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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS **SORGHUM** *Grower*

SPRING 2014

BLUEPRINT OF SUCCESS

NSP Yield & Management Contest Winners
Share Keys to Their Success

PLUS

Farmers Get Creative with
Grain Sorghum Management

Retaining Key Employees
During Succession

Also Inside
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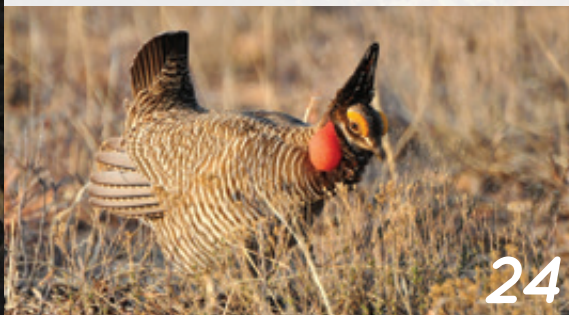
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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

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SPRING 2014

ON THE COVER: Sorghum growers share their blueprints for yield success in our annual feature of the national winners of NSP's Yield and Management Contest.



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CEO's Desk

It's That Time of Year



SPRING IS AN EXCITING AND TIRING TIME OF YEAR for NSP leaders and staff. This is the time of year when we get to celebrate with state and national sorghum yield contest winners from around the country at the annual Commodity Classic. As we wrap up individual successes from last year's crop year, we are also working to help growers' bottom lines for 2014 through education programs on everything from the new farm bill to fertilizer placement.

NSP was very pleased with the final results of the farm bill and remains deeply involved in the process to make sure USDA's implementation of the farm bill is sorghum-friendly.

If you didn't notice, *Sorghum Grower* magazine is growing. Interest in sorghum and advertising new tools for growers continues to expand, and our team is doing a great job in helping industry partners get the word out to you, our growers, on these products. As always, we appreciate you giving these groups a shot at your business as they help us help you.

Be sure to catch the article on p. 12 in this issue that addresses newly adopted changes in the NSP Yield Contest and the big prizes that will be available to eligible growers who bust the 250-bushel mark in 2014.

As sorghum is up and growing in parts of the South, we are excited to see continued improvement and growth in the sorghum industry in 2014.

Tim Lust
National Sorghum Producers
CEO

Q&A: Sorghum and the New Farm Bill

By NSP Staff

Q. What are all the acronyms and what do they mean?

- PLC - Price Loss Coverage - Commodity program choice for growers that covers only price loss and allows growers to purchase SCO.
- ARC - Agriculture Risk Coverage - Commodity program choice for growers that covers revenue loss with the choice of county or individual coverage.
- SCO - Supplemental Coverage Option - New type of crop insurance that helps cover some of the grower's crop insurance deductible.
- STAX - Stacked Income Protection - New type of crop insurance for upland cotton that is area-based.
- APH - Actual Production History - Crop insurance yield history.

Q. Can base be increased?

A. Base can only be increased due to expiring or withdrawn CRP. Reallocation of base cannot result in an increase of base acres on the farm as of Sept. 30, 2013.

Q. What are payment acres?

A. Payment acres are the percentage of base acres that receive payment. For PLC and county ARC, that is 85 percent. For individual ARC, it is 65 percent.

Q. What are generic base acres?

A. Generic base acres are cotton base acres on the farm as of Sept. 30, 2013. Generic base acres cannot be reallocated, except on a yearly basis per the rules covered in the next question.

Q. If I plant a covered crop on generic base acres, can I participate in PLC or ARC for that crop?

A. Yes. Acreage of a covered crop (such as sorghum, corn or wheat) planted on generic base acres fall under that commodity's PLC or ARC coverage (whichever is chosen in the original sign up period). While PLC and ARC are decoupled for standard base acres, these are coupled (they follow what you plant) for generic acres.

Example: If a producer is enrolled in PLC for sorghum and enrolled in ARC for corn and plants both of these on generic base acres, then the generic base acres attributed to sorghum will be eligible for PLC and the generic base acres attributed to corn will be eligible for ARC. Attribution of generic base acres is on a pro rata formula between covered crops.

Q. What do you mean by decoupled or coupled?

A. Decoupled means the PLC or ARC payment is NOT dependent on what the farmer plants. For example, a farm with ARC for corn and PLC for sorghum on base acres can receive payments for both ARC and PLC if triggered for the respective crop when they plant only sorghum. The option to reallocate base acres is based strictly on the proportion of program crops planted between 2009 and 2012, but the decision may reflect attitudes toward future prices and which crop might trigger a payment under either ARC or PLC. Coupled payments are those for generic base where only planted acres determine an ARC or PLC payment.

Q. What is the impact of multiple farms owned by the same landowner with share agreements with multiple farmers?

A. Decisions relative to ARC and PLC are to be made by “all producers on a farm.” Each separate farm number stands on its own, and all the producers on the farm must agree on the decision. Producers are defined as those at risk, so landowners in a share rent arrangement are considered producers. The decisions to reallocate base and/or update yields are solely that of the landowner.

Example: Landowner A has three share arrangements with different farmers with three different farm numbers all in the same state: 1, 2 and 3. If A-1 chooses to go all PLC, then A-2 and A-3 could choose ARC. Then they must make a unanimous choice between county or individual coverage. In this example, if producers A-2 and A-3 chose individual ARC, the revenue from farms A-2 and A-3 would be added together for Landowner A to determine his individual ARC payment.

Q. Is there a tie to base for SCO?

A. There is no base tie for SCO. SCO can be purchased on all acreage on a farm of commodities covered by PLC.

However, SCO must be purchased in combination with an underlying crop insurance policy.

Q. Is a loss required on the underlying crop insurance policy to collect on SCO?

A. No. While you must have an underlying individual policy to purchase SCO, SCO losses are determined strictly by the county yield or revenue guarantee. For the highest level of SCO coverage (86 percent policy), the county must have at least a 14 percent loss to trigger an SCO payment.

Q. Can you purchase SCO and STAX together?

A. No. You can purchase either SCO or STAX on an acre by acre basis, but you cannot purchase both SCO and STAX on the same acre. In some cases where the producer's APH is significantly better than the county yield used for STAX and SCO, SCO may be advantageous for cotton producers because, even though the indemnity paid will be triggered by the county loss, the actual indemnity will be paid based on the producer's APH. 🌱

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Retaining Key Employees During Succession

By Kevin Spafford, eLegacyConnect

TOO MANY BUSINESS OWNERS give too much credit to material asset value, plant, property, intellect, etc., and too little value to people and processes.

The dollar value of a company is based on variables – most of which are easily measured in an appraisal and some of which are based on a gut-level feel and lots of experience. What if you could apply an appraised value to people? What value do your loyal employees bring? And how much intellect do they bring to the work place that is a part of your culture and a key to business success?

Absent the commitment of loyal employees, a business may not survive succession. Whether left in the hands of a well-prepared next generation or sold to a willing third-party, unless there are capable employees to carry on, the business simply will not make it beyond transition. The probability of survival may be slim if, when the owner departs, key employees leave instead of adapting to a new management structure.

A business succession plan should include strategies to identify and retain key employees. Even if there is a suc-

cessor waiting in the wings to assume control when the owner retires, key employees will be necessary to ensure the business continues to grow and prosper. Key employees are not always limited to those in high-level control or management positions. Their ranks will be filled with people from every department and a host of capabilities including finance, marketing and/or operational positions.

An ownership transition can be disruptive and cause key employees to question their continued security in the business. Key employees may be reluctant to work with and mentor a successor who is not ready to take immediate control, especially given that the family member may supplant the key employee and take the position. It may be necessary to offer the key employees additional incentives to remain with the operation and support the successor(s) through an ownership transition.

There are numerous options for rewarding a key employee's commitment, loyalty and hard work. The most effective incentives are usually monetarily based.

An owner may offer some form of non-qualified plan so the incentive may be tailored specifically to a particular situation.

Retaining key employees through transition is critical to an operation's success. A comprehensive succession plan will include a strategy to retain those employees when formulating a business succession plan. And, like every other component of a comprehensive plan, it should be evaluated at



least annually to see if it is working as intended or requires adjustments.

In designing the business succession plan, it is important to identify all employees who are critical to the continuing success of the business. Once key employees are identified, specific strategies for their retention can be formulated. The key to an effective retention strategy is designing an incentive package that motivates particular employees. Some key employees may desire equity ownership in the company. Others may be motivated by more immediate income or additional compensation at retirement. Though a business may not be willing or able to provide everything an employee wants, it is important that the incentive be motivating to the person—the incentive must speak di-

rectly to that individual's personal or professional goals.

Though money is the typical motivator, non-monetary items should be considered. Flex time, consulting contracts or part-time employment may motivate an employee who wants to spend more time with family, pursue personal goals or start an entrepreneurial venture. Other incentives may include job advancement and/or professional enrichment programs. If there is a higher position for which the key employee is qualified, the company can provide an incentive for the employee to stay by offering a promotion, which should also offer higher pay and more incentives.

Job enrichment may include expanding an employee's responsibilities, as-

signing new project, or enhancing the employee's decision-making authority in the organization. An owner's commitment to enrich an employee's job as part of the succession planning process related to ownership transition can provide a key employee with incentives to stay while making a positive contribution to that transition.

For more, login to eLegacyConnect.com and search 'key employees.'

Kevin Spafford is the founder of eLegacyConnect which provides succession solutions for farm families. Members of National Sorghum Producers receive a discount for full access to eLegacyConnect. Use membership code 'sorghumgrower' at eLegacyConnect.com. Also, visit www.SorghumGrowers.com for more information on eLegacyConnect.



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2014 Commodity Classic Sets Another Attendance Record

By Lindsay Kennedy

MORE THAN 7,300 GROWERS, media and exhibitors attended this year's Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 26-March 1. National Sorghum Producers joined the National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and the American Soybean Association for NSP's sixth year to participate in the annual Classic.

During the week in San Antonio, NSP held its spring board of directors meeting, its annual Sorghum General Session and the 2013 NSP Yield and Management Contest Awards Dinner where national and state winners were honored for their yield

achievements during the last crop year. A yield of 215 bushels per acre was made by this year's irrigated Bin Buster award winner. To read more about 2013's high yielding sorghum farmers, see p. 14.

Sorghum General Session

Approximately 200 people attended this year's Sorghum General Session, which featured a variety of topics and issues impacting the sorghum industry.

Katharine Armstrong, president of Austin-based Natural Resources Solutions, discussed how certain endangered species regulations could affect

sorghum growers, including the lesser prairie chicken. For more on this topic, read "Endangered Species on the Fast Track" on p. 24.

Dr. Kevin Dhuyvetter, professor and extension specialist in farm management and marketing at Kansas State University, presented on the economics of growing grain sorghum, including trends and projections, basis and price, historical returns and costs, projected costs and returns for 2014, and irrigation economics.

Dhuyvetter said USDA projections show economic returns on sorghum suggest it is a competitive crop and should remain an important crop in the High Plains region. In addition, with low rainfall and reduced ability to irrigate, sorghum becomes more competitive with corn. To see Dhuyvetter's complete presentation, visit SorghumGrowers.com.



◀ **SORGHUM TAKES THE STAGE.** NSP Chairman J.B. Stewart (right) joined the chairmen of NAWG, NCGA and ASA on stage during the Commodity Classic General Session before a crowd made up of an estimated 7,300 Classic attendees.

► COMMODITY CLASSIC. (Top) USDA Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden stopped by the NSP booth during the Classic trade show to meet with NSP board members and industry representatives. (Bottom) Adam Baldwin, Alvaro Cordero and Bob Vanderloo discussed the impact of China on the U.S. sorghum market.

An international marketing panel consisting of Kansas sorghum grower Adam Baldwin, Alvaro Cordero of the U.S. Grains Council and Bob Vanderloo from Cargill discussed the impact of China on the U.S. sorghum market.

Baldwin, who attended a trade mission to China in Oct. 2012, said the Chinese market is already having an impact on sorghum basis.

“The opening of the Chinese export should really help maintain basis levels and truly be a game changer for U.S. sorghum,” Baldwin said.

Wayne Schumacher of DuPont gave an update on timelines and expectations of Inzen and Zest over-the-top weed and grass control - a product many growers have been eagerly awaiting. For more on Schumacher’s presentation, see “Over-the-Top Weed, Grass Control Timeline and Expectations” on p. 32. 📺



See more NSP coverage from Commodity Classic, including exclusive interviews at the trade show, Sorghum General Session and the NSP Yield Contest, and clips from Secretary Vilsack’s speech at www.YouTube.com/SorghumGrowers.



NSP Makes Rule Changes to Sorghum Yield Contest

By Lindsay Kennedy

GROWERS ASKED FOR CHANGE and they got it. The National Sorghum Producers board of directors voted in March 2014 to make select rule changes in its annual sorghum yield contest.

NSP Vice Chairman James Born said the changes were adopted by the NSP board after receiving great feedback from growers on how to improve the sorghum yield contest.

“We believe these changes will positively impact the integrity of the NSP Yield Contest and will further promote the yield potential of grain sorghum and the production achievements by growers from around the country,” said Born, who is a grower in Booker, Texas. “The addition of our new Bin Buster Award prizes will certainly encourage growers to strive for that 250-plus yield.”

New Bin Buster Awards

The bar has been raised when it comes to grain sorghum yield goals. Starting with the 2014 NSP Yield Contest, sorghum growers who reach 250

bushels per acre or greater in any category will be eligible for a first place prize of a three-year lease of a Dodge, Chevrolet, Ford or Toyota pickup (\$25,000 value), an all-terrain vehicle (\$10,000 value) for second place, and a riding lawnmower (\$5,000 value) for third place. A 10-acre minimum entry with 1.5-acre harvest plot is necessary to be eligible.

Non-Irrigated Scoring

Among the main changes to the contest is the elimination of using five-year county average yields in the scoring process for non-irrigated category entries. Starting with the 2014 contest, non-irrigated entries will be scored by yield only.

In past contests, contestants' scores were calculated by subtracting their five-year county average yield from their actual yield. Five-year county average yields are determined by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

“It is no secret the five-year county average yields are sometimes questionable in certain regions,” said Tim Lust,

NSP CEO. “This situation presented a problem and often put many great growers at a disadvantage.”

Other Changes

Another key change in the contest rules includes the addition of several new options for qualified supervisors who must be present during the entire harvest and weighing process. A full listing of qualified supervisors can be found in the official NSP Yield Contest rules.

Entry plot requirements were increased from a minimum of five continuous acres to a minimum of 10 continuous acres. Harvested contest plots must be a minimum of 1.5 continuous acres from the same entry plot. A recheck is required if the resulting yield is 250 bushels per acre or above. The recheck on the contest plot will be a minimum of 1.5 continuous acres in the same entry plot.

To view the complete set of rules and the entry form for the 2014 NSP Yield Contest, see p. 20 or visit the NSP website at www.SorghumGrowers.com and click the ‘Programs’ tab. 📄

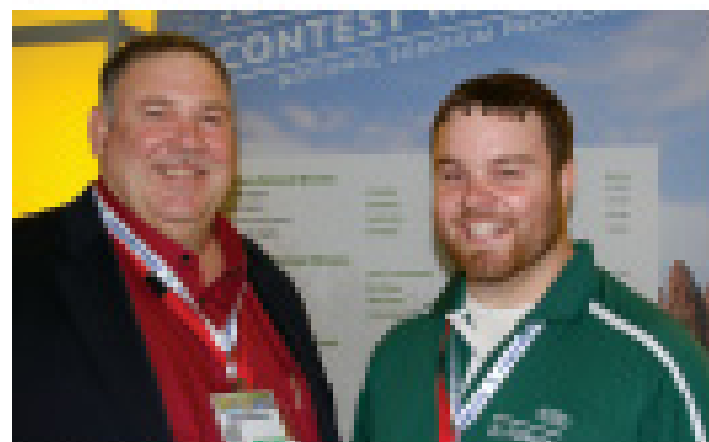
BIN-BUSTING SORGHUM

John and Justin Williams invest in sorghum inputs for winning yields.

John H. and Justin Williams say it's no secret how their high-yielding sorghum has won the National Sorghum Growers 2015 Bin-Busting Bin Bustin' Award and two first-place state awards.

Intensive input management and John's winning sorghum field of 145.38 bushels in White County, IL, like one Justin and the team looked to win two first-place state rankings in Southern County: a first-place 145.38-bushel field in the on-fall, one-hybrid division, and a first-place 147.33-bushel field in the on-fall, on-fall, one-hybrid division.

Chemicals have aided high-yielding sorghum with the right combination of genetics, fertility and crop protection. John says the most important thing was his applying a new mindset about sorghum.



John and Justin Williams celebrate sorghum's success.

"There's a long-held belief that sorghum is a lower-input crop than corn, but genetic and biologic evidence says per-bushel production inputs what you are doing. With a mindset to provide quality and sorghum, we got a position of 40 to 70 more bushels than corn, so it pays to adopt a high-yield strategy."

Plant Population and Protection

John and Justin shared their bin-busting yield goals by planting 150,000 sorghum hybrids and supporting them with

the fertility and crop protection inputs were needed for corn. But they weren't related.

Fields began showing around 200 bushels when John and Justin learned that seed 120,000-seeds per acre for hybrids including Pioneer 34H342 to 130,000 seeds per acre. With intensive management, they produced 12 to 13 bushels without extra fertilizing or other products. John credits crop protection with making that possible.

"John applied fertility, so he is seed application at timing of 3 percent later always along with Defiant[®] Aquest[®] fungicide and Defiant[®] Aquest[®] II herbicide," says John. "Aquest[®] herbicide gets all important plantlets from stress and much greater stress resistance field potential while maintaining high leaf weight."

"The high-yielding sorghum plan will be crop density next season," says John, "although possibly by bin-busting population by an additional 20,000 seeds per acre. We can still do better."

On-time Management Results Field

John's Defiant[®] Crop Protection fungicide and herbicide provide more, more that later stress management can make a big yield difference. "Our results show sorghum has plant-on-growing 10 to 15 percent yield increase with Aquest[®] fungicide. The seed application of Aquest[®] is timing, provide protection and maintain protection from top stress and at top leaf spot and disease out. This program gives best time the better photosynthesis and yield 10, and especially helping for John's corn and stress yield."

High-yield plant populations could make Aquest[®] more valuable. "It shows how many other hybrids can be made on sorghum that stress stress and can produce more hybrids than getting in some of the plant Aquest[®] components for that reason is more significantly throughout the entire plant, even if only applied in upper half of corn."

For more information, visit aquest.sprayer.com.

John and Justin Williams are sorghum growers in White County, IL. John is a member of the National Sorghum Growers Association and the Illinois Sorghum Growers Association. Justin is a member of the National Sorghum Growers Association and the Illinois Sorghum Growers Association. They are both members of the National Sorghum Growers Association and the Illinois Sorghum Growers Association.

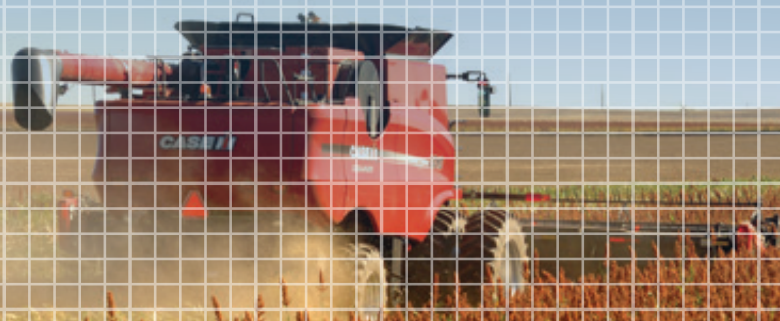
BLUEPRINT of SUCCESS



NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS YIELD & MANAGEMENT CONTEST

AN INSIDE LOOK AT HOW THE 2013
NATIONAL WINNERS ACHIEVED TOP
GRAIN SORGHUM YIELDS

IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED BIN BUSTERS
REDUCED-TILL IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED
NO-TILL NON-IRRIGATED
MULCH-TILL NON-IRRIGATED
DOUBLE CROP IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED
CONVENTIONAL-TILL IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED
FOOD-GRADE NATIONAL WINNERS IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED





-  **IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER**
215 bu/ac Pioneer 84G62
-  **IRRIGATED FOOD GRADE**
194.92 bu/ac Nusun 345
-  **REDUCED-TILL IRRIGATED**

KI GAMBLE

EDWARDS COUNTY, KANSAS

Yield 215 bu/ac
Seed Pioneer 84G62
Safener Concept
Seeds/Ac 80,000
Row Spacing 15 in.

Previous Crop Soybeans
Rainfall 16 in.
Planting Date May 25, 2013
Harvest Date November 15, 2013

Fertilizer Liquid N (200 gal), Liquid P (50 gal), Dry Potash (50 lbs)
Herbicide Medal (1.33 pts pre-emerge), Milo Pro (1 pt pre-emerge)
Insecticide Belt (2 oz broadcast)

Ki Gamble has made a habit of collecting trophies from the NSP Yield and Management Contest over the last few years.

In 2013, Ki's sorghum crop earned top honors again with a yield of 215 bushels per acre in the Reduced-Till Irrigated category, which also won the Irrigated Bin Buster Award. He says cooperative weather and fertilizing were key to his success in 2013.

Ki said he split his fertilizing applications throughout the growing season. He applied nitrogen at planting, starter fertilizer, side-dressed, and ran some nitrogen through the pivots, applying all his nitrogen before boot. Rotating crops with grain sorghum also allows him to change modes of action on herbicides.

The southwest Kansas farmer says sorghum has always been a part of his farming operation.

"I really enjoy growing irrigated grain sorghum," he said. "I don't think there is a prettier field than a field of irrigated grain sorghum."

Food-Grade Success

Not only did Ki take home top honors for his irrigated reduced-till sorghum, but he was also the national Irrigated Food-Grade winner.

Ki has been growing food-grade sorghum since 2012 as part of a pilot program with Richardson Seed in Vega, Texas, ADM Milling in Dodge City, Kan., and "a handful of other farmers" where he gets a premium price for his grain. That

premium makes his sorghum compete favorably with the price of corn or beans on a lot less water.

His food-grade sorghum is being used to produce flour for gluten-free food products — a market Ki believes will continue to grow and create opportunities for the crop.

"As the American population becomes more aware of gluten allergies, I think food-grade sorghum will really take off in the future," Ki said. "I think food-grade sorghum can be the poster child for sorghum production. It may really take off big with sorghum exports to China."

Ki says he doesn't treat his food-grade sorghum any differently than his conventional sorghum hybrids.

"Although the food-grade sorghum yields around 15 bushels per acre less than the conventional grain sorghum, the premium for the food-grade more than offsets the yield difference."

As the food-grade program continues to grow, Ki said he hopes to grow with it.

Opportunities with Irrigated Sorghum

For the last 15 years, Ki's farm has always had at least one pivot of irrigated grain sorghum. Since working with the food-grade program, he has had at least two to three pivots of irrigated sorghum.

"We have always grown sorghum in our operation," he said. "We like what sorghum does for us. I am anticipating having between five and seven pivots of irrigated sorghum this year." 🌾



NON-IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER 186.35 bu/ac Pioneer 84G62

Yield	186.35 bu/ac	Planting Date	June 20, 2013
Co. Avg Yield	126 bu/ac	Harvest Date	October 22, 2013
Seed	Pioneer 84G62	Fertilizer	NH ₃ (205 actual N), N (36), P (92), Potash (200)
Safener	Concept	Herbicide	Weedone 638 (20 oz preplant), Cinch
Row Spacing	15 in.	Insecticide	ATZ (2 qts pre-emerge)
Previous Crop	Soybeans		Asana (6.4 oz broadcast)
Rainfall	48 in.		

JOHN WILLIAMS WHITE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

John Williams grows sorghum in an area more known for its corn production, but the Illinois farmer continues to see the benefits sorghum brings to his farm.

"We've been growing sorghum since back in the early '80s, and it's been a learning process," John said. "We're in an area where sorghum's not all that popular, so it's been a lot of trial and error and talking to a lot of people. I finally feel like we're starting to arrive and get the yields up where I think they should be."

This year, John upped his plant population considerably,

which he says increased his yields comparable with corn. He utilizes a fertilizing program that includes anhydrous ammonia at pre-plant and nitrogen, potash, sulfur and zinc in the fall.

John has also found it is better to harvest sorghum with moisture in it and then dry it in his bins. He then hauls it to his local elevator where he gets a 40-80 percent positive basis from a rail niche.

In 2014, he's aiming high when it comes to sorghum.

"Our goal is 300-bushel milo." 🍌



NON-IRRIGATED FOOD GRADE 75.43 bu/ac Sorghum Partners SP3303

Yield	75.43 bu/ac	Planting Date	June 7, 2013
Co. Avg Yield	52.2 bu/ac	Harvest Date	October 17, 2013
Seed	SP3303	Fertilizer	Liquid N (25 lbs), Manure (10 tons)
Seeds/Ac	40,000	Herbicide	RT3 (.75 qts pre-emerge), Gramoxine (.5 qts preplant), Triangle (1.6 qts half pre-plant, half pre-emerge)
Row Spacing	30 in.	Insecticide	Nips-It (Seed)
Previous Crop	Rye		
Rainfall	18 in.		

BEN CRAMER LANE COUNTY, KANSAS

Ben Cramer's fifth year of growing grain sorghum earned him top honors in 2013 as the National Sorghum Producers' Non-Irrigated Food-Grade winner. Ben took home the same honor in the 2010 sorghum yield and management contest.

He utilizes no-till to conserve and save soil moisture.

The growing demand by consumers for gluten-free flour is providing him with a valuable market opportunity for his food-grade sorghum.

"We had a processor come into the area, and hopefully

that's going to be a nice local market for us," Ben said.

"They are milling and shipping whole grain out to other millers for the gluten-free market. I think they may be doing some exports, too."

Like many growers in his area in west central Kansas, he had to overcome a dry 2013.

"It didn't rain a lick until late July, and we had just enough rain in late July and early August to get it through, and we went ahead and made a crop," Ben said. "It was better than we thought it would be in the first half of the year." 🍌



NO-TILL NON-IRRIGATED 176.39 bu/ac Pioneer 84P80

Yield	176.39 bu/ac	Planting Date	May 25, 2013
Co. Avg Yield	92.4 bu/ac	Harvest Date	October 28, 2013
Seed	Pioneer 84P80	Fertilizer	Liquid N (114 lbs/ac)
Seeds/Ac	65,000	Herbicide	Lexar (2.86 qt pre-emerge), 2, 4-D
Safener	Concept II		Albaugh 6#LV (9 oz pre-emerge),
Row Spacing	30 in.		RoundUp (28 oz pre-emerge)
Previous Crop	Wheat	Insecticide	Cruiser (seed treatment)
Rainfall	32.35 in.		

GARY RESCO CLOUD COUNTY, KANSAS

Fertility placement is one production practice Gary Resco hangs his hat on when it comes to growing sorghum.

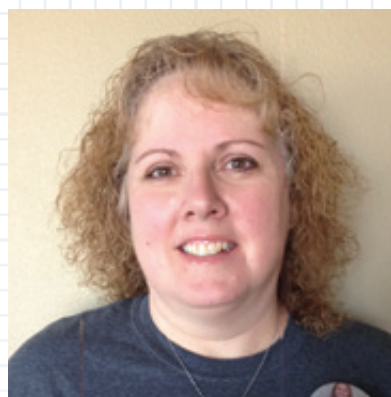
"At planting time, we inject all our fertility in a two-by-two on both sides of the row," Gary said. "We follow the sorghum with two years of wheat. We're also putting straight nitrogen on, following two years of heavy phosphorus on the wheat. That's how we get by without a whole lot of phosphorus on our sorghum."

Gary said his farm in north central Kansas has been mostly no-till for nearly 20 years for moisture conservation and soil management. Other than chemical expense, he

said, no-till is the most economical way to go, not to mention the tremendous amount in fuel savings.

Sorghum is a valuable part of Gary's farm.

"I've experimented with dryland corn in the last few years, but I'm partial to sorghum, because as far as I'm concerned, it manages my risk over and above what I know about corn," he said. "I'm excited about sorghum and what's coming down the road. I think there's still yield potential there. Obviously, the traits for grass control will be good. I know it's not typical, but we were 30 to 40 cents over corn, so that's something to hang our hat on." 🍌



MULCH-TILL NON-IRRIGATED 175.65 bu/ac Mycogen 627

Yield	175.65 bu/ac	Rainfall	16 in.
Co. Avg Yield	68 bu/ac	Planting Date	June 17, 2013
Seed	Mycogen 627	Harvest Date	November 9, 2013
Seeds/Ac	45,000	Fertilizer	Liquid N (80), Liquid P (30)
Safener	Concept	Herbicide	Lexar (1.5 qts pre-emerge)
Row Spacing	30 in.	Insecticide	Belt (2 oz broadcast)
Previous Crop	Wheat		

KIMBERLY GAMBLE KIOWA COUNTY, KANSAS

The Gamble family certainly had a year to remember when it came to sorghum yield success.

Kimberly Gamble's 175.65 bushels per acre in the Mulch-Till Non-Irrigated category added another trophy to her family's mantle in addition to the Irrigated Bin Buster Award, Reduced-Till Irrigated and National Irrigated Food-Grade awards won by her husband Ki in the 2013 contest.

Sorghum has become a mainstay on the Gamble's farm in southwest Kansas, and according to Kimberly, the crop always exceeds their expectations.

"It is just, more than anything else in Kansas, the sign of fall," Kimberly said in reference to why she loves sorghum. "When the milo starts to ripen, there's nothing prettier than that. It seems like more of a worry-free crop than some of the others."

Kimberly said proper management is the key to getting good yields.

"If you put your work in ahead of time, it seems to me like it is pretty trouble-free," she said. "Every year we are kind of surprised at how good our yields are." 🍌



DOUBLE CROP NON-IRRIGATED 133.66 bu/ac DEKALB DKS36-06

Yield 133.66 bu/ac
Co. Avg Yield 70.6 bu/ac
Seed DEKALB DKS36-06
Seeds/Ac 100,000
Row Spacing 15 in.
Previous Crop Rye
Rainfall 20 in.

Planting Date June 6, 2013
Harvest Date November 6, 2013
Fertilizer Liquid N (100)
Herbicide Bicep (2qts/ac pre-emerge)

SANTINO SANTINI, JR WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

In just his second year to grow sorghum, New Jersey farmer Santino Santini found himself in the winner's circle of NSP's yield contest with his double crop, non-irrigated sorghum. Although New Jersey isn't exactly near the Sorghum Belt, Santino is seeing real potential for the crop.

"I grew a little bit two years ago for a hunting club that wanted it to hunt in," he said. "They wanted the stubble left after I took the grain off. And I said, 'Well, wow, we can grow this crop of sorghum here.' Then last year, about

50 miles from us, a bird seed company came up and there was demand for sorghum as bird seed. I decided we should grow a little bit more. And now, they still want more, so we're getting into it a lot bigger. It seems like we can produce a good crop of sorghum here cheaper than corn.

"I've found that many of the things I was doing in corn translated to sorghum production. The last two years I was kind of playing around, but now I want to see what I can really do." 🌾



DOUBLE CROP IRRIGATED 153.42 bu/ac DEKALB DKS37-07

Yield 153.42 bu/ac
Seed DEKALB DKS37-07
Seeds/Ac 90,000
Safener Concept
Row Spacing 30 in.
Previous Crop Wheat
Rainfall 16 in.
Irrigation 7 in., Sprinkle

Planting Date June 25, 2013
Harvest Date November 20, 2013
Fertilizer Liquid N (105), Liquid P (35), Liquid Potash (35)
Herbicide Intro (2qts preplant), Atrax (1 lb post-emerge)
Insecticide Belt (2oz broadcast)

CLARK BIBB COMANCHE COUNTY, KANSAS

With a little cooperation from Mother Nature following three years of terrible drought, Clark Bibb yielded 153.42 bushels per acre on his 2013 double crop grain sorghum following wheat.

"I tried something new this year," Clark said. "I've been strip-tilling, but I no-tilled [the sorghum] in this year, and it seemed like we got a lot better weed control. It also came up faster."

Clark has been doing a rotation of three years of sorghum and three years of wheat.

"We're into milo pretty good right now," he said. "The market has been real good, and that helps. I feel like it helps our wheat crop, too. I've been leaning a little more toward irrigated milo than corn because of water issues and how much cheaper it is to raise. Our market for milo is pretty decent here with the ethanol plant in Liberal."

Clark said wind toward the end of the growing season created some challenges with lodging, but using a longer season sorghum variety helped bump his yields and weather the wind. 🌾



CONVENTIONAL-TILL NON-IRRIGATED

144.84 bu/ac Pioneer 84G62

Yield 144.84 bu/ac
Co. Avg Yield 37.4 bu/ac
Seed Pioneer 84G62
Seeds/Ac 55,000
Safener Concept II
Row Spacing 30 in.
Previous Crop Corn

Rainfall 40 in.
Planting Date May 1, 2013
Harvest Date October 4, 2013
Fertilizer Dry Nitrogen (100 lbs/ac), P (75 lbs/ac), Dry Potash (125 lbs/ac)
Herbicide Bicep (1 qt/ac pre-emerge)

DAVID JUSTICE CHEROKEE COUNTY, KANSAS

David Justice says he had his best grain sorghum crop ever in 2013 since the 74-year-old Kansas farmer started growing the crop 25 to 30 years ago.

"It was the best season I ever had on milo," David said. "I had corn right across from my milo and it only made 30 bushels per acre."

David said he expects to plant between 400 to 500 acres of sorghum on his farm in southeastern Kansas in 2014.

"We figure if we have a corn crop, we will for sure have

a milo crop, and if we don't have a corn crop, we will still have a milo crop."

Despite the dry weather and issues with cuckie burrs, David's conventional-till sorghum crop yielded 144.84 bushels per acre.

He markets all of his crop at his local farmer's coop in Columbus, Kan., which showed strong interest in sorghum last year.

"They said they would take every grain I had." 🌾



CONVENTIONAL-TILL IRRIGATED

194.97 bu/ac Pioneer 85Y40

Yield 194.97 bu/ac
Seed Pioneer 85Y40
Seeds/Acre 37,700
Safener Concept
Row Spacing 40 in.
Previous Crop Cotton

Irrigation 16 in., Drip
Planting Date July 5, 2013
Harvest Date October 23, 2013
Fertilizer Dry Nitrogen (100 lb/ac)

ERIC PARKEY LAMB COUNTY, TEXAS

Sorghum's yield potential may have surprised Texas Panhandle farmer Eric Parkey, who has traditionally raised wheat, corn and cotton.

His conventional-till irrigated sorghum nearly reached the 200-bushel yield mark at 194.97 bushels per acre. He credits luck and a good rain at the right time.

"I had a drip field of cotton that got hailed out, and I went back in there and planted sorghum," he said.

Using a planting rate of just under 38,000 seeds per acre, Eric found success with sorghum despite a stubborn

drought that has plagued farmers in the Panhandle and South Plains for more than three years now.

"Man, that stuff tillered out and looked good all year. Then we got a five inch rain on July 17, which really helped it out."

Parkey said now he knows sorghum can "make those kinds of yields" the crop is going to be a first crop option taking the place of corn in a few of his fields. He marketed his grain through a local elevator.

"Not only did it make a good crop," Eric said, "but it brought a great price." 🌾

- Signature of Contestant _____ Date Signed _____

2014 Sorghum Yield Contest Rules

Please read contest rules carefully before completing the entry form. **There are many new rule changes.**

Contest Deadlines

Entries must be postmarked 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. 1, 2014**. 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. Ridges are rebuilt during 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 percent 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 **10** 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:

- * FFA Advisers
- * Vocational Agricultural Instructor
- * County Extension Agent or Assistant
- * NRCS Employees
- * FSA CED/Loan Manager/Officer
- * SWCD Employees
- * College of Agriculture Instructor
- * American Society of Farm Managers
- * Accredited Farm Manager
- * Crop Insurance Agents/Adjustors (not contestant's agent or adjustor)
- * Farm Credit Services Officers (not contestant's service officer)
- * Bank Ag Loan Officer (not contestant's loan officer)

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

- * Private crop consultants or agronomist
- * Anyone who has a financial or direct business tie to a company that sells agribusiness supplies (i.e. seed or chemical representatives, farm equipment sales men, etc.)
- * Employee/relative of the contestant lending agencies
- * The contestant himself/herself
- * Producers serving on boards of NSP, USCP or state sorghum producers boards affiliated with NSP

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. Initial Check: The contestant must harvest and report at least **1.5** continuous acres in order to complete the initial check. The unharvested sorghum will be used for the recheck if required. Recheck: A recheck of **1.5** continuous acres from the remaining acres of the contest plot is required if the yield on the initial check is 250,000 or more. When the recheck yield is **equal to or more than** the initial check yield, then the recheck yield will be the yield for the plot. When the recheck yield is **less than** the first check yield, then an average of the two yields will be used for the contest plot.

When harvesting, if the resulting yield is 250,0000 or more bushels per acre, contact NSP headquarters at 1-800-658-9808 for further instruction.

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 1. Harvest information arriving after close of business on December 1 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

All division placings will be determined by yield only.

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 yield in the county will be named the county winner.

First, second and third place state winners in each division will be determined by yield. Non-irrigated entries will not be entered into state and national competition if their yield is below 60 bushels per acre. Only one state award in each division will be given per membership with the entry with the highest yield 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 yield. Only one national award will be given per membership, with only the entry with the highest yield being considered for national honors.

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.

THE NEW BIN BUSTER AWARDS: A new yield target has been set at 250 bushels per acre or greater, which must be met in order to qualify for the following three prizes.

- * 1st Place: 3-year pickup lease of a Dodge, Chevrolet, Ford or Toyota (\$25,000 value)
- * 2nd Place: All Terrain Vehicle (\$10,000 value)
- * 3rd Place: Riding Mower (\$5,000 value)

10 acre minimum entry with 1.5 harvest plot to be eligible.



Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

KGSC Sets 2014 Research Priorities

The Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission (KGSC) set research priorities for the next fiscal year, Oct. 1, 2014 to Sept. 30, 2015. The priorities were based on feedback received from Kansas sorghum growers.

"Establishing research priorities is critical to get the type of research we need," said Jeff Casten, KGSC District Eight commissioner. "I feel like we are very in tune with growers across the state. Our highest priority is weed control."

KGSC accepts proposals from both public and private research entities that are committed to advancing the sorghum industry for sorghum farmers. Interested individuals should contact Jill Barnhardt, KGSC administrator for a detailed *request for proposal* announcement. Research priorities are:

1. **Weed Control** – (a) Research focusing on the identification of new genetic sources for resistance to available grass control herbicides. (b) Management research addressing herbicide treatment and farm-based weed control.
2. **Yield** – (a) Genetic and breeding research targeted toward increased yields in both high yielding and limited resource environments. (b) Research focusing on best farm management practices for top yields. This priority can include but is not limited to farm trials, extension meetings, and on-farm management case studies. (c) Identify BMPs for both full and limited irrigation practices.
3. **Sorghum Economics and Profitability** – (a) Production economics focusing on farm profitability and sorghum

return. (b) Water economics to include but not limited water response curves and limited irrigation returns. (c) Basis drivers evaluating the impact of ethanol, feed markets, exports and other market drivers on interior Kansas basis markets.

4. **Disease Control** – (a) Evaluate how plant health and disease resistance are influenced by management including but not limited to fertilizer, seed treatment, and seeding rates. (b) Genetic research targeted toward plant health, standability and disease resistance.
5. **Insect Control** – (a) Evaluation of economic threshold for treatment and insect control related to profitability. (b) Chinch bug management and control.

Proposals are due to the commission by April 30, 2014. Research proposals outside of these priorities will be considered. For proposal instructions and questions, please contact KGSC.

"Kansas grain sorghum farmers had a great year in 2013," said Clayton Short, KGSC chairman. "Acres planted increased and grain production per acre was up. Sorghum continues to be the crop of choice in water stressed environments in Kansas. Grain sorghum production is not without challenges. Increasing herbicide and yield options are still common themes in sorghum grower conversations. The Kansas Sorghum Commission is eager to get quality proposals to invest in producer fields so we can continue to increase the profitability of the sorghum farmers."

*For more information about the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, contact
KGSC Administrator Jill Barnhardt 795 22nd Rd. NW, Lebo, KS 66856
(785) 341-6433, jill@ksgrainsorghum.org, www.ksgrainsorghum.org*



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Endangered Species Listings on the Fast Track

By Hannah Lipps

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is 40 years old, and most producers know the far reaching impacts it can have on agricultural land. Because the ESA protects endangered plant and animal species and their habitats, farmers and ranchers can be disproportionately affected.

Litigation Driving ESA Listings

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which implements ESA, is often slow-moving. But a recent legal settlement of unprecedented size is set to push hundreds of species from a candidate list to full listing – or delisting – in just two years.

Over several years, Wild Earth Guardians and the Center for Biodiversity attempted to force action on hundreds of candidate species by filing a series of lawsuits against the Department of Interior, which oversees the USFWS. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for Washington, D.C., combined this litigation into one huge settlement that compels USFWS to act on 250 species by 2016.

Impacting Producers

Because of the huge scope and fast timeline, it is critical for producers to know which listed species are in their areas,

◀ The Lesser Prairie Chicken (LEPC) occupies a 19 million-acre range across five states (Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas). The USFWS listed the LEPC as “threatened” with a final determination on March 27, 2014. See more on Natural Resources Solutions’s Stakeholder Conservation Strategy for the LEPC at <http://lepcstakeholderstrategy.com>.

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and engage with USFWS about populations, conservation and impacts.

For farmers, species listing may affect them in any number of ways from land use limitation and complications at the FSA office, to private land seizure in extreme cases. Listing a species changes the rules for any federal program that could affect habitat, including those administered by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

One group in Austin, Texas, is focused on positive outcomes. Natural Resources Solutions (NRS) is raising awareness about the coming influx of new listings and bringing together landowners, industry, business and environmental interests to build consensus around solutions that benefit stakeholders, communities and species.

Steve Manning, NRS principal, understands this need firsthand. A fifth-generation Texas rancher, Manning learned the complex interactions between ESA regulations and land stewardship by necessity when his family's grazing lease was threatened in the early 1990s.

"My background is a landowner, ag background," says Manning. "Nearly all of our solutions involve agriculture and landowners because if we are going to find ways to increase conservation, the best way to do that is to go to the people who steward the land."

Know the Process

Each species affected by the settlement is already on a candidate list, meaning they have completed part of the detailed listing process. USFWS

has determined each of the species is warranted for listing but precluded because of higher priorities, often budget-related.

In order to officially list or delist a candidate species, USFWS has to publish a proposed rule in the U.S. Federal Register. The proposed rule gives stakehold-

“It actually helps the situation when stakeholders like ag offer to participate in the solution.”

ers 12 months to comment. At the end of those 12 months, USFWS reviews the input and best available research and publishes a final rule in the Federal Register announcing the species is either listed or withdrawn.

Now, as USFWS faces a backlog of candidate species, they need partners that will be part of the solution.

"These species will either have to be listed or pulled off the list by 2016," says Manning. "We don't normally see massive settlements but this overpowers the agency. USFWS doesn't have the resources to handle that load on that short of a timeline."

Part of the Solution

Farmers, ranchers and landowners are perfectly poised to weigh in on pending ESA classifications because they are so close to the land.

"It actually helps the situation when stakeholders like ag offer to participate in the solution," he said "In a number of cases, the agency will be looking for people to help build solutions."

Manning says the manner of involvement depends largely on the species. A species listing that only affects a few counties might be better approached individually, while plugging into a larger coalition makes sense with a species that covers multiple states.

"The most important thing is that farmers talk to state and federal officials and demand a seat at the table," says Manning. "Don't wait until the end. Be engaged in the rule making process and strategy for solutions at the beginning."

Capitalize on the Benefits

Manning says producers also need to consider alternative revenue streams as industries like oil and gas work to maintain habitat and industrial use.

"We see opportunities for agriculture to have another revenue stream like a market-based crediting system," says Manning. "Developers like oil and gas need to continue to produce. It is easier for them to pay somebody that already has grassland or maybe land coming out of CRP to maintain that habitat or create that habitat, than it is for them to move or end activity. NRS is developing stakeholder conservation strategies as a way for oil and gas money to flow down to landowners."

In the end, USFWS is compelled to propose the candidate species. Agriculture can sit back and watch, or be a part of the solution. 🌾



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Farmers Get Creative with Grain Sorghum Management

By Hannah Lipps

FROM COAST TO COAST SORghum growers are managing their crops to get the most out of every acre and finding creative ways to deal with common problems. The challenges aren't unique, but the solutions are.

Making Every Drop Count

In Texas, farmers are teaming up with the Texas Alliance for Water Conservation (TAWC) to face the region's growing water shortages and new restrictions. When a local producer wanted to rotate three crops on 240 drip-irrigated acres, he consulted the TAWC for advice. They developed a plan together that

would maximize yield and minimize water waste.

Rick Kellison, TAWC project manager, studied historic evapotranspiration data to determine the highest water need window for each crop.

"If we staggered planting dates," said Kellison, "we'd keep those three crops from needing water at the same time."

Then the TAWC installed capacitance probes, an innovative technology that collects soil moisture data, in the producer's field to make sure every drop of water was put to good use. The probes gave the producer the information he needed to adjust irrigation

▲ **MAKING IT COUNT.** From water conservation to fungicides to grain storage, growers are finding creative ways to increase their bottom lines with grain sorghum.

according to the volume, depth and timing of soil moisture.

The result? His grain sorghum yielded 8,800 pounds per acre (157 bushels/acre), corn made 240 bushels per acre, and his cotton made 1,800 pounds per acre, all healthy yields in a severely water restricted region.

"This gives us a way to visualize what's going on beneath the soil," says



Some farmers turned to fungicides to solve their problems, but results were mixed. That was until North Carolina State University (NCSU) took up the problem and sought an efficient way to use fungicides on sorghum.

Dr. Randy Weitz of North Carolina State University began sorghum fungicide trials just last year. And though it is too soon to draw hard conclusions, early data demonstrates that application timing is everything.

Kellison. “So when we have extreme environmental demands, we can see how deep we are moving that water and how deep the crop is reaching. We can know if we need to slow that pivot down to keep the water from wicking or evaporating.”

Fungicides: Timing is Everything

In North Carolina, producers are facing a different problem. Farmers there deal with very warm, humid conditions for most of the growing season. This puts extreme disease pressure on sorghum crops, but farmers still want to grow grain sorghum to meet regional feed demand.

“Two years ago when we started hybrid evaluation in the region, we split our trials so that half our plots got fungicide and half didn’t,” says Weitz. “We were surprised we didn’t see a yield difference between them, especially as we could visually see a difference in the amount of anthracnose present.”

So, Weitz wondered if timing would make a difference.

“I began to wonder what would happen if there was strobularin or triazole at boot, early flower, or two weeks after full head,” he says. “The most consistent results were with strobularin. We got good yield re-

▲ **STORED AWAY.** Burt Heinrich decided to try grain storage bags to get the most out of his 2013 grain sorghum crop. So far, that decision has paid off.

sponse and disease control when we sprayed at first flower. We saw some improvement at boot, but virtually none two weeks after full heading.”

In the 2013 growing season, Weitz saw almost a 20-bushel yield increase when spraying fungicides at first flower instead of two weeks after heading.

“We don’t have a lot of results,” he says, “but we are being clear with growers: it looks like strobularin at first flower is good. And if you err [in timing], err early.”

Grain Bagging Comes Through in a Pinch

Burt Heinrich lost an entire cotton crop to hail last June. Short on options, he turned to grain sorghum – not a staple on his farm but hardy and reliable nonetheless. At harvest, he leased combines and the owners suggested he borrow their grain

bagger as well. Heinrich was skeptical but he took the equipment in lieu of trucks to haul his grain directly to an elevator.

“We ended up putting about 11 bags of grain out,” he said.

Heinrich’s grain bags were 200 feet long and 9 feet in diameter. He says a full bag will hold a half million pounds, or eight to ten truckloads per bag. He was impressed with their efficiency as he skipped wait times at the elevator and could cut grain around the clock when moisture was low.

He had plenty of concerns about the safety of his grain, from vandals to

mice to moisture, but none of them panned out.

“The quality of the grain was excellent,” Heinrich said. “We put it in at 14.5 percent moisture, and a lot of it came out

For Heinrich, bagging turned out to be an excellent marketing decision. He doesn’t grow grain every year so it doesn’t make sense to keep trucks, he doesn’t have on-farm bins and he hadn’t pre-contracted to an elevator.

“
If you see an opportunity for
basis getting better, putting
it in the bag puts you in
driver’s seat.”

exactly the same. We didn’t have any grain spoil, and we had very few issues with holes in the bags from mice—just a few fox holes we had to tape up.”

He stored his grain over the winter and hauled it to a local ethanol plant in February, where he more than recuperated his expenses.

“Some places they have on farm storage and lots of elevators, but we just don’t have that here,” he says.

“I would say if you see an opportunity for basis getting better, putting it in the bag puts you in the driver’s seat.”



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Over-the-Top Weed, Grass Control Timeline and Expectations

By Lindsay Kennedy

DURING THE NATIONAL Sorghum Producers' annual Sorghum General Session at Commodity Classic, DuPont's Wayne Schumacher presented on the timeline and progress in bringing the company's Inzen sorghum trait and Zest herbicide to a sorghum field near you.

Schumacher, new technology launch manager for DuPont, said one of the biggest hurdles sorghum growers have in order to maximize yields is over-the-top grass control.

"The key benefit we are really focused on with the trait and herbicide system is to provide post-emergence grass control in sorghum production," said Schumacher. "If they could manage that, we could see on average a 13-bushel return with the trait and herbicide."

DuPont says Inzen, the herbicide tolerance trait for sorghum, and Zest, the post-emergence herbicide for control of grasses, will give growers "a better chance for a better crop, yield and profit" by delivering proven herbicide active ingredients that are new for sorghum, more options to clean up grass that comes up in the crop, and crop safety due to built-in herbicide tolerance.

Other grower benefits include post-grass control flexibility by controlling foxtails, barnyardgrass, panicum and crabgrass. DuPont says the technology also gives growers a tool to rotate chemistries to avoid resistance build-up to glyphosate. The trait is also a native, non-GMO trait, which allows for export flexibility.

Stewardship is Key

The Izen and Zest system also contains a trait stewardship plan supported by the Sorghum Checkoff.

Schumacher said stewardship and best management practices will play a vital role in the success and sustainability of the technologies, which represent the first technologies solely focused on sorghum.

"The key point around stewardship is that as we bring technology into a crop system, what we want to do is ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of this trait," he said. "If we have an over-reliance on a single technology, and we often find that two to three years after the launch, you can start building resistance problems. So, what we want to do is help bring an educa-

tion and certification program in conjunction with the Sorghum Checkoff in terms of how we manage this for long-term viability because we don't want to lose this technology."

Helping producers implement best management practices will be a priority for the Sorghum Checkoff.



▲ **TECHNOLOGY UPDATE.** DuPont's Wayne Schumacher provided an update on the over-the-top technology during NSP's Sorghum General Session at Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas on Feb. 27.

“This technology will bring increased agronomic flexibility to U.S. sorghum farmers by adding an additional tool to the toolbox for weed control,” said Dr. Justin Weinheimer, crop improvement program director for the Sorghum Checkoff. “The Sorghum Checkoff is committed to working collaboratively with DuPont to ensure the success of Inzen and Zest.”

DuPont says product stewardship practices that will be important in managing johnsongrass and shattercane will include:

- Do not plant the Inzen trait in consecutive years in the same field,
- Manage johnsongrass and shattercane in road ditches and fence rows,

- Do not expect the Inzen trait and Zest herbicide to control ALS resistant johnsongrass or shattercane,
- Plant the trait into fields where emerged weeds have been controlled by tillage or non-selective herbicides such as glyphosate,
- Plan crop rotations that allow use of alternate mode-of-action herbicides in the year following Inzen sorghum,
- Closely monitor effectiveness of herbicide programs, and
- Complete certification program and sign Stewardship Technology Use Agreement.

Zest cannot be applied to sorghum that does not contain the DuPont Inzen herbicide tolerant trait as severe crop injury or death will occur.

Commercialization

DuPont Pioneer and Advanta US are the two companies who have signed agreements to commercialize the Inzen sorghum trait, Schumacher said.

“They will probably be the two companies out in the lead bringing this trait to their hybrids,” he said. “We are also in discussions with other seed companies to do the same thing.”

Schumacher told those in attendance at the NSP Sorghum General Session in late February 2014 the Inzen ALS trait could be available in seed on a very limited basis by 2015, but 2016 is more of a probability. Time-to-market is limited by breeding cycle times. 🐦

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Sorghum Checkoff Releases 2013 Annual Report

The Sorghum Checkoff's 2013 Annual Report is now available both in print and at SorghumCheckoff.com. The report overviews the organization's focus on crop improvement, high value markets and renewables programs, the 2013 financial report, sorghum production and the Sorghum Checkoff board of director's strategic model.

"We believe the future is bright for sorghum," said Stewart Weaver, Sorghum Checkoff chairman and grower from Edmondson, Ark. "As you will read in the 2013 annual report, the Sorghum Checkoff invested \$3.9 million toward crop improvement in 2013. We are leveraging valuable research through collaborative and strategic investments with public and private entities across the U.S. to unlock the genetic potential of sorghum to ultimately bring new and improved traits to your fields."

From a market standpoint, Weaver said, new end users are entering the sorghum market, realizing the crop's potential and value in products such as biofuel feedstocks, livestock feed, gluten-free flour, green chemicals, building materials and the list goes on. Strong demand, both domestically and internationally, strengthens producers' bottom line.

The report also overviews checkoff programs such as Leadership Sorghum, Sorghum U and the Sorghum: The Smart Choice™ branding initiative.

"It was exciting to see planted sorghum acres in 2013 above 8 million for the first time since 2008," said Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Florentino Lopez. "The Sorghum Checkoff, along with new energy from industry, is pushing to make sorghum reach its full potential. From collaboration with industry on high-level crop improvement projects to shaping demand and value drivers such as ethanol, exports or the food industry, a revival is taking place in the sorghum industry."

The 2013 Sorghum Checkoff annual report is available online at www.SorghumCheckoff.com, or you can request a printed copy by emailing info@sorghumcheckoff.com. ✓



Chinese Market for U.S. Sorghum Still Going Strong

The current population of the People's Republic of China is estimated to be about 1.39 billion, making up about 19.3 percent of the world's population. Even more impressive, China remains the most populous country in the entire world, having approximately 130 million more people than India, the second largest country in the world.

This boom in population was extremely evident when a U.S. Grains Council-hosted trade team made up of representatives of the Sorghum Checkoff and Texas Grain Sorghum Producers traveled throughout China. The skylines of the Chinese cities visited were dotted with new high-rises and countless construction cranes.

So, why should we care about China's growth? China's agricultural industry lags behind in modern technology and relies on imported goods to supply their growing population with a food supply. On the flip side, China continues to develop as the world's biggest growth market for agricultural products, and U.S. sorghum also continues to become an attractive commodity for its rapidly expanding market.

The U.S. Grains Council along with the Sorghum Checkoff have worked to increase demand in China since late 2012. In fact, according to USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, combined exports and outstanding sales are up from zero last marketing year to more than 2.2 million

metric tons (87 million bushels) this marketing year as of March 6, 2014.

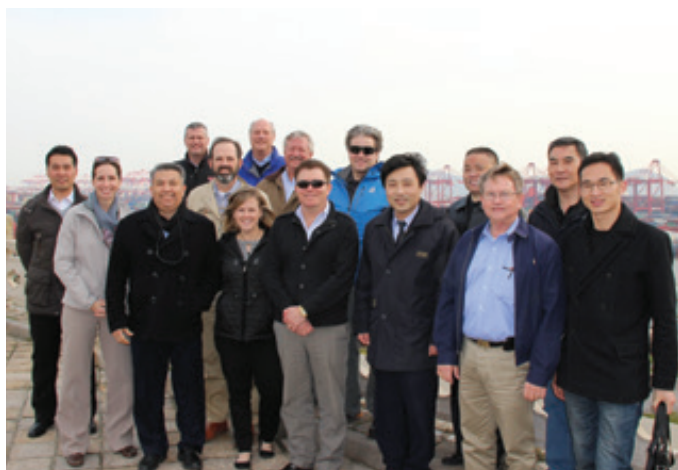
Sorghum is an attractive commodity for China's quickly expanding market, especially for animal agriculture end-users. Unlike corn and wheat, sorghum is not subject to China's tariff rate quota and this provides a strong incentive for importers and end-users to purchase sorghum from the United States.

China is one of many export markets, including Mexico and Japan where the U.S. Grains Council and the Sorghum Checkoff work to create demand and increased opportunities for sorghum farmers. However, it was interesting to see the sheer magnitude of China's market demand, not to mention the current construction taking place there.

A trade team of sorghum traders, a nutritionist and a sorghum producer traveled to China the week of March 10 to host sorghum seminars for Chinese grain buyers. The seminars were in partnership with the U.S. Grains Council, Texas Grain Sorghum Producers, Texas Department of Agriculture and the Sorghum Checkoff.

The goal of the educational seminars was to provide technical information on topics from the availability of

Continued on p. 4 of USCP Newsletter



Sorghum Checkoff Now Accepting Applications for Leadership Sorghum Class II

3

Sorghum farmers interested in participating in the Sorghum Checkoff's Leadership Sorghum program can now apply online to become a member of Class II.

Leadership Sorghum is a farmer-focused program to develop the next generation of leaders for the sorghum industry.

Through five sessions over the span of 16 months, Class II will be exposed to various aspects of the sorghum industry from basic research to international marketing. Through both hands-on and classroom style education, participants will gain an understanding of how sorghum moves through the value chain, how checkoffs and stakeholder organizations interact on behalf of the industry and what the future holds for the crop. The program also provides professional development training and networking opportunities.

"This program has really shown me the value of producer leadership in commodity organizations as well as the broad diversity and opportunities that exist in the



sorghum industry," said Luke Sayes, Class I graduate and sorghum farmer in Deville, La. "I believe this industry has a bright future."

Eligible applicants must be farmers actively engaged in sorghum production in the United States. Fifteen growers will be accepted into the program's second class. Men and women are encouraged to apply.

"It was amazing seeing the entire sorghum industry chain from seed production to the final end user," said Pat Damman, a sorghum farmer from Clifton, Kan., and graduate of Leadership Sorghum Class I. "The experience and contacts I received will be a lifelong asset to my farming operation. I wouldn't trade the experience for anything."

Applications and recommendations for Leadership Sorghum Class II are due April 30, 2014. Following the application deadline, all complete applications and references will be reviewed by a committee comprised of Sorghum Checkoff board members, staff and alumni of the Leadership Sorghum program. Finalists may be contacted via telephone to arrange an interview. Class members and alternates will be notified of acceptance by June 30, 2014. The online application, reference forms, program criteria and class schedule are available at www.SorghumCheckoff.com/leadership. ✓



Members of Leadership Sorghum Class I gather in front of biomass sorghum in Hereford, Texas, during the group's first session in Sept. 2012. Growers interested in applying for Class II should visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com/leadership.

Jurek Joins Sorghum Checkoff As New Communications Director



The Sorghum Checkoff welcomes Faith Jurek to its staff as communications director. Faith takes the place of Jenna Hightower who stepped down from the position in March 2014.

Faith has her master's degree in agricultural communications from Texas Tech University. She has communications experience through internships with the San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, State

Fair of Texas, Lubbock Chamber of Commerce and Congressman Randy Neugebauer in Washington, D.C. She also served as the president of the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow and was a member of the 2011 National Champion Texas Tech Meat Judging Team.

"Faith brings not only a broad range of communications skills to the sorghum team, but she also possesses a passion for agriculture and the work ethic needed to continue the Sorghum Checkoff's many communications and education programs," said Lindsay Kennedy, Sorghum Checkoff external affairs director. Faith joined the staff April 1, 2014. ✓

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China Export Market, Continued

U.S. sorghum to procuring the crop as well as sorghum nutritional values in rations and the milling of sorghum. James Born, a sorghum grower from Booker, Texas, also spoke to the Chinese end-users about growing grain sorghum and providing a high quality commodity to buyers around the world.

The educational seminars were a huge success with more than 300 brokers, buyers, logistics and nutritionists attending the meeting in Qingdao. In fact, attendance continued to be strong throughout the week with more than 250 attending a meeting in Guangzhou and 75 participants attending a meeting in Shanghai.

When visiting with end-users about sorghum, they are just as excited and interested in sorghum as they were on Oct. 18, 2013, when the first shipment of 60,000 metric tons (2.36 million bushels) of sorghum landed in the Guangzhou Port facility.

All indications from China buyers are they are happy with the quality of U.S. grain sorghum and plan to continue to book vessels in the coming months. However, buyers are concerned the U.S. cannot provide the needed production acres to satisfy their growing demand. The U.S. traders traveling with the team reminded the Chinese audience that U.S. farmers respond to price and encouraged them to start buying new crop.

The trade mission to China helped facilitate marketing relationships that will benefit sorghum growers throughout the U.S. Just as the economic momentum in China is gaining strength, the sorghum industry and more importantly, the sorghum farmer will match this momentum to supply both domestic and international demands. ✓

Sorghum Industry Events

May 16 — Deadline for USCP Board Nominations
Visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com for more info

June 9-12 — International Fuel Ethanol Workshop
Indianapolis, Ind.

June 25-27 — Sorghum Improvement Conference
of North America (SICNA), Corpus Christi, Texas

July 25 — Oklahoma Sorghum Commission Meeting
Goodwell, Okla.

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Sorghum Shortcuts

NSP Board of Directors Accepting Applications for Open Board Seats

The sorghum industry is seeking your involvement. The nominating committee for National Sorghum Producers has begun the process of accepting applications for individuals with an interest in serving on the NSP board of directors.

About the NSP Board

As leaders and representatives of the membership of NSP, the board of directors is responsible for setting policy and strategic direction, which propel the organization forward to accomplish its goals.

Eleven directors are seated on the NSP board, which is comprised of sorghum growers and representatives from the sorghum industry. Per NSP board of directors policy, the majority of the board must be comprised of growers.

Board directors serve three-year terms starting Oct. 1 by representing, leading, advising and supporting the activities of the National Sorghum Producers. A board member can serve up to two consecutive terms.

Time Commitment

Board members are expected to attend all board and committee meetings. Three board meetings are held per year, including NSP's annual conference held in conjunction with the Commodity Classic, a summer board meeting in August, and a winter board meeting in November.

Eligibility

The NSP board is not limited to growers, as members of industry are encouraged to apply. No experience is necessary. All you need is simply a desire to improve the sorghum industry.

Applications must be completed by a candidate in order to be considered for a position on the board of directors. Following the deadline, submitted applications will be reviewed by the NSP nominating committee and candidates will be interviewed. Nominations by the committee will then be made to the board of directors for consideration and election. Candidates will be notified of the result immediately following this process.

Apply Before May 9

The board director application and position description can be found online at SorghumGrowers.com. The deadline to apply is May 9, 2014.

About NSP

NSP is the national commodity organization for grain, sweet and energy sorghum and represents U.S. sorghum farmers nationwide. The member-focused organization is the voice of the sorghum industry and works through education, legislative and regulatory issues relevant to the industry. NSP is headquartered in Lubbock, Texas, with members in 30 states and affiliate organizations in seven states throughout the U.S. Sorghum Belt.

Questions?

Visit SorghumGrowers.com for more information about the National Sorghum Producers board of directors, staff, mission and vision. You can also call our office at 806-749-3478 with questions about the board of directors application process. 🌾



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Congratulations to the national winners of the 2013 National Sorghum Producers Yield and Management Contest. And thanks to the growers who chose Pioneer® brand hybrids as part of their game plan.

Rank/Entrant Name	State	County	Yield (bu/a)	Pioneer® brand Hybrid
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REDUCED-TILL IRRIGATED

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2nd	Duane L. Vorderstrasse	Nebraska	Harlan	171.03	84G62
3rd	Steven Haywood	Arkansas	Clay	147.82	84P80

NO-TILL NON-IRRIGATED

1st	Gary Resco	Kansas	Cloud	176.39	84P80
3rd	Laurence W. Chappell	North Carolina	Perquimans	132.12	84P80

MULCH-TILL NON-IRRIGATED

2nd	Bob Shearer	Pennsylvania	Lancaster	162.81	84G62
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DOUBLE CROP NON-IRRIGATED

3rd	D & M Farms	Arkansas	Jackson	129.61	84G62
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DOUBLE CROP IRRIGATED

3rd	D & M Farms	Arkansas	Jackson	117.37	84G62
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CONVENTIONAL-TILL NON-IRRIGATED

1st	David Justice	Kansas	Cherokee	144.84	84G62
2nd	Mike Shearer	Pennsylvania	Lancaster	170.45	84G62

CONVENTIONAL-TILL IRRIGATED

1st	Eric Parkey	Texas	Lamb	194.97	85Y40
2nd	Jim Boehlke Bell-Key Farms	Idaho	Canyon	193.66	85Y40

IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER AWARD

	Ki Gamble	Kansas	Edwards	215.00	84G62
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NON-IRRIGATED BIN BUSTER AWARD

	John W. Williams	Illinois	White	186.35	84G62
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National winners selected from state 1st place winners.

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Learn more about the National Sorghum Producers Yield and Management Contest at pioneer.com/nsp.

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