A		

Not many people think of Pennsylvania when they think of sorghum country, but the Shearer family proved grain sorghum can be a successful option in the northeast. Bob has been growing sorghum for the last 15 years and primarily markets his crop to a local company, F.M. Brown's Sons Inc., who uses the crop to make bird seed.

"We have some areas that I grow sorghum in industrial parks where I can't grow tall crops, so we use sorghum as a rotation in those situations, and it has been a good choice," Bob said. "Now that I've been using yield mapping, I see that I can do better raising sorghum verses corn with lower input costs."

MULCH-TILL NON-IRRIGATED NATIONAL WINNER



Mike Shearer

Lancaster County, Penn. | Pioneer 84G62

Score: 59.64	Plant Date: N/A	Fertilizer: 100 lbs/a liquid N, 1 t/a manure, 50 lbs/a dry phosphorous
Yield: 131.94	Harvest Date: Nov. 12	
Previous Crop: Corn	Rainfall: 44 in.	
Row Spacing: 15 in.	Herbicides: 1.8 qt. Bicep burndown, 2 qts. Credit Extra burndown	
Seeds/Acre: N/A		

Mike Shearer grew grain sorghum for the first time in 2012 with his dad, Bob Shearer, who also took home national honors for his no-till, non-irrigated grain sorghum yields.

Mike, who farms in Marietta, Penn., says he considers grain sorghum one of their cash crops because of the high value local market FM Brown's Sons provides them.

"We had some great weather in Pennsylvania last year, and timely rainfalls really helped us get good yields."

DOUBLE CROP IRRIGATED NATIONAL WINNER



Reznik & Sons Inc

Moore County, Texas | Triumph 424

Score: 147.2

Yield: 147.2

Previous Crop: Wheat

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Seeds/Acre: 75,000

Plant Date: June 26

Harvest Date: Oct. 23

Irrigation: Sprinkle,
15.6 in.

Rainfall: 2.85 in.

Herbicides: Pre-emerge:
1.5 lbs/a Atrazine, 16.5
oz/a Me-Too-Lachlor; Post-
plant: 1.16 lbs/a Atrazine
Fertilizer: 116 lbs/a liquid
nitrogen

Robert Reznick became the first winner of the new Double Crop Irrigated category with his yield of 147.2 bushels per acre in 2012. Robert and his family have grown grain sorghum on their Texas Panhandle farm in Dumas since 1956. The Rezniks attribute their yield success in 2012—another drought laden crop season on the High Plains—to their no-till production system because of the water it saves in the ground. Keeping residue in the soil, using manure and maintaining perfect plant chemistry was key to a successful crop year, Robert says. The Rezniks grow sorghum seed for Monsanto, but they also market their grain through their local coop.

DOUBLE CROP NON-IRRIGATED NATIONAL WINNER



Tim King

Lawrence County, Tenn. | Pioneer 83P17

Score: 58.70

Yield: 131

Previous Crop: Rye

Row Spacing: 30 in.

Seeds/Acre: 75,000

Plant Date: June 8

Harvest Date: Nov. 1

Rainfall: 10 in.

Herbicides: Pre-emerge: 1
qt. Roundup; Post-emerge:
1.5 qt Me-Too-Lachlor, 1.5
qt Atrazine

Fertilizer: 120 lbs/a dry N

Tim King may be the first winner of the new Double Crop Non-Irrigated Category, but he certainly isn't new to the crop. Tim has grown sorghum on his Lawrenceburg, Tenn., farm for 25 years. He lives in an area with diverse soil types, and sorghum plays an important role in his rotation with cereal rye. Tim says his ability to conserve water using no-till planting practices, along with a few timely rains in mid-July aided in his yield success in 2012. He utilizes on-farm storage when marketing his grain and sells his crop mainly to Faith Way Feeds in northern Alabama.

CONVENTIONAL-TILL NON-IRRIGATED NATIONAL WINNER



Gage Porter

Decatur County, Iowa | Pioneer 84G62

Score: 71.99

Yield: 144.29

Previous Crop: Corn

Row Spacing: 15 in.

Seeds/Acre: 130,000

Plant Date: May 25

Harvest Date: Nov. 13

Rainfall: 24 in.

Herbicides: 1 qt. Bicep pre-plant

Fertilizer: 160 lbs/a dry N,
60 lbs/a dry potash 40 lbs/a
dry phosphorous

Gage Porter's fourth year of growing sorghum proved to be a successful one. In fact, he started growing the crop when he was 14 because he specifically wanted to enter the NSP Yield and Management Contest. Sorghum did so well for Gage in 2012, outperforming corn on his land, he said he plans to plant 150 acres in 2013. Some of the production practices he implemented include varying seed population (best at 120,000 seeds/acre, which he plans to increase this year); maintaining soil quality by adding nitrogen, potash, phosphorus and anhydrous; and planting in fields located next to a creek. Though he may be young now, Gage believes his youth will benefit him in the long run. "The earlier you start, the more time you have to learn and grow," he says. 🌱

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ONE-ON-ONE WITH CHROMATIN INC'S DAPHNE PREUSS

By Lindsay Kennedy

Chromatin Inc. has made their message loud and clear — they are 100 percent committed to one crop: *sorghum*.

The company, headquartered in Chicago with operations in Lubbock, Texas, and Champaign, Ill., is developing and customizing new seed products for a variety of purposes by combining sorghum varieties with diverse traits.

When Chromatin acquired Sorghum Partners Inc. (SPI) and Milo Genetics LP in 2010, they were able to gain access to SPI's well-established, multi-national network of sorghum growers and distributors as well as existing sorghum seed production facilities. The acquisition helped pave the way for Chromatin's efforts to commercialize a portfolio of proprietary sorghum lines as bioenergy feedstocks.

Today, the company continues its focus on the crop's environmental sustainability and water savings potential, which is evident by their tag line — *Sorghum: Customized by Chromatin, Renewable by Nature*.

During NSP's Sorghum General Session at the 2013 Commodity Classic in Kissimmee, Fla., Chromatin Inc. CEO Daphne Preuss presented on her company's history, their commitment to sorghum, and how they plan to improve sorghum genetics to create a superior and environmentally sustainable biofuel feedstock.

After the Sorghum General Session, *Sorghum Grower* sat down with Preuss for an exclusive one-on-one to learn more about Chromatin's passion and confidence in sorghum's role as a biofuel feedstock.



Daphne Preuss and her team at Chromatin are all in when it comes to focusing on sorghum and its sustainability potential.

Chromatin is really focused on sorghum. This is our only crop, and we're bringing all of the expertise you typically see in a crop like corn or soybeans into sorghum.

—Daphne Preuss, Chromatin CEO

Why did Chromatin choose sorghum?

We believe sorghum is a fantastic growth opportunity. It's a crop that can work in a number of different applications from traditional agriculture to renewable energy, and our company is helping to create those renewable markets. At the same time, we're supplying growers who use sorghum for feed or end-use purposes that are food-related.

What makes sorghum the smart choice when it comes to water efficiency?

Water is a key element when choosing sorghum. Worldwide, fresh water is a huge limitation to agriculture, and agriculture needs to grow over the coming years to meet the needs of the increasing population. Furthermore, we're using agriculture for new purposes, like renewable energy, so we have a big problem because there's not enough fresh water in the world to sustain all the growth we anticipate.

We must start shifting to crops that are more water-efficient, and that's an important trait sorghum has. Something else that makes (sorghum) a smart choice is that it's a very fast crop. You can often use it as a double-crop, and it takes very few months to go from planting to maturity, which makes it a nice choice for end-users who need a quick solution.

How do sorghum's starch, cellulose and sugar properties work together to give sorghum versatility in the market?

Sorghum is a very nice crop because it has three key components for a number of processes (sugar, cellulose and starch), and it's all in one genetic pool. For us as a research and breeding company developing new types of sorghum, what this allows us to do is pool our resources to get three times the benefit, which for us is great. I think for the end-users, they're looking for economical sources of sugar, cellulose and starch, and sorghum in its different forms really provides that.

What does Chromatin have planned for sorghum in the near future?

Chromatin is really focused on sorghum. This is our only crop, and we're bringing all of the expertise you typically see in a crop like corn or soybeans into sorghum. We're working on everything from strong scientific capabilities to marketing and business development, and by having a team of cherry-picked sorghum experts from all of the major corporations, we've got something really unique going on. We're excited about how we're constantly seeing new opportunities and tremendous growth potential. 🌾

To see more from Daphne Preuss, visit www.SorghumGrowers.com to watch her interview at *Commodity Classic*.

Chromatin, POET Reach Agreement to Use South Dakota-Grown Sorghum in Ethanol Production

In March 2013, Chromatin announced it had entered an agreement with POET, one of the world's largest ethanol producers, to use sorghum grown in South Dakota in the production of ethanol.

"Our agreement with (POET) is a significant step in our commitment to expand the use of grain sorghum in the production of energy-efficient biofuels," Preuss said in a company press release. "Ethanol producers are embracing the benefits of sorghum as a drop-in replacement for corn."

The Chromatin-POET agreement covers grain sorghum acres that will be grown in South Dakota to be used in POET's Chancellor plant, which produces 110 million gallons of ethanol annually.



The POET plant in Chancellor, S.D., is now contracting grain sorghum. (Photo courtesy of POET)



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Sorghum: Customized by Chromatin, Renewable by Nature™

CLIMATE CHANGE

Naturally Heat &
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RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Less Irrigation
Fewer Chemical
Inputs

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Herbicide &
Pesticide Use
40-80% < Corn

WATER USE

85% < Sugarcane
50% < Corn

LAND USE

High Yield on
Marginal Land

Food Quality
Brown Midrib
Drought Tolerant
Water Efficient
Heat Tolerant
Nutrient Efficient
High/Low Tannin
Photoperiod Sensitive



Chromatin

SORGHUM MARKETS

Sorghum Fiberboard – Built to Last

By Jennifer Blackburn

When you think of sorghum uses, feed and fuel in some form are generally the first end-products that come to mind. However, sorghum farmers in northwest Missouri are investing in an entirely new sorghum use – fiberboard.

ChloroFill, a San Diego-based company, has launched its first commercial-scale manufacturing plant in Nodaway County, Mo., to produce fiberboard made from sorghum stalks for use in interior design, furniture and construction markets.

Going green with sorghum

ChloroFill President and CEO Michael Hurst wanted to develop green building materials and said outsourcing early research and development in China led him to sorghum.

“I didn’t set out to work with sorghum initially,” Hurst said. “We tried many different crops, but I found sorghum to be extremely tough and to have a very high tinsel strength—it fit the green picture I was looking for, as well.”

Sorghum became even more attractive to Hurst when he knew it could be grown all over the world, particularly in arid regions, and it is a renewable agricultural source that reduces waste.

“As I dug into the possibilities with sorghum, the better my options became, whether it was grain, forage or sweet sorghum.”

Producer buy-in

ChloroFill also provides income for subsistence farmers. Hurst said the lead investors in the Missouri-based plant are a group of farmers, which helped ChloroFill secure the financing it needed to launch the plant.

“Farmer involvement thus far has been phenomenal,” Hurst said. “The first year’s crop was actually grown at [Northwest Missouri State University]. But we have close ties to the local farming community, and at this scale, we have a number of farmers that are ready, willing and able to grow the crop for us.”

Creating a market and jobs

Nodaway County Economic Development was instrumen-

tal in introducing ChloroFill to the community, Hurst said. The project was something the county had been looking to invest in for seven years to leverage ag expertise to create a high-value product while creating jobs in the community.

This project now also targets 1,000 sorghum acres in an area where Nodaway County only planted approximately nine acres of grain and forage sorghum last year.

“ChloroFill will pay a very fair price for the sorghum being grown for us,” Hurst said, giving farmers in the area a new added-value market opportunity for their sorghum crop.

Looking ahead

ChloroFill has strategically partnered with private industry to make determinations on the type of sorghum that will advance the quality of ChloroFill’s products and ensure it has a platform for future growth. Hurst said the company began testing 10 different hybrids prior to launch, and the company chose a forage hybrid to begin fiberboard production.

Sorghum’s performance and aesthetics are ChloroFill’s main objective, and Hurst said the company’s business model is constantly evolving.

“I originally sought to replace particle board in furniture due to the formaldehyde release,” Hurst said. “Then, I had to address another issue, which was what to do with the sorghum stalks that would add value to the product.”

Hurst said the sorghum stalks looked like bamboo and were aesthetically pleasing, which was when he knew his business model no longer included a commodity product, but a high, value-added product.

“I found I could create a superior product once I saw how beautiful sorghum was,” Hurst said. “I no longer wanted to create something that needed to be covered up.”

Hurst said his product has received sizeable positive feedback, and he has been invited to speak at some of the largest architectural firms in the nation, creating a stir among the limited audience who has seen the product.

He anticipates ChloroFill’s manufacturing plant to begin producing materials during the summer of 2013. 📍

Please read contest rules carefully before completing this entry form.
Information given on this entry form must match information given on all contest forms.

- Entry forms must be filled out completely and **postmarked at least 30 days before harvest for "Regular Entry" or at least 10 days before harvest for "Express Entry"** of the contest field.
- **Send "Regular Entry" forms and fees** to *National Sorghum Producers, 4201 N Interstate 27, Lubbock, TX 79403.*
- **Send "Express Entry" form via Overnight Carrier** to *National Sorghum Producers, 4201 N Interstate 27, Lubbock, TX 79403.* "Express Entry" sent via fax or regular U.S. mail **will not be accepted.**
- A complete set of contest rules, a management information form, a harvest report form and a copy of your entry form will be mailed to you as soon as we receive your entry.

1. Entry Fees: "Regular Entry" option allows for harvest 30 or more days after entry.
A nonrefundable entry fee of \$65 must accompany each Regular Entry. Entry fee enclosed: \$_____.
"Express Entry" option allows for harvest 10 or more days after entry.
A nonrefundable entry fee of \$95 must accompany each "Express Entry." Entry fee enclosed: \$_____.
2. Membership dues: *Dues of \$60 for a 1-year membership or \$150 for a 3-year membership must be enclosed if you are not a paid NSP member.* Dues enclosed: \$_____.
If you are an E-Member, please give us the name and location of your elevator:

3. Contestant: *Print or type the name exactly as you wish it to appear on any awards, news releases, etc. (30 character limit)*

[illegible]

4. Contact person: _____ Phone _____ E-Mail address: _____
Address _____ City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

5. Entry number: *If you have more than 1 entry, use a separate entry form for each and number them 1, 2, 3 etc.*

6. Division: o Conventional-till Irrigated o Conventional-till Non-irrigated o No-till Non-Irrigated o Mulch-till Non-Irrigated
 o Reduced-till Irrigated o Double Crop Irrigated (*New Category*) o Double Non-Irrigated (*New Category*)

8. Seed Brand: _____ Variety: _____

Are you entering this variety as a food grade entry? _____

9. For Double Crop (Irrigated or Non-Irrigated) ONLY. Irrigation was not applied six months prior to planting of this sorghum entry? (Y/N) _____

Previous crop harvested: _____ Date of previous crop harvested: _____ Yield of previous crop harvested: _____

10. Location of Contest Field: State _____ County _____ FSA Farm Number _____

11. Total Acres in Contest Field: _____

12. I have attached an aerial map with contest field clearly marked. (required)

13. I have attached FSA Form 578 that proves I am the owner/operator of this farm. (required)

14. Agribusiness Sponsor: *If you want your agribusiness dealer to receive information on your entry, fill in his/her name and address below.*

Name	Company	Phone
------	---------	-------

Address _____ City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

Email _____

15. I hereby certify the above information given on this entry form to be accurate to the best of my knowledge and believe and agree that all contest information provided by me pursuant to this grain sorghum yield and management contest shall be the property of the National Sorghum Producers and may be used and distributed at the sole discretion of National Sorghum Producers.

Signature of Contestant _____ Date Signed _____

2013 Contest Rules

Please read contest rules carefully before completing the entry form. Changes are in bold.

Contest Deadlines

Regular Entries must be postmarked at least 30 days prior to harvest of the contest acreage. Express Entries must be sent via **overnight delivery** at least 10 days prior to harvest of the contest acreage.

Harvest Rules, a Harvest Report Form and a Management Information Form will be mailed to the contestant as soon as the entry is received. The forms must be completed and **in the NSP office no later than Dec. 2, 2013**. There will be no extension of deadlines.

Contestant Qualifications

Contestant must be a paid member of NSP at the time of entry and judging. More than one member of a family may enter, but each contestant must have a separate membership.

Contestant must be a certified FSA owner/operator of the entry plot. A copy of FSA Form 578, including farm summary, must be submitted with the contest entry form.

Contestants can enter more than once, but each entry must be on a separate entry form.

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.

NSP directors, employees and spouses are prohibited from entering the contest.

Contest Divisions

Conventional-Till Irrigated

Conventional-Till Non-Irrigated

Reduced-Till Irrigated

No-Till Non-Irrigated

Mulch-Till Non-Irrigated

Double Crop Irrigated

Double Crop Non-Irrigated

Conventional: Any management or cultural practice excluding no-till, ridge-till or mulch-till.

No-Till: No-till means the soil is left undisturbed from the harvest of the previous crop to the harvest of the next crop with the exception of the injection of nutrients with knives or coulters, not sweeps.

Reduced-Till: No-Till as defined above **OR** Ridge-Till **OR** Strip Till, each as defined here. **Ridge-Till:** The soil is left undisturbed from harvest to planting except for nutrient injection. Planting is completed in a seedbed prepared on ridges with sweeps, disk openers, coulters, or row cleaners. Residue is left on the surface between ridges. Weed control is accomplished with herbicides and/or cultivation. **Strip Till:** The soil is left undisturbed from harvest to planting except for tillage of a strip of soil no more than 10 inches wide (with or without nutrient injection). Planting is completed in the prepared strip. Residue is left on the surface between the strips. Weed control is accomplished with herbicides and/or cultivation.

Mulch-Till: This may include Mulch-till **OR** Strip Till, each as defined here. **Mulch-till:** The soil may be disturbed one time prior to planting and will have a minimum of 30% residue remaining. Tillage tools such as chisels,

field cultivators, disks, sweeps or blades are used. Weed control is accomplished with herbicides and/or one cultivation. **Strip Till:** The soil is left undisturbed from harvest to planting except for tillage of a strip of soil no more than 10 inches wide (with or without nutrient injection). Planting is completed in the prepared strip. Residue is left on the surface between the strips. Weed control is accomplished with herbicides and/or cultivation.

Double Crop: To plant sorghum behind a previously harvested crop in the same crop year.

Irrigated: Any field receiving any supplemental water in the past six months or during the current growing season.

Non-irrigated: Any field that has not received any supplemental water since the last harvest or during the current growing season.

Field Qualifications

A complete field of 5 or more continuous acres, planted in the sorghum seed variety named on the entry form, will be designated as the contest field. The contest field must be designated on an aerial map. The aerial map must be included with the entry and the harvest report. Each plot's harvest report will be limited to a single harvest per year. High-tannin sorghum varieties will not be accepted.

Supervisor Qualifications

A qualified supervisor must be present during the entire harvest and weighing. The supervisor must complete and sign the Harvest Report Form. The supervisor must specify the tillage method. Supervisors **MUST** be from the following list:

- * Vocational Agricultural Instructor
- * County or Regional Extension Director or Assistant Director
- * Senior NRCS staff person
- * FSA Office Manager, Field Supervisor or Compliance Technician

Supervisors from the following list will **NOT** be accepted and the entry will be disqualified:

- * Private crop consultants
- * Elevator employees
- * Officials of commercial banks or other lending agencies
- * A company representative of any product used in the contest field
- * A relative of the contestant

Harvesting Rules

The supervisor must be present during the entire harvest of the contest plot and must make all field measurements and computations, oversee the weighing, **INCLUDING** LOADING AND UNLOADING, and moisture testing, verify the date of harvest, and report location of the contest field. The contestant must harvest and report at least five continuous acres from the same contest field that was designated on the entry form. The entire field may be harvested and reported.

A load's gross weight must be determined first, followed by empty or tare weight on the same date. Determination of a load's gross weight **must occur before** determination of tare weight. If time and date of weighing are not automatically stamped on weight

ticket(s), supervisors must note both time and date of both weighings on weight ticket(s).

Detailed rules for measuring, weighing, moisture testing and calculating the yields will be mailed to contestant on receipt of his/her entry.

Reporting Results

Harvest Reports, aerial map, weight tickets and management information are to be completed and sent to the NSP office postmarked no later than 15 days after the date of the final weight ticket on the specific contest plot. All harvest information must be in the NSP office by December 3. Harvest information arriving after close of business on December 3 will not be eligible for competition. NSP is not responsible for contest reports that are lost in the mail. Reports may be mailed by certified mail to ensure delivery.

Judging

Irrigated Division: The contestant's score is determined by yield only.

Non-Irrigated Division: The contestant's score will be the amount in bushels by which his yield exceeds the 5-year county average for that division as determined by USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. (If an entry is received from a county that does not have NASS yields, the average of the NASS yields of all states that are represented in the contest will be used.)

In the event of a tie, the contestant harvesting and reporting the largest acreage will be declared the winner. If a second tie-breaker is needed, the contestant with the longest time between the entry date and the harvest date will be named the winner.

Any entry is subject to further review. Any contestant committing fraud will be barred from the contest for three years.

Contest Winners

The contestant with the highest score in the county will be named the county winner.

First, second and third place state winners in each division will be determined by score. Scores below zero (0) will not be eligible for state and national competition. Only one state award in each division will be given per membership with the entry with the highest score considered for state awards.

The first, second and third place national winners in each division will be named from the first-place state winners based on score. Only one national award will be given per membership, with only the entry with the highest score being considered for national honors.

Recognition will be given for the highest dryland yield.

Two \$250 cash awards will be given for the highest irrigated and highest non-irrigated food-grade, tan-glume, tan-plant sorghum scores in the contest.

Hall of Fame: Beginning with the 1997 national winners, contestants who win National 1st Place three times in a division will be inducted into the Hall of Fame and will not be eligible to enter that division.

Awards

County and State winners will receive certificates by mail. National winners will receive trophies. Except where noted, no cash awards will be given by NSP.

Farm Bill Update

By Combest, Sell & Associates

Baseball legend Yogi Berra once said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it."

Congress may act on Berra's advice. In the face of unknowns, the Agriculture Committees are poised to consider the farm bill in April or May.

What will the farm bill look like? One big change may be the deletion of the shallow-loss program, originally included in both the House and Senate versions of the farm bill. Favor for shallow-loss has declined, losing original support from at least one major commodity group who stood behind it in the beginning. National Sorghum Producers does not support a shallow-loss program but does support the House farm bill reference price system. NSP is also in favor of strengthening crop insurance and retaining both chamber's language for a Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO).

Do these considerations alter the House bill? We know that the hemorrhaging of farmer support, tighter budgets, and the need to address the concerns of southern senators (and other senators) could also alter the Senate bill.

What savings are required? Although the savings under the 2012 bills declined under the CBO baseline update, this is due to lower projected costs of farm bill policies, not phony savings as opponents have charged. Still, the committees must meet the same savings targets, meaning policy shifts to offset lost savings and turn off sequestration.

What is the process beyond the committees? Who knows whether they will charge forward under regular

order or if a deal will be cut on larger budget issues that include a farm bill.

Despite these unknowns, there are reasons to be hopeful. Late to the game, the Administration's budget will have an impact limited to giving opponents bad ideas. The House budget avoided amendments against farm policy and affords the House Agriculture Committee flexibility to write and pass a good farm bill. The Senate budget also affords the Senate Agriculture Committee flexibility while yielding two victories.

An amendment by Senators Begich (D-AK) and Flake (R-AZ) would have subjected crop insurance to the smears and distortions EWG uses on commodity payments, requiring disclosure of benefits despite this information being available in aggregate form and that crop insurance is written on private paper with producers paying premiums. Thanks to friends in the Senate and NSP members and supporters who rolled up their sleeves and fought, this unprecedented breach of privacy and proprietary information was never offered.

The supporters of this amendment also back legislation by Flake and Rep. Duncan (R-TN) to cut crop insurance by 65 percent. These groups further propose \$100 billion in cuts to farm policy. Their approach is incremental but the endgame is clear: Kill farm policy.

Divide and conquer is their game. But, in a show of unity, with the strong support of the National Sorghum Producers, we defeated them. This is the team work we need to pass a farm bill. 🍯

2013 NSP D.C. Fly-In Recap

Twenty sorghum producers from nine different states represented the sorghum industry in Washington, D.C., on behalf of National Sorghum Producers for its annual D.C. Fly-In during the week of Feb. 11, 2013.

Those traveling to the beltway met with 77 offices both on Capitol Hill and with various offices and agencies within USDA.

NSP met separately with House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas, Ranking Member Collin Peterson, the office of Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, and Ranking Member Thad Cochran. The other 68 Hill visits were distributed as follows:

20 visits in the Senate

- 8 meetings with Senators
- 12 meetings with Senate staffers

48 visits in the House

- 20 meetings with Representatives
- 28 meetings with House staffers

Overall, NSP representatives logged almost 300 man-hours in the House and Senate combined. NSP also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack's office NRCS, FSA, OCE, RMA and USAID.

Sorghum Checkoff Makes \$3.4 Million Investment into Sorghum's Genetic Potential

The Sorghum Checkoff board of directors Feb. 26 approved funding of \$3.4 million in significant investments to private and public research to enhance sorghum's genetic potential.

Grain attributes, new hybrid development, branding and better management traits are included among the major areas of focus these funded projects will address. The projects approved total \$3.4 million over a five-year time frame. These projects represent a unique commitment

that will compliment annual efforts made by the Sorghum Checkoff.

"The United Sorghum Checkoff Program remains committed to improving sorghum as a sustainable, profitable, and competitive crop," said Sorghum Checkoff Chairman Stewart Weaver, a producer from Edmondson, Ark. "There is great momentum in the sorghum industry, and we look forward to announcing more details about this investment in the coming weeks." ✓

Branding Sorghum as the 'Smart Choice'

We all have certain brands that resonate with us. The brand of vehicle you drive, the combine you use to harvest your crop, the clothes you buy – all of these things are likely associated with a brand, or a set of behaviors or culture you can relate to.

The Sorghum Checkoff believes sorghum has a great story to tell. Whether we are talking about sorghum's whole grain and gluten-free attributes, its water efficiency and drought tolerance, or its value as a biofuel feedstock, this crop has a lot going for it. But even with all of those positive attributes that speak for themselves, it is time to brand sorghum.

During the Sorghum Checkoff board of directors meeting in late February, the board approved funding to start a strategic branding process for sorghum that reaches across its many diverse attributes and markets. Branding is more than designing a fancy logo – it is building a culture.

Throughout the sorghum branding process, we hope to instill a culture of viewing sorghum as the "Smart Choice" across many facets of our industry all the way down to the way we have conversations with farmers, end-users and potential markets.

"Sorghum is such a versatile crop and has so many uses, that it was quite difficult to pin down just one attribute to thoroughly publicize," said Stewart Weaver, Sorghum Checkoff board chairman and producer from Edmondson, Ark. "When the Smart Choice came to the table, we knew that was exactly the way to describe sorghum's value in many markets. It is simply a smart choice."

Over the next several months, keep an eye out for the phrase "Sorghum: The Smart Choice" as it relates to water conservation, gluten-free products, livestock feed, biofuels and all the diverse markets where sorghum can be utilized. ✓



**SORGHUM: THE
SMART
CHOICE**

Leadership Sorghum Visits Washington, D.C. for Third Session

Leadership Sorghum Class I met in Washington, D.C., Feb. 11-14 for its third session, which focused on education of the government's role in the sorghum industry, checkoffs and interest organizations.

While in Washington, D.C., the class met with representatives from USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, USAID, the National Institute for Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Grains Council to gain a better understanding of how these agencies and organizations interact with the Sorghum Checkoff to create opportunities for U.S. sorghum growers.

"It was a great opportunity to come to D.C. and see how USDA and the checkoff process works," said Class I member Steven Bigge, a grower from Stockton, Kan. "It was also very informative to meet with the [U.S. Grains Council] and see how some of our checkoff dollars are being used to make us sorghum producers more profitable."



The Sorghum Checkoff works closely with groups like NIFA and the U.S. Grains Council to maintain relationships with foreign customers, who account for some 25 percent of the U.S. sorghum market. By learning how these groups and the checkoff work together, Class I took back a better understanding of the value these relationships bring to sorghum growers across the nation.

Class I heard presentations on regulations and economics impacting the sorghum industry and participated in etiquette training for the session's professional development segment.

Leadership Sorghum Class I will attend its fourth session in July, which will give an overview of international markets for sorghum, port operations and next generation biofuels in the Texas Gulf region.

Class I is made up of 15 sorghum farmers representing eight states. To learn more about the Leadership Sorghum program or how to apply for Class II, visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com/leadership. ✓



The members of Leadership Sorghum Class I met in Washington, D.C., Feb. 11-14 for an educational session on the government's role in sorghum, checkoffs and interest organizations.



Sorghum Checkoff Sponsors Marketing Panel at Commodity Classic

3

The Sorghum Checkoff sponsored a marketing panel during the Sorghum General Session, Feb. 28, at the 18th annual Commodity Classic in Kissimmee, Fla. North Carolina farmer Charles Rose, marketing consultant Mike Karst of Entira, and Terry Coffey of Murphy-Brown discussed how the producer, end-user and consultants have worked together to create a reliable market for grain sorghum.

Murphy-Brown, which is one of the largest swine feeders in the country, began seeking locally-grown grain sorghum as an alternative to corn that was being raised in from the Midwest. Murphy-Brown started a pilot program in 2011 to contract grain sorghum acres with Mid-Atlantic producers.

The program has been successful. Mid-Atlantic sorghum acres grew to 70,000 acres in 2012 thanks to the market opportunity with livestock feeding. Murphy-Brown is hoping that number will reach even higher.

Karst and his team at Entira have worked to bridge the communication gap between university and extension researchers, seed companies, members of the retail channel, and Murphy-Brown to allow all segments of the supply chain to move forward in reaching the ultimate goal of 500,000 sorghum acres in the Mid-Atlantic by the end of their five-year program.

"There were 7,000 acres the first year, 70,000 acres in 2012, we should be north of 100,000 acres next year," Karst said. "Sorghum is a great fit in North Carolina because of its lower water use, tolerance to heat, and it's a great way to double crop and get more calories per acre than any other crop combination we can put out there."

Coffey said he believes sorghum can get to that half million acre mark in North Carolina once producers see the value in the crop.

"As the largest end-user of grain in the Mid-Atlantic region, Murphy-Brown is able to provide a reliable

market for a fair price," Coffey said. However, grain sorghum is still fairly new to the Mid-Atlantic region.

"The shift to sorghum acres in North Carolina has been a cultural change," Coffey said.

Murphy-Brown, the Sorghum Checkoff and North Carolina State University have worked together to provide producers with resources and information on how to effectively grow grain sorghum.

"The biggest thing is many producers are replacing other crops behind wheat, so we have to tell them the advantage sorghum offers financially and agronomically, what protocols exist, such as where to get information, what chemicals are labeled, harvest timing, etc.," Karst said.

Rose, who farms 40 miles from the Raleigh area, grows a wide variety of crops, including tobacco, sweet potatoes, cotton, soybeans and cucumbers and began growing sorghum for the first time when Murphy-Brown started offering contracts in its pilot program.

"I think we can get a larger return per acre of land with sorghum in North Carolina," Rose said. "The crop has also been a profitable option in my rotation."

Having a reliable market like Murphy-Brown has given Rose peace of mind.

"Murphy-Brown is a respected, dependable company to market my grain to," Rose said. ✓



(L to R) Charles Rose, a North Carolina sorghum producer, Mike Karst of Entira, and Terry Coffey of Murphy-Brown participated in the sorghum marketing panel during the Sorghum General Session at Commodity Classic.

Informa Study Outlines Sorghum Industry Opportunities, Constraints

In May 2012, the Sorghum Checkoff board of directors contracted Informa Economics to conduct a macroeconomic analysis of the sorghum industry to identify the size and scale of industry segments, opportunities and constraints for strategic growth, and estimated overarching areas of business and industry alignment. That study has been completed and is available online.

The Sorghum Checkoff board will use this study to aid in developing strategic investment opportunities to increase sorghum's competitiveness and profitability. To review the report, visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com. ✓

Sorghum U - Nebraska & South Dakota

After two successful Sorghum U programs in Texas and Kansas, the Sorghum Checkoff hosted two more sessions in Nebraska and South Dakota in February and April.

Sorghum U was held in Kearney, Neb., on Feb. 19, and was co-sponsored by the Sorghum Checkoff, High Plains Journal, Chromatin and Abengoa Bioenergy. A fourth Sorghum U session was held in Chamberlain, S.D., on April 9 and was co-sponsored by the Sorghum Checkoff, High Plains Journal, Chromatin and POET.

The two sessions followed the same format as previous meetings, providing farmer-focused breakout sessions based on issues affecting the respective regions.

While water was a main focus in Nebraska, marketing opportunities were key in South Dakota. Sorghum acres in these areas are being driven by private industry interested in contracting sorghum for biofuels.

Sorghum U presentations and farmer resources are available at www.SorghumU.com. ✓

SORGHUM CHECKOFF MISSION:

Investing your Sorghum Checkoff dollars to increase profitability for the sorghum industry.

CONTACT US:

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Communications Coordinator
(877) 643-8727
jenna@sorghumcheckoff.com



4

2012 Sorghum Checkoff Annual Report Available Online

The 2012 Sorghum Checkoff Annual Report is now available at www.SorghumCheckoff.com. The report overviews the year's activities, projects, market distribution, budgets and more.

To request a copy, contact us at 877-643-9002 or email jenna@sorghumcheckoff.com. ✓

Sorghum Industry Events

April 14-17 — Advanced Biofuels Leadership Conf.
National Harbor, Maryland

April 18— Ethanol 2013: Emerging Issues Forum
Omaha, Nebraska

July — Summer Crops School - K-State
Kansas - Check SorghumCheckoff.com for details

July 11-13 — 3i Show
Dodge City, Kansas

Drought is Part of Our History

There is always a drought lurking on the South Plains

By Lindsay Kennedy

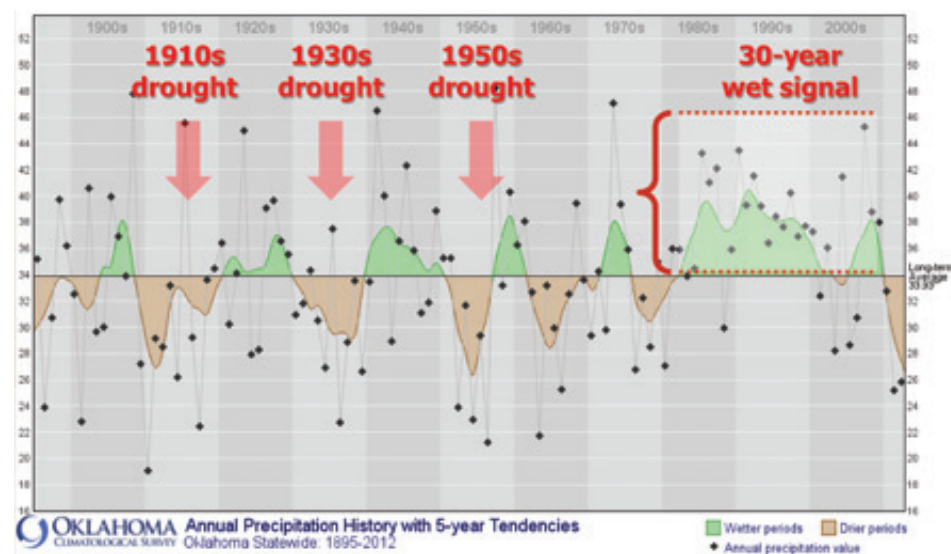
The last thing anyone enduring a drought wants to hear is, “After this drought is over, there is likely to be another one.”

Regardless of how you look at it, history does repeat itself when it comes to drought, particularly in sorghum country. Anyone who was around to witness the drought of the 1950s has seen plenty of similarities in this current drought - dust storms, disappearing ponds, struggling crops and the list goes on.

It could be worse

Terms like “driest year on record” lead us to assume this has never happened before in the U.S. However, Gary McManus, associate state climatologist for the Oklahoma Climatological Survey in Norman, says big droughts are always lurking.

“That period from the 1980s through the 2000s, in essence, erased the droughts of the ‘30s, ‘50s and even the ‘60s and ‘70s, from our collective memories,” McManus said. “We’ve now had at least a couple of generations that have never experienced the type



of long-term drought seen in our past, and have become used to relative ‘times of plenty.’ A switch back to the 1930s-1970s type of drought-wet-drought cycle would be a shock to our system.”

The main difference in the current drought compared to those of the ‘50s and ‘30s is duration, McManus said.

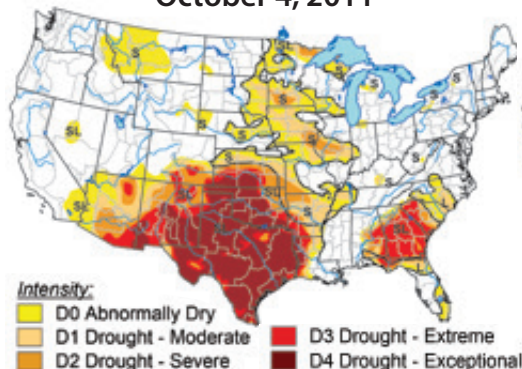
“This [drought] is still a baby in comparison,” he said. “It’s similar in that it is comprised of periods of drought interspersed with periods of wet. But

even the 1950s drought, the worst statistically for the state of Oklahoma since the late 1800s, pales in comparison to some of the dry times of the last 2,000 years as evidenced by the paleoclimate data.”

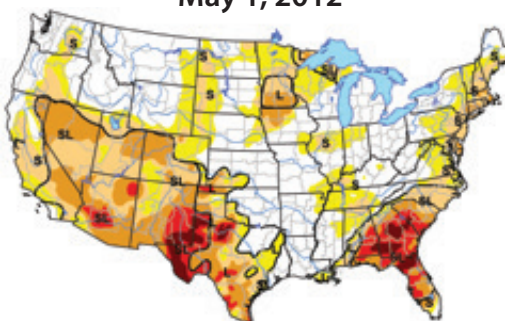
Looking ahead

McManus discussed the evolution and outlook of the Southern Plains drought from 2010 through 2013 during the Drought Outlook and Assessment Forum held in Goodwell,

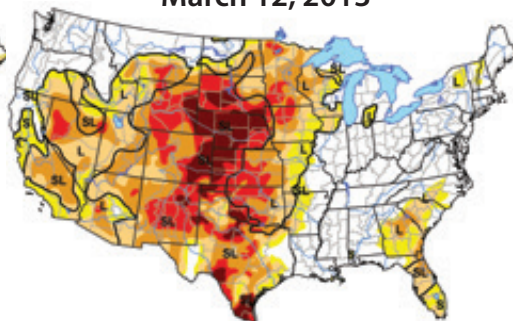
October 4, 2011



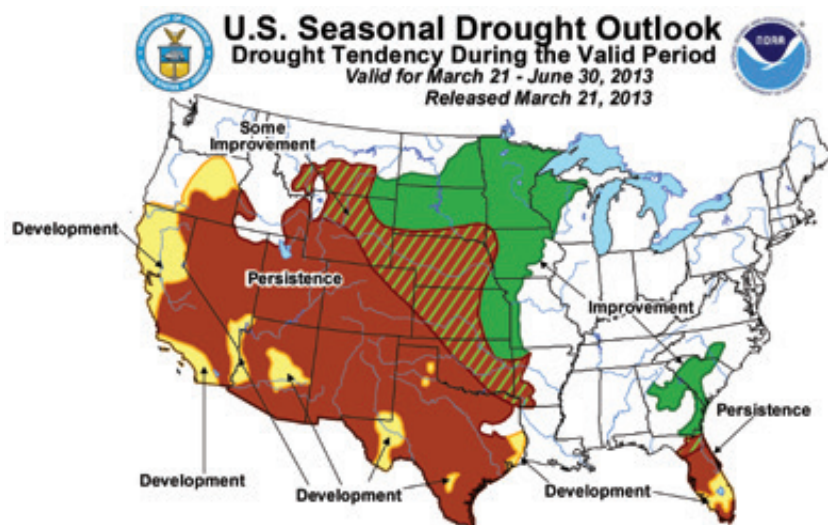
May 1, 2012



March 12, 2013



Maps from the U.S. Drought Monitor, <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



KEY:

	Drought to persist or intensify
	Drought ongoing, some improvement
	Drought likely to improve, impacts ease
	Drought development likely

Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectivity derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Short-term events - such as individual storms - cannot be accurately forecast more than a few days in advance. Use caution for applications - such as crops - that can be affected by such events. "Ongoing" drought areas are approximated from the Drought Monitor (D1 to D4 intensity). Graphic and information from the U.S. Drought Monitor, <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Okla., in early March. He explained that thanks to unfavorable oceanic temperature patterns, we might be headed back into a precipitation pattern resembling that of the 1950s-1970s. While that does not necessarily mean drought straight through the next decade, it does suggest we will experi-

ence a similar weather pattern to that period with more dry times ahead than wet.

Although it may seem like more doom and gloom when it comes to weather forecasts, McManus says there may be a faint light at the end of the tunnel.

"With another spring on tap, we have renewed hope for drought relief," he said. "There doesn't seem to be any large-scale climate pattern pointing us toward dry weather, so hopefully we can get more relief through June before the heat of summer sets in." 🌱

Sustainability and Relevance, continued from p. 5

As this persistent drought bears down on the agricultural community, we are challenged with the task of changing our methods to bring ourselves once again into *sustainability*. This time, not only is our profitability at bay, but our aquifers, as well.

Most of our product is grown in areas where water is scarce and becoming more so. Therefore, it is in our best interest to conserve all that we can. This is where our crop, whether as grain sorghum or as forage, can claim relevance.

NSP saw the need to help its producers with an issue revolving around conversion from forage crops with high consumptive water use to sorghum silage, which has a smaller need for irrigation water. The Sorghum

Silage Pilot Program Expansion was the result of the efforts of NSP to assist the crop insurance industry through RMA. With extensive work providing data from sorghum silage trials and from testimony and records from individual producers, the program was offered to 58 additional counties in New Mexico, Oklahoma Panhandle, and the Texas Panhandle. Irrigated forage sorghum acres will be offered federal crop insurance for the 2013 crop year as a result of this effort. If you produce forage or consume forage in the High Plains region, this points to another quantifiable result from your National Sorghum Producers organization.

So, are we sustainable? Are we relevant? Are we making a difference? I humbly make my case that I most certainly

think we have made a significant effort to provide evidence that affords us the opportunity to say "yes" to all three.

Can we do more? Certainly we can. I again encourage all of you to know that we are all significant parts of the body and each part has a very important function. We weren't given all the same gifts or talents, but we all are given the same challenge to make a difference. Support your ag organizations, get involved, and show someone you are relevant. 🌱

Terry Swanson is Southeastern Colorado farmer and rancher currently serving as chairman of the National Sorghum Producers. Terry and his wife Marcella run their grain and forage sorghum, corn, wheat and cattle operation in Walsh, Colo.

SORGHUM SHORTCUTS



www.SorghumGrowers.com Gets a Face Lift

If you have recently visited the National Sorghum Producers' website, www.SorghumGrowers.com, you probably noticed it has a completely new look.

The new and improved SorghumGrowers.com is the place to learn more about National Sorghum Producers and the issues affecting the industry.

The updated site allows for easier usability and includes enhanced features to make navigation simple and efficient.

The "Newsroom" tab includes links to the online version of *Sorghum Grower* magazine, Sorghum Notes, NSP's blog and news and information from NSP.

The new site also includes more social media integration to make it easier for you to connect with NSP through Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.


Users can also find updated information on NSP's programs, including producer members, E-Membership, the Industry Partner program, the annual NSP Yield and Management Contest, the Sorghum Foundation, and Sustainable Crop Insurance Services.

Interested in NSP membership? Fill out the online form and pay or renew your dues online. It is safe, quick and simple.

Spread the good news about sorghum

If you are receiving *Sorghum Grower* magazine for the first time, we hope you enjoyed the publication. There is certainly plenty to be excited about in the sorghum industry, and we aim to highlight that excitement with every issue of *Sorghum Grower*.

If you know other sorghum farmers or interested members of the sorghum industry who may not be receiving *Sorghum Grower* magazine, send us an email at lindsay@sorghumgrowers.com or call us at 800-658-9808 and let us know their name and mailing address so we can add them to our mailing list.

Sorghum Grower is the official publication of the National Sorghum Producers. 





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