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# SORGHUM *Grower*

SUMMER 2019

*Farm Bill Implementation*

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

**SORGHUM**  
*Grower*

SUMMER 2019

ON THE COVER: Verity Ulibarri, a sorghum farmer and ag lender with Farm Credit of New Mexico who is also chairwoman of the Sorghum Checkoff, provides farmers a unique perspective during the current farm economy. Pictured with Ulibarri is eastern New Mexico producer and former National Sorghum Producers director Stan Fury.



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Summer 2019, Volume 13, Issue 3

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4201 North Interstate 27  
Lubbock, Texas 79403  
806-749-3478 (phone)  
800-658-9808 (toll free)  
806-749-9002 (fax)  
[www.SorghumGrowers.com](http://www.SorghumGrowers.com)

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## CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

### *Farming Forward with Optimism*



In my last chairman's column, I began by saying how 2018 was a "wild ride" for sorghum producers, yet I had no idea how bumpy agriculture could be in 2019. This year has been a challenging time for not only sorghum producers, but for almost all farmers. From brutal blizzards and freezing temperatures this winter, to floods this spring throughout the Midwest, Mother Nature has been uncooperative at best for producers. Yet, as the saying goes, "If this way of life were easy, everyone would be doing it!"

It is safe to say amongst farmers the elephant in the room is still, and will remain, trade. Almost everything we have heard or read in ag media over the past year has revolved around trade disruptions, tariffs and the potential of new trade agreements. Whenever I get the chance to speak with a group of sorghum growers, I always remind them how much policy matters to their bottom line. Our producers profitability was affected because of trade policy. Yet, as we are all well aware, the Market Facilitation Program enacted by the Trump Administration has a very meaningful financial impact on our growers. Due to the efforts of our organization and talented staff, sorghum growers were treated very fairly within the program. Let me reiterate, policy matters!

As I write, MFP 2.0 signup has begun with county payment rates recently being announced. A quick analysis of the rates shows sorghum was once again treated well. I look forward to seeing the formulas behind 2.0, but on the surface, the program looks very fair for our growers.

Moving forward into this second half of 2019, it's exciting to see trade talks ongoing with not only China, but also Japan. While Japan isn't a large customer of U.S. sorghum, many of our growers who produce other commodities will benefit from a trade deal. I can only remain optimistic for the future, as I would much rather be selling sorghum for export than receiving payments.

On yet another trade front, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) has continued to hit roadblocks politically. I sincerely hope that after the August recess Congress can get down to business and show some real results. August will be a great time for our producers to visit with their Congressional leaders in their district. I encourage everyone to reach out to their elected officials to reinforce how impactful these trade agreements are to the farmer.

As I wrap up a full year as chairman, I have many, many reasons to be grateful. It has been the utmost pleasure to serve with a dynamic board of directors, a top-notch staff and represent a fantastic group of producers. Moving forward, I'm very optimistic for some big picture items on the horizon. Will Rogers hit the nail on the head when he said, "The farmer has to be an optimist, or he wouldn't still be a farmer."

Dan Atkisson  
Board Chairman



## Igrowth™ Sorghum on the Horizon



By Delanie Crist

**A**dvancements in weed control technology in sorghum are on the horizon through the form of *igrowth*™, a proprietary trait in sorghum, which allows producers to spray imidazolinone (IMI) herbicides for weed control.

The IMI tolerant traits were discovered by Advanta Seeds in 2007. Since then, the Advanta research and development teams have tested the new technology in multiple environments, working to finalize the discovery.

United Sorghum Checkoff Program Director of Agronomy Brent Bean, Ph.D., says the *igrowth*™ sorghum technology can be used both for pre-emergent and post-emergent control of weeds and grass in sorghum.

“Up to this point we really haven’t had anything that was effective in controlling grass over-the-top or post-emergence in sorghum,” Bean said. “This will have an over-the-top postemergence label for grass control in sorghum, and that’s a big deal.”

Until the creation of *igrowth*™ sorghum, producers were unable to use imidazolinone herbicides in grain

sorghum because it would kill the crop. Having control over weeds with IMI ingredients, while allowing sorghum crops to reach full yield potential, is creating new opportunities for producers.

Zach Eder, Ph.D., U.S. technology development manager for Advanta, said they set out several years ago to do a different project to bring opportunity to sorghum growers.

By screening their global elite germplasm for potential tolerances, Advanta discovered this natural mutation. Advanta pre-screened multiple lines of sorghum to develop hybrids with tolerance to IMI herbicides.

“Fast forward into recent years, we’ve now launched this technology in countries where the IMI herbicides family is a very strong performing group of herbicide chemistries,” Eder said.

Advanta has now launched the *igrowth*™ technology in Australia, Argentina and several other South American countries.

“[*Igrowth*™] has been a phenomenal success for us



in those countries with sales and grower acceptance surpassing our most ambitious estimates,” said Eder. “So bringing it to the United States is the next big step for us.”

Industry collaboration to bring igrowth™ sorghum to U.S. producers led several Sorghum Checkoff board members to Australia this spring to meet with Advanta’s development managers to learn more about the technology. Craig Poore, a checkoff director and producer from Osborne County, Kansas, was a member of that team.

“My initial reaction was, ‘Okay tell me more. Is this going to work?’” Poore said.

After the initial discussion and receiving an understanding of the chemistries, Poore said he was excited about the possibility of having igrowth™ as a tool for future production.

“Igrowth™ technology is another good thing in our arsenal to help growers in fields where they have issues,” Poore said. “It helps knock back and control weeds while still getting the yield that growers want.”

Poore said it is important the Checkoff works with the industry to explore and bring forward improved and new technologies for producers.

“The Checkoff board, in my opinion, was created to better the crop, not only for profit and marketing but also to enhance growth,” Poore said. “By investing in new technologies, like igrowth™, it not only enhances the crop, but it also benefits the farmers who pay Checkoff dollars.”

While in Australia, the Checkoff group was able to look at commercially launched hybrids. Eder noted that within Advanta’s global family of genetics, Australian genetics for grain sorghum tend to do exceptionally well for their Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas Panhandle markets.

“The [U.S.] growers going to Australia to see the technology in practice was an excellent opportunity to see the herbicide program,” Eder said, “and at the same time to see the potential for the hybrids and the overall pipeline of products that will ultimately be a part of the overall portfolio pipeline for the United States.”

Advanta’s research and development team has been working with materials from Australia and Argentina as well as genetics predominantly used in the United

States to create hybrid products that will fit into the U.S. market.

In addition to their own internal testing, Advanta has initiated numerous trials with different researchers from Kansas State University, Oklahoma State University, Texas A&M University and others across the Sorghum Belt. The Sorghum Checkoff also continues to work with Advanta through the transition into the U.S. market to help ensure education and best management practices are in place for U.S. growers.

“A big part of this technology, as well as the other herbicide tolerant sorghum traits that are going to be coming out, is what we call stewardship guidelines,” Bean said. “We’ll be actively involved with Advanta in developing those stewardship guidelines, which will help ensure this technology lasts for a long time, and the weeds do not become resistant to it.”

Advanta continues to collaborate with herbicide specialists to better understand the potential of

igrowth™ in the U.S. market and also provide the data and information growers are going to need to best utilize this technology.

“We’re showing excellent results as part of a preemergence program as well as a post

application program,” Eder said. “This is going to give a grower in different regions access to different herbicide regimens, so they’ll be able to fit this system into what they’re already doing rather than having to change everything as a whole.”

At this point, Advanta has done U.S. plot tour demonstrations in South Texas and plans to do tours in central Texas, as well.

“We have plots in large scale production with key growers looking at these hybrids all throughout the grain growing areas of the U.S.,” Eder said. “We’re also going to have another large igrowth™ plot in western Kansas.”

Right now, the igrowth™ technologies are in the final process of technology acceptance in Canada and are in the mid-approval stages within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. However, the timeline for final approval remains tentative.

Advanta hopes producers looking at booking and purchasing seed for igrowth™ technology will have access in the fall-to-winter time frame in 2020.✂

“ This will have an over-the-top postemergence label for grass control in sorghum, and that’s a big deal. ”



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FARM BILL IMPLEMENTATION

*By Tom Sell, Combest Sell & Associates*

**A**fter passage of the 2018 Farm Bill last December, ongoing efforts to pass the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and resolve trade disputes with China along with authorization of several rounds of trade mitigation and disaster aid have made it easy to lose sight of the fact the newly enacted farm bill must still be implemented.

Throughout the farm bill debate, National Sorghum Producers had some key objectives in mind, and we thought we'd update you on where those goals are in the implementation process now that they are securely part of the law.

Not much has been announced publicly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) yet, but the Department has indicated a new Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) election that will apply to the 2019 and 2020 crop years will begin this September with the PLC option entailing an opportunity to update yields.

This update (based on 2013-2017 yields) is important to farmers who may have passed up the last opportunity under the 2014 Farm Bill because that update would have meant using D-4 drought yields (from 2009-2013) for purposes of calculating PLC payments.

Other PLC and ARC components include a trend yield adjustment for ARC revenue guarantees, which may make ARC a viable option to at least look at, and reference prices for PLC that can float up (but cannot fall below the minimum established in law) based on the 5-year olympic average of market prices.

And, you cannot read the new conservation title without reading the words, "resource conserving crop rotation," which signifies the priority placed on crops like water-sipping sorghum under overhauled conservation initiatives. USDA's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is working on a new rule to implement the farm bill changes that will be published in the fall to govern the 2020 application process, but from all indications this rule will push more authority out to the state and local levels. This is where NSP and state sorghum staff have been engaging NRCS staff to ensure program objectives eyed by Congress are met.

We've also been keeping a very close watch on the

implementation of changes to Section 9005, the Bio-energy Program for Advanced Biofuels. Congress was adamant all crops that contribute toward the energy independence of our country deserve an equitable opportunity to participate in this program aimed at next generation biofuels production. We feel confident sorghum will now have a full seat at the table under the new rules that are being written to meet this prudent mandate from Congress.

And, finally, we are excited about efforts by the Risk Management Agency to carry out the Congressional mandate to get to the bottom of why sorghum premium rates under crop insurance are so high relative to the risks involved. These higher premiums skew farmer decisions in favor of lower, more affordable coverage levels, which ultimately works against the farmer and the taxpayer who both have a strong, strong interest in promoting crop insurance — where the farmer writes the check for his coverage — and discouraging the need for costly ad hoc disaster aid. This important work is underway.

So, there is a lot going on in the way of farm bill implementation even as all eyes have been on trade, the Market Facilitation Program, and supplemental disaster aid.

We're keeping an eye on things, and we'll be sure to keep you posted.🐦

► TOM SELL is co-founder and managing partner of Combest, Sell & Associates, a firm that focuses on agricultural, food security and rural issues. CSA represents sorghum farmers in Washington, D.C.



## MFP 2.0 Sign Up Available

**O**n July 25, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced further details of the \$16 billion package to support American agriculture producers, including a second installment of the Market Facilitation Program.

This is the second time President Trump has followed through on his commitment to provide farmers needed relief from trade disputes. The USDA has been authorized by the President to provide direct payments through the MFP for 2019 to assist impacted producers, which reflects the estimated impacts of the retaliatory tariffs and non-tariff barriers to exports of U.S. agricultural goods.

Payments will be made by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) under the authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton and wheat. All sorghum types are program eligible.

Assistance is based on a single-county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings of MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per-acre payments are not dependent on which crops are planted in 2019. County payment rates range from \$15-\$150 per acre, depending on the impact of unjustified trade retaliation in that county.

MFP payments will be made in up to three tranches with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. It is important to note producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings.

Signup for MFP is available at local FSA offices until Friday, December 6, 2019. For more information, visit [SorghumGrowers.com/mfp-payment-resources/](http://SorghumGrowers.com/mfp-payment-resources/). If you encounter any questions or concerns about sorghum eligibility during signup, contact National Sorghum Producers at 800-658-9808. We are happy to assist.



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## Sorghum Interest in the Philippines

By Alyssa Soles

**A**s sorghum gains popularity around the world, the Philippines has added themselves to the list of countries that have taken interest. A group of Philippine government representatives, including the Department of Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol and National Sorghum Program Coordinator Lorenzo Caranguian, visited the United States to learn more about the sorghum industry.

The group met with National Sorghum Producers CEO Tim Lust and Sorghum Checkoff Director of Agronomy Brent Bean Ph.D., to discuss various aspects of sorghum. The discussions included topics ranging from production, processing, use, industry organization, government programs and industry challenges.

The group was seeking NSP's advice in order to prepare farmers in the Philippines.

"We are actively interested in the adaptability of the crop to our climate," Agriculture Secretary Piñol said. "We want to be educated so we can start this crop right."

Feed grain and silage are the main focus for bringing sorghum into the Philippines. Their poultry and livestock industries have grown and created more demand. In 2018, the Philippines Department of Agriculture started increasing sorghum production by allocating 100,000 hectares of land to support the country's growing poultry and livestock industries.

In addition to serving as the Department of Agriculture Secretary, Piñol was previously the governor of Cotabato and is a farmer and goat breeder. He uses sorghum silage on his operation. He said corn has been their main source of animal feed, but it has not been performing to the level they need to satisfy demand.

"One of the reasons we are so excited about sorghum is because the price of corn, especially GMO [corn], is too expensive for our farmers – they are barely making a profit," Piñol said. "We are now looking at sorghum for our corn."

Besides using sorghum to meet the demand of the poultry and livestock industries, he said the crop will also be used to provide food supply to the people of the Philippines. He said the indigenous people were granted wide open areas of land like the Native Americans in the U.S. and explained how sorghum suits the region well because it does not require tillage and can be harvested by hand.

"The number one intention with bringing sorghum to the Philippines is to provide them food – it has been a great source of protein for people on the countryside," Piñol said. "Sorghum wasn't given much attention in the past, but we're very serious about our desire to develop our sorghum industry."

Lust explained the benefits of sorghum include the crop requiring less water than other crops, and sorghum can handle waterlogging longer than some crops, which would be ideal in the Philippines during typhoon season if crops are not harvested in time.

Lust also touched on some of the equipment used for sorghum as the process will look different in the Philippines. He referred to some of the same equipment used for traditional crops grown in the Philippines and how in U.S. locations like South Texas, rice and sorghum headers for combines are used interchangeably.

Lust concluded his advice by saying that an industry takes decades to build and sustain, so it is important to be patient and to provide farmers with the resources necessary to succeed. ♣

► A PHILIPPINE DELEGATION, including Department of Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, traveled to the U.S. to learn more about the sorghum industry. U.S. leaders, Tim Lust and Brent Bean, Ph.D., discussed sorghum production, markets and U.S. industry initiatives.



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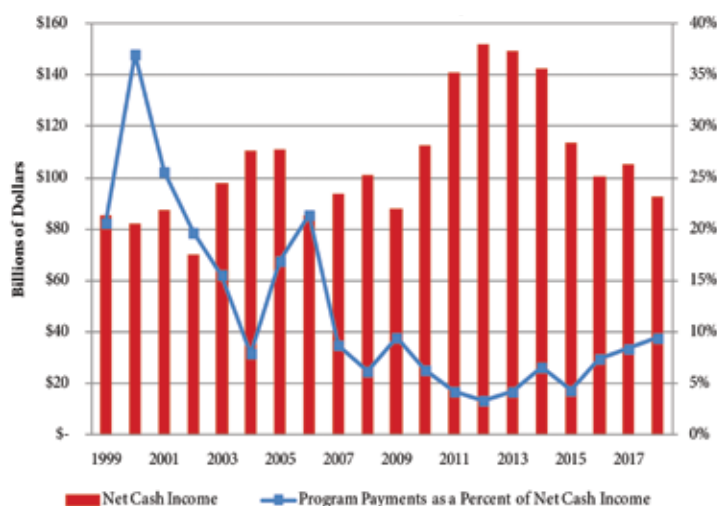
## Capturing the Benefits of USDA Programs

By John Duff

For many years—decades, even—farm program payments made up a significant portion of income for some farmers. For a time, direct payments were guaranteed by statute, and countercyclical payments were all but assured as commodity prices sputtered along and perpetually threatened to test multi-year lows. Add to those programs the occasional disaster payment, and U.S. farmers could predictably rely on farm programs to help remove some level of catastrophic risk.

From farmers, to bankers, to input suppliers, to small rural businesses, everyone involved in agriculture needs the added level of financial certainty farm programs provide. Unfortunately, while net cash income for U.S. agriculture has declined a staggering 37 percent from its 2012 high, farm bill program payments as a percent of that income have not increased in proportion to the loss. Figure 1 illustrates this unsettling financial reality.

Figure 1  
Farm Income and Government Payments



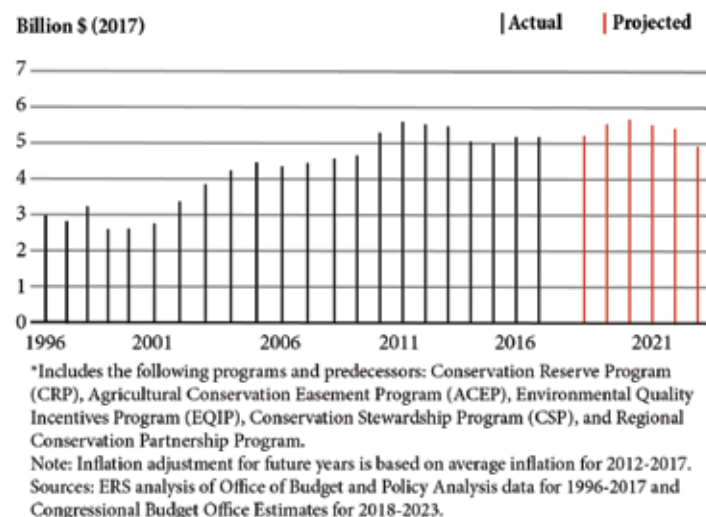
With payments from traditional programs down and unlikely to recover anytime soon (for most crops—sorghum is the lone exception given its strong \$3.95

reference price), farmers need to be mindful of how they are using existing programs and constantly on the lookout for opportunities afforded by new programs or programs they are not currently using. While there are dozens of considerations for existing and new program use, three of the most important programs relate to conservation programs, entity structure and beginning farmer and rancher benefits.

### Conservation Programs

Funding for conservation programs has steadily increased over the past couple decades with current spending levels approaching \$6 billion (see Figure 2). The most common conservation program is the

Figure 2  
Inflation-adjusted spending for major conservation programs\* | 1996-2017, with projections to 2023



Conservation Reserve Program, but the most beneficial programs for sorghum farmers are working lands programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). CSP incentivizes conservation practices adopted across whole farms under multi-year contracts, while EQIP lives up to its name by equipping

farmers—typically at the individual field level—with resource-conserving technology aimed at driving positive conservation outcomes.

Many sorghum farmers have utilized CSP and EQIP, but some do not realize the full scope of these programs. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) relies on 169 conservation practice standards to design the incentives available under CSP and EQIP, so there may be opportunities in areas many farmers have not considered. A few current examples include incentives related to soil properties, drainage and irrigation efficiency in addition to upcoming incentives related to resource-conserving crop rotations, which National Sorghum Producers worked to secure in the last two farm bills.

Entity Structure

Perhaps the most expensive mistake farmers can make when enrolling in farm programs is failing to structure their entities in a way that enables the receipt of payments that commensurate with actual financial risk (see Figure 3). For sole proprietorships, payment

Figure 3  
U.S. Farms by Legal Status for Tax Purposes, 2012

Farm Type	Number	Share	Production Value	Share
Sole proprietorship or family farm	1,828,946	86.7%	\$202,637,055,000	50.3%
Joint operation	137,987	6.5%	\$87,447,400,000	21.7%
Corporation	106,716	5.1%	\$105,815,058,000	26.3%
Other: cooperative, estate or trust, institutional, etc.	35,654	1.7%	\$6,798,315,000	1.7%
Total	2,109,303	100%	\$402,697,828,000	100%

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2012 Census of Agriculture, Table 67, May 2014.

limits for crops, other than peanuts, are a combined \$125,000 for each individual associated with the principal operator under the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, reduced by any sequestration. The key here is an individual associated with the principle operator includes a farmer’s spouse, so the common husband-wife farming duo effectively has a limit of \$250,000. With updated program yields and the large price losses experienced over the past few years, such a payment only requires a few thousand acres in some areas. Joint operations are similar in that each member in the operation has a separate limit.

The exception is corporations, which have a single limit of \$125,000 regardless of the number of members. While this single limit is seen by many as a rule that protects family farmers from encroachment by corpo-

rate agriculture, it is important to remember a corporate structure is used by many family farmers for legitimate tax, liability and other reasons. For any farmers—incorporated or not—who have questions about entity structure or are interested in restructuring, NSP is always happy to help. There is also a wealth of knowledge in this area among private consultants. One such consultant is Performance Agriculture Services, who can be reached by visiting [farm-consultants.com](http://farm-consultants.com).

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Benefits

Beginning farmer programs are an important part of many young farmers’ businesses, and these programs received a boost under the 2018 Farm Bill. Not only were funding levels increased, the programs were expanded to include veterans and other socially disadvantaged and historically underserved groups. For USDA Farm Service Agency programs, beginning farmers are defined as farmers in their first 10 years of operation. While there are multiple benefits for beginning farmers, including higher subsidy rates for crop insurance, the most significant are the interest rates (see Figure 4).

Figure 4  
Current Interest Rates

Program	Interest Rates
Farm Operating - Direct	3.250%
Farm Operating - Microloan	3.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.875%
Farm Ownership - Microloan	3.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

Effective as of July 1, 2019

In conclusion, farming comes with an inordinate amount of risk—regardless of the size of farms. For almost a century, the U.S. government has considered agricultural risk a strategic threat to the safety and economic viability of the country and has funded programs to help farmers manage these risks. However, traditional farm program payments have declined significantly in recent years, so farmers must pay close attention to existing programs and constantly look for opportunities afforded by new and underutilized programs.🌾





# FARMER-FIRST LEGISLATION

*Family Farmer Relief Act Passes  
Congress with Bipartisan Support*

*By Haleigh Erramouspe*

**F**arm debt has increased by 30 percent since 2013. Commodity prices are decreasing while input costs are rising, and ongoing trade disputes add another level of uncertainty to an already precarious situation.

“I think most people involved in the farm economy are going say [the economy] goes up and down,” said Ulibarri. “You have to have thick skin, and you have to be prepared to manage potential outcomes.”

Verity Ulibarri, Chairwoman of the Sorghum Check-off board of directors, is a farmer from McAlister, New Mexico, as well as an agricultural lender for Farm Credit of New Mexico. She said although facing financial challenges can be overwhelming, there are options for those looking to work through them.

## **Restructuring Debt**

When looking to restructure debt, Ulibarri said farmers should work with their creditors to better align their cash flow with their debt service, evaluate what they truly need and look into scaling down their operation. Although it may not seem worth it to downsize, she said it could close the gap enough to help farmers survive long term.

“In agriculture, we have a tendency to get emotionally


connected with what we do as producers,” Ulibarri said. “While it allows us to have a passion often not found in other sectors, sometimes we don’t make decisions as fast as we need to, such as downsizing.”

Other options, she included, were diversifying the operation or sitting out a growing season. Ulibarri said obtaining a part-time job can also provide some stability and relieve some stress from volatility in the agricultural sector.

Throughout the lending process, Ulibarri said, having a good relationship with creditors is important, especially with the primary lender. She also emphasized the importance of being proactive, working through debt and not avoiding creditors for too long. When farmers take the time to work with their creditors, she said, the creditors will often be prompted to work with them, as well.

## **Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019**

For farmers who are working to cope with large debts, there is a new piece of legislation farmers should be aware of that recently passed Congress at the time of writing. On August 1, 2019, H.R. 2336, also known as the Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019, was passed by the Senate. The bill was



first introduced to the House of Representatives in April by a bipartisan group, including House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN). The purpose of this bill is to amend the United States Code concerning Chapter 12 Bankruptcy by increasing the amount of debt covered from \$4.1 million in inflation-adjusted dollars to \$10 million.

Chapter 12 Bankruptcy is a specific type of bankruptcy designed for farmers and fishermen. Its purpose was to create a more streamlined process for farmers to restructure their debt pursuant to a repayment plan under the supervision of a bankruptcy trustee. Chapter 12 was first introduced in 1986 in response to the large farm debts that occurred as a result of the 1980s Farm Crisis. It was originally enacted on a temporary basis but was made permanent in 2005 after being extended multiple times due to the volatility of the agricultural market.

Statistically, Chapter 12 Bankruptcy is not extensively utilized with only 438 cases filed in 2018. However, when producers have reached a last resort, bankruptcy can sometimes be the only accessible tool, especially when creditors are unwilling to work with the producers to pay their debt.

Chapter 12 Bankruptcy takes into consideration the seasonality of farm cash flow, Ulibarri said, and creates a more manageable plan for farmers to pay off their debt over a period of time. She said Chapter 12 Bankruptcy is a good tool if farmers need it, but they should go into the process very intentionally and as a final option.

Ulibarri noted these challenging financial times in agriculture have led to consolidation in many sectors, particularly in production. There is a finite number of profitable farming acres, so consequently there are fewer farmers producing on more acres with larger operating budgets than ever before. Ulibarri said the current amount of farm debt covered by Chapter 12 bankruptcy closes the option off to many large farm operations.

"It just takes so much more to operate farms," Ulibarri said. "Whether that be row crop, or feedlot, or dairy or any of those things. Those operations can get very sizeable."

Billy Bob Brown, a farmer from Panhandle, Texas, said many people do not recognize the amount of money it takes to operate a successful farm, and many farmers are running from year to year. Some farmers who are well balanced and

well financed can weather a financial storm, but a stroke of unlucky circumstances could lead another to have large financial needs that must be met quickly. Brown thinks H.R. 2336 could give farmers facing a difficult financial outlook a chance to continue their business.

"[H.R. 2336] will give them an opportunity to make a decision they wouldn't otherwise have," Brown said, "whether they can continue or not. If their backs are against the door, they will have an opportunity to decide."

Brown was National Sorghum Producers Chairman from 1989-1990 and noted the importance of having good relationships with lawmakers, especially in challenging times. He said when farmers' or organizations' voices are heard by Congress, positive legislation, like H.R. 2336 develops. Farmers have needs, Brown said, and sometimes those needs must be met quickly.

## 1980s Farm Crisis

Brown was actively farming during the 1980s Farm Crisis and said he recognizes similar patterns today to the harsh financial uncertainty faced by farmers in the 1980s.

The 1980s, especially the early years, Brown said, were an economic battle for farmers. Crop prices were low, rain was scarce, interest rates went up as high as 20 percent, and the United States placed a grain embargo against the Soviet Union.

Brown said government programs in the 1980s helped farmers get the financing they needed to stay afloat, but sound management practices and farm diversity were also key aspects of what kept his farm alive, and that same wisdom applies today.

Brown said he saw many good farmers go by the wayside in the 1980s because things happened that were completely out of their control, and they just could not get back on their feet. Today, Brown believes H.R. 2336 is

farmer-oriented legislation that can help farmers survive into the next season whether they are running from year to year, were devastated by the weather or facing other circumstances completely out of their control.

Ulibarri said as a farm lender, she enjoys helping farmers reach the dreams

they have envisioned achieving for a long time, but she also finds joy in helping them get through the hard times. She recognizes times are tough for farmers, but she knows they have thick skin.

"There's a lot of hardship out there, but one thing I do know is farmers are pretty tough, a little stubborn in good ways and always looking for ways to make things work," Ulibarri said, "[Farmers] are pretty industrious, and that is one thing that makes you feel somewhat optimistic in some of the worst situations that we find ourselves."✍

“ One thing I do know is farmers are pretty tough, a little stubborn in good ways and always looking for ways to make things work. ”



# H.R. 2336

## WHERE IS IT TODAY?

*Sorghum Grower - Summer 2019 was published August 5, 2019. This article details the state of H.R. 2336 up to the aforementioned date.*

H.R. 2336, also known as the Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019, was introduced to the House of Representatives on April 18 with the purpose of amending Title 11 of the United States Code with respect to the definition of “family farmer” and raising the debt limit from \$4.1 million in inflation-adjusted dollars to \$10 million.

The bill was sponsored by freshman Rep. Antonio Delgado (D-NY) and co-sponsored by Rep. T.J. Cox (D-CA), Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), Rep. Kelly Armstrong (R-ND) and Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD).

Since its introduction, several institutions have issued their support for the bill, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers Union, the American College on Bankruptcy and the American Bankruptcy Institute.

Once H.R. 2336 was introduced, it was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary and then referred to the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law. On July 11, the bill was ordered to be reported to the full House of Representatives by a voice vote in the House Committee on the Judiciary. When reported to the House of Representatives on July 24, the bill had garnered 22 more bipartisan sponsors.

H.R. 2336 was passed in the House of Representatives on July

25 by voice vote. It included an amendment from the House Committee on the Judiciary of an additional section regarding determination of budgetary effects, and was then sent to the Senate.

The bill was then passed by the Senate by voice vote on August 1 where it was backed by Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and other farm state Senators.

The Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019 will now go to the President's desk where it must be signed before becoming law.



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## SORGHUM BERRY POPSICLES

Make this recipe

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1 (14 oz) can full fat coconut milk  
(refrigerated overnight or for a  
few hours)  
3 tablespoons sorghum syrup  
(more or less to taste)  
1 cup blueberries + 1/2 cup  
separated  
1 cup sliced strawberries or berries  
of choice

### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 In a high speed blender, or blender, add the coconut milk, sorghum syrup, blueberries and strawberries. Mix until well blended.
- 2 Pour the mixture into the popsicle molds, filling it nearly all the way full.
- 3 Fill the remainder of the popsicles mold with blueberries until the mold is almost full. Add the popsicle sticks, cover and place in the freezer for at least 6 hours or until completely frozen.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that sorghum was one of few sweeteners consumed 100 years ago?

As the list of natural and artificial sweeteners grows, sorghum syrup remains a product that is still requested and used today.

Sorghum syrup comes from a crop variety known as sweet sorghum – very fitting, isn't it? Sweet sorghum has a juicier stalk than the other sorghum varieties, which are typically produced for grain and forage uses.

The syrup is created by cooking the juice from the stalk. As the water evaporates, the sweet syrup is produced. Although this natural sweetener is often substituted for molasses, it is distinct and offers a competitive nutritional value.

In addition to a unique flavor, this product also offers health benefits. Sorghum syrup is lower in fructose levels than other sweeteners and is high in potassium.

Sorghum syrup can be compared and used in the place of molasses, honey or syrup. Therefore, it makes the perfect addition to baking or dessert making. As this product regains popularity, it can be found at grocery stores like Walmart, United Supermarkets, Trader Joe's and Whole Foods Market among many others.

For this recipe and more, visit:  
**[SimplySorghum.com](http://SimplySorghum.com)**



# NEWSLETTER

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### **KILLING WEEDS WHO ARE KILLING YIELD**

**A** postemergence grass control herbicide is not available for use in sorghum, but that may change over the next few years. The Sorghum Checkoff has contributed funding for a project with S&W Seed, formerly Chromatin, to produce a sorghum hybrid with tolerance to ACCase (acetyl-CoA carboxylase) herbicides, and they're making steady progress.

ACCase herbicides work as effective postemergence herbicides for the control of grasses.

"This over-the-top grass control technology is something that, for many years, sorghum growers have been saying they want and is a high priority for them," said Brent Bean, Ph.D., Sorghum Checkoff director of agronomy.

### **ENHANCING GROWER PROFITABILITY**

The Sorghum Checkoff estimates yield loss from heavy grass competition can be as much as 50 percent. Even in the average field, yield loss from grasses can be high.

"Grassy weeds can cause huge yield losses, and in sorghum, there is little we can do about it," said Steve Calhoun, S&W Seed vice president for research and development. "ACCase-tolerant sorghum will give us a way to control these weeds and avoid yield loss."

In heavy pressure acres or in areas with a history of established grasses, ACCase-tolerant sorghum will allow growers to plant those acres with sorghum, increasing the available acreage for the crop.

### **ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGES**

Although initial observations of high crop tolerance are encouraging, experience with other genetic traits has shown the importance of careful and rigorous work prior to commercial launch.

- The ACCase tolerant trait was developed through conventional breeding methods and is non-GMO.
- The trait must be expressed across a wide range of environmental conditions.
- The new trait must work in various genetic backgrounds so it can be made available in a range of hybrids. S&W has incorporated the ACCase tolerant trait into several proprietary parents and is evaluating the hybrids of these in the field during the current year.
- The new trait must be agronomically sound with no, or minimal, adverse effects on yield, standability, maturity, etc.
- The herbicide used with the trait must be approved and labeled for this new use. The target active ingredient quizalofop (currently sold as Assure II and other trade names), must be labeled for over-the-top use on sorghum.
- The new trait must work in an overall weed control system. Because ACCase herbicide does not control broadleaf weeds, a grower will need to mix the target herbicide with a broadleaf weed herbicide for a complete weed control system.
- The trait should be kept effective as long as possible. Growers are

well aware weeds can develop resistance to very good herbicides due to overuse or misuse. A sound weed resistance management program is essential before launching a new herbicide trait. S&W and the Sorghum Checkoff will work diligently with university and private sector weed scientists to develop and implement a stewardship plan.

## MAKING PROGRESS

The Sorghum Checkoff believes ACCase-tolerant sorghum may be commercially available in the next three years. S&W Seed is committed to getting the product to market as quickly as possible. Once ready, S&W Seed will sell the product and also license ACCase-tolerant sorghum to other providers. ✓

## THE NEXT STEP TOWARD MAKING BETTER HYBRIDS FASTER

**T**he development of new sorghum hybrids takes years of patient selection and effort. That is because it can take several years to bring a hybrid to market using conventional breeding methods. Now, the speed of hybrid development can accelerate in sorghum with a new technology—Doubled Haploids (DH).

### EARLY AND CONTINUING SUCCESS

In a three-year collaboration, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and DuPont Pioneer, now part of Corteva Agriscience, made the groundbreaking discovery of two haploid inducers in sorghum. Haploid inducers provide sorghum breeders with the opportunity to create finished parental lines of hybrids in a single step, potentially cutting the traditional timeline to develop sorghum hybrids in half.

Since discovering the haploid inducers, Corteva research scientists led by Tanveer Hussain, Ph.D., and Cleve Franks, Ph.D., have moved to the next phase: the downstream process of creating a DH production system, including the early identification of the haploids, the doubling of the chromosomes to generate the finished DH lines, and increasing the seeds for distribution to sorghum breeders. Completion of the production system is still in the works with a few obstacles to overcome, but the pieces are coming together and scientists expect to have a production system soon.

The science of the doubled haploid project gets complicated very quickly for nonscientists, but the exciting news is researchers have successfully created several DH populations for sorghum breeders to use in testing. Hussain has created a number of lines for Corteva sorghum breeders and has been testing them in the fields in Johnston, Iowa, this summer as a proof of concept. Additionally, the haploid inducer lines have been licensed from Corteva to additional breeding programs, as well.

"For the first time, we'll have doubled haploid lines for our breeders to look at," Franks said. "Not huge numbers yet, but they're there. There are actually doubled haploids in the fields, and we'll be making hybrids with them this winter in our nurseries. That's exciting."

### BENEFITS TO GROWERS

DH technology is primarily a breeder's tool, and it significantly speeds up a breeder's ability to create pure parental lines for the creation of hybrids. But breeders aren't the only group expected to benefit from the new technology. Sorghum growers will reap indirect benefits, and those benefits have tremendous potential for sorghum crops. Once the technology is thoroughly developed, growers will benefit by having better hybrids with higher yields and more traits, through the increase in genetic gain that can be realized through the DH process.

"Sorghum growers want hybrids that push the envelope and bring new traits to market," said Justin Weinheimer, Ph.D., Sorghum Checkoff crop improvement director. "Development of this technology is going to allow sorghum seed developers to do that effectively and efficiently. Hopefully, the result for the grower is, in five years down the road, their opportunities for growing more productive hybrids is greater."

Corn growers have already experienced the benefit of DH technology, and, based on those proven successes, sorghum growers can be hopeful about what the technology can achieve, particularly from a yield and trait development standpoint.

"If you look at what's been done in corn, for example, the way they switched over from traditional breeding to doubled haploids, it's really a game-changer, and that's no exaggeration," Franks said. "It changed everything in the way they do their breeding, and it allowed them to get the traits

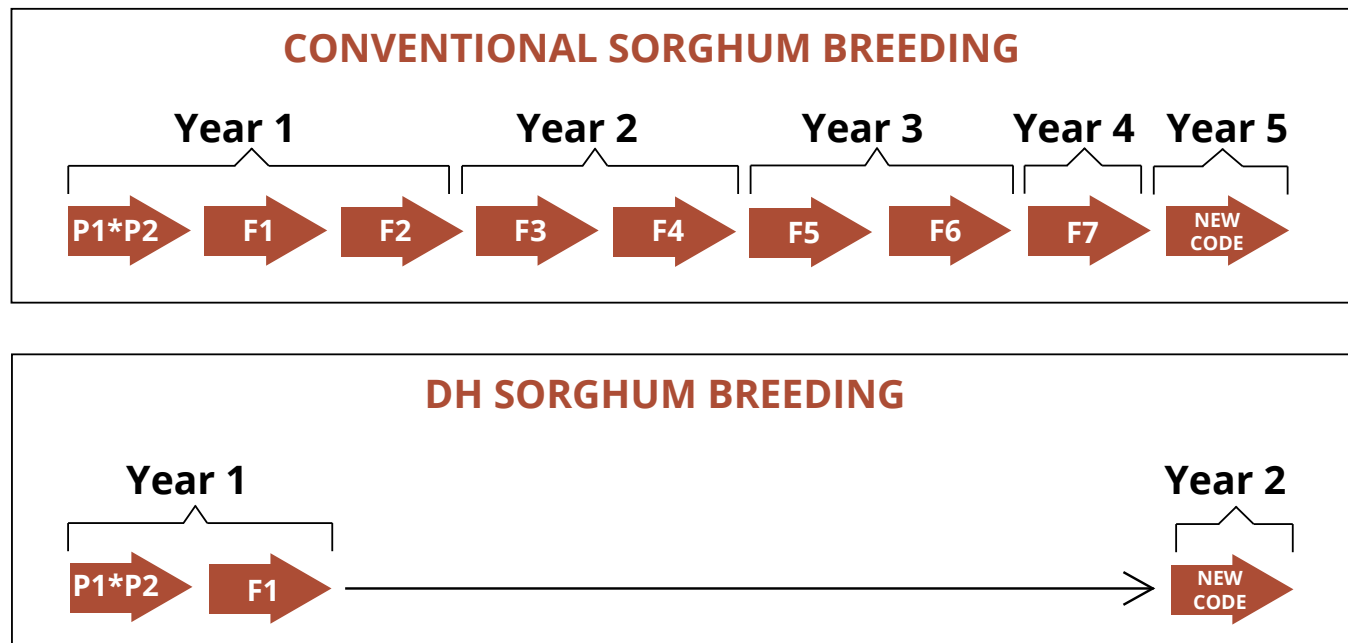


and get the genetic gains and the better yields to their growers faster. This is a tool for breeders, but the end goal is to allow us to make a lot better hybrids."

### HYBRIDS ON THE MARKET

Within the next 18 months, as the final phase of the project, Corteva expects to en-

sure DH technology is ready for use in commercial seed development programs. Once implemented, the Sorghum Checkoff anticipates it will only take 3-5 years before the technology will develop a hybrid seed that a sorghum farmer can plant as a commercial crop. Corteva will make the technology available to other seed developers. ✓



### IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH

Rudyard Kipling once said, "For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack." In a similar relationship, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and the state commission boards must work together to generate results in the sorghum industry that benefit all sorghum farmers.

Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission Executive Director Jesse McCurry strongly believes producers have the largest impact on a unified structure and working relationship between the national and state boards.

"Producer leadership is the biggest component of cooperation," McCurry said. "We have transparency and trust to be able to do things together as a result."

The Sorghum Checkoff was formed with the support of existing state organizations to

serve a bigger purpose and work on behalf of all sorghum growers throughout the U.S. In fact, the official purpose adopted by the Sorghum Checkoff board of directors is, "We exist to do as a group what we cannot do individually."

"Trying to get unity and a complementary strategy to where the state and national [boards] are aligned and have a healthy relationship has been mission critical," McCurry said. "We don't have enough time or resources, any of us, to go at this alone."

The Kansas Commission is taking steps to support strategic industry initiatives through investment at the state level.

"Trying to get tools out the door for farmers has been a priority," McCurry said. "Increasingly, we've been doing more market development and promotion whether that's been promoting etha-

nol-use adoption by consumers, investing more in the U.S. Grains Council and even through staff involvement connecting buyers and sellers. "

Texas Grain Sorghum Board Executive Director Wayne Cleveland said their board appreciates the system in place and believes it adds value for Texas growers.

"There's a very linear approach to everything that gets done, and it's really great for our producers because we have resources and people with credentials making a difference in profitability," Cleveland said. "There's no compensation or replacement value for that; it's just the people."

The Sorghum Checkoff was established in 2008, which makes it a relatively young program at only 11 years old.

"It's important to highlight USCP has not been around near as long as other commodity boards," Cleveland said. "It's easy to get impatient. As we get older, we will continue to learn and get better."

In an effort to support national efforts for market development, the Texas Grain Sorghum Board is heavily involved in hosting international trade teams, ethanol promotion as well as other projects and education.

Jordan Shearer, executive director for the Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma state boards, said his board members keep the big picture in mind when funding research, market development or agronomic projects.

"We are all Team Sorghum, and what's good for the industry in Oklahoma is good for Kansas, is good for Texas and vice versa," he said. "We

work with the national checkoff in recruiting talent for Leadership Sorghum and recruiting leadership for the national board to name a few."

Mutual goals for the industry can be met more efficiently and effectively with the help and support of the state boards, and Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board executive director Nate Blum, looks forward to contributing to the success of the industry.

"The importance of a strong relationship between the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and the Sorghum Checkoff cannot be overstated," Blum said. "Neither the state nor the national checkoff can function with maximum efficiency independently of one another."

State boards are allocated a passback amount of no less than 15 percent and no more than 25 percent of total assessments collected for their respective state annually by the Sorghum Checkoff. Passback money is the source of budget for the state organizations and allows them to operate and fund different projects in accordance with the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996 and the Sorghum Promotion, Research and Information Order, which govern the utilization of all assessment dollars.

The Sorghum Checkoff board and state boards aspire to be a united catalyst for positive change and are working hard on behalf of the entire industry.

"It's just like any family," Cleveland said. "The better you learn to communicate, the better your results will be. We've all got the producer in mind and are contributing collectively to their benefit." ✓

## ***SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS***

September 2 - Labor Day  
Office Closed

October 15-17 - Sunbelt Ag Expo  
Moultrie, Georgia

October 23-24 - South Texas Farm and  
Ranch Show  
Victoria, Texas

For more events, visit [sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar](http://sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar)

## ***CONTACT US***



Shalin Pinkerton  
Communications Manager  
(806) 687-8727  
[shalin@sorghumcheckoff.com](mailto:shalin@sorghumcheckoff.com)

## ***SORGHUM CHECKOFF MISSION***

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



## NSP Sets Sights on New Strategic Plan

By Sam Barnett

**N**ational Sorghum Producers recently underwent strategic planning and evaluated the principles governing the association in order to better promote change within the industry through advocacy and leadership. Ensuring the association is serving its members effectively is a top priority.

The association has new mission and vision statements, a long-term strategic plan and membership rates and options. The NSP board of directors feel the new changes reflect the current needs of sorghum farmers and the industry, which will help cultivate change needed to advance the sorghum industry into the next decade.

"It is important NSP re-evaluate our strategic plan to keep pace with an ever-changing world," said NSP Chairman Dan Atkisson, a sorghum farmer from Stockton, Kansas. "The sorghum industry, like most of agriculture, is always evolving, and keeping our vision and mission up-to-date sets a clear path forward for our organization."

Redefined objectives within the strategic plan include legislative, funding, messaging, crop

sustainability and traceability, research and management.

"Strategic planning is never an easy process," Atkisson said, "yet our board of directors is very focused on producer profitability and the overall health of our industry, and we hope to accomplish meaningful goals through these different objectives."

### Legislative Objectives

Going forward, NSP will identify, cultivate and maintain relationships in Washington, D.C., develop and implement policy objectives, deliver consistent trade

policy and regulatory wins to growers, develop and maintain adequate resources to make a positive difference on Capitol Hill and expand the Sorghum Political Action Committee. Sorghum PAC initiatives will include a long-term plan with annual goals for fundraising and giving. Contributions to key legislators will be evaluated, as well, according to annual policy objectives. Key staff and Sorghum PAC contributor champions will be critical to future success.

### Funding Objectives

Funding priorities include expand the association's for-profit subsidiaries, evaluate revenue and expense

streams, create a task force to evaluate activities that are financially marginal and evaluate and prioritize major office updates.

### Messaging Objectives

NSP will develop a long-term communications plan,

including evaluation of the future of *Sorghum Grower* magazine. This will include digital options, advertising considerations, circulation and a potential re-design after a readership survey.

### Crop Sustainability and Traceability Objectives

Keeping with organization sustainability efforts, NSP will provide verification and proof sorghum is sustainable and work with grassroots conservation programs to carry out programs and measurement objectives.

### Research Objectives

NSP will continue to seek funding for sorghum research through policy support and relationships in Washington, D.C., and leverage research funding to USCP investments.

### Mission:

NSP will lead positive change for sorghum farmers through effective policy and relationships.

### Vision:

NSP will promote, advocate for and defend the sorghum industry.

## Management Objectives

Finally, NSP management will evaluate leadership positions within the association for functionality and effectiveness, establish annual goals for each department and perform quarterly department planning meetings with the CEO.

“While our mission and vision statements remain very similar, our objectives have pivoted to better serve our membership,” Atkisson said, “and I look forward to implementing this new strategic plan.”

## Membership Rates and Options

In addition to the new strategic plan, the association recently made changes to membership. In order to continue to provide NSP members with the quality level of representation expected from the association, the NSP board of directors, through careful consideration, approved a membership fee adjustment with the addition of two new membership levels.

“It has been almost 20 years since NSP has increased membership dues, and while we recognize we are facing a critical time period in farm country, we also believe in the value our organization provides during times like these,” Atkisson said. “We value our members continued support to make our organization stronger and more viable into the future, and we promise to

work diligently to raise revenue through other means so as not to put this responsibility solely on the back of our industry’s farmers.”

## Membership Benefits

Legislative Contributors can expect the same benefits of membership as in the past, including subscription to *Sorghum Grower* magazine and weekly subscription to the Sorghum Notes e-newsletter.

Legislative Partner membership also includes subscription to *Sorghum Grower* magazine and weekly subscription to Sorghum Notes with the addition of access to NSP’s newly launched Milo Mobile polling system that allows members to have input into organization policy decisions. Plus, Legislative Partners’ names will be displayed in *Sorghum Grower* annually to recognize their contributions.

Legislative Champions will receive everything from previous levels, plus heightened involvement in legislative activities and recognition in *Sorghum Grower* annually as a Legislative Champion.

Changes to membership were effective May 1, 2019. The new NSP strategic plan was approved by the board of directors August 7 and will go into effect at the start of the new fiscal year, beginning October 1, 2019. Visit [SorghumGrowers.com](http://SorghumGrowers.com) to learn more. 📖



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979-219-1864  
[jmiller@agconsult.net](mailto:jmiller@agconsult.net)

Andrew Dusek  
979-220-8784  
[adusek@agconsult.net](mailto:adusek@agconsult.net)

#### EDNA

Phone: 361-782-6715  
Fax: 844-843-9677

Ryan Pinson  
[ryan@agconsult.net](mailto:ryan@agconsult.net)

#### CANYON

James Miller  
979-595-7704  
[jamesmiller@agconsult.net](mailto:jamesmiller@agconsult.net)

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# Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

## Get to Know New Kansas Sorghum Staff, Adam York

### ***1) Why did you choose to come to work for Kansas Sorghum?***

Sorghum is an exciting, versatile crop with a global demand and robust world markets. I wanted to return to my home state to work in a growing industry that I felt confident could provide fast paced dynamics and new challenges from a local to global scale. Plus, although we are both Kansans, my wife and I met as interns in Washington, D.C., so coming back home to be closer to our families has always been our priority. We also welcomed our newborn daughter, Sadie, into the world on June 6, 2019, and we wanted Sadie to be raised a Kansan like we were. All arrows pointed to Kansas Sorghum!

### ***2) What most excites you about the job?***

I am excited to spend my workdays implementing farmers' visions for their product. This role requires a great mix of research skills, networking, creativity, and elbow-grease to move all the needles in the right direction to help increase farmers' yields and profitability.

### ***3) Tell us about your background.***

I grew up on a multi-generational farm and cattle ranch near Ashland, Kansas, attended Kansas State University to earn a degree in history (in fact one of my favorite college research papers was on Kansas ghost towns), and spent the last six years as a Kansas delegation staffer in the U.S. House of Representatives where I worked hard to move up from a legislative intern to a deputy chief of staff. Tackling challenging learning curves has always interested me, whether it be leading a congressional staff, starting a new job in a new industry, or even starting a new family, but it just so

happened all three of these occurred together the past few months.

### ***4) What has your life been like in the last 3 months?***

New job, newborn daughter, cross-country relocation - good thing I was already pretty bald, so I had no more hair to lose the past few weeks.

### ***5) Where did you grow up and go to school?***

I grew up along the Kansas border with the Oklahoma Panhandle in southwest Kansas, spent my summers counting heads of cattle, and proudly started off my professional resume as a night-shift janitor during my four years of college at K-State in Manhattan.

### ***6) What are your hobbies?***

My wife and I enjoy camping in national parks. I suppose someday we may try to visit them all. Personally, nothing beats early spring skiing in Colorado, though.

### ***7) What is it like working on the Hill?***

It is a fast-paced environment where there is really no telling what you might be handling when you walk into the office on any given day. I specifically remember an instance of mental whiplash taking a staff-level meeting with constituents on Native American water rights one moment and then started my next meeting with scientists talking about particle physics.

### ***8) Any advice on how farmers can relate to their congressman and staff?***

I learned quickly that Members of Congress come

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from all walks of life—teachers, accountants, car salesmen, and there was even a reindeer farmer serving in the House a few years ago. They all want to hear from their constituents, and they all want to do a good job for their communities, which is tough when no one back home calls. So, simply picking up the phone and having a polite chat with their office or getting out to their local events remain the best ways to elevate the voices of farm country and rural America within the halls of Congress.

### ***9) What projects did you work on that you are most proud of?***

While I was the point person for agriculture and trade policies in my office, I did really enjoy working on local projects—as opposed to great big national legislation—that no other Representatives may have cared about since these parochial projects were specific to Kansas or to our district. But to some of our constituents, these issues were the most important things in the world. I have always loved history and literally spent years helping the Members of Congress I worked for push a very small and focused federal lands bill that would simply modify a local National Historic Site boundary by just a few acres that everyone in the community thought was a good idea. Seemingly simple, but nothing moves quickly in Congress. After over five years of managing and pushing this specific legislation, we finally got the provision signed into law and the modification allowed a local Civil War-era relic in southeastern Kansas to legally pass to the federal government now to be preserved by the National Park Service in perpetuity.

### ***10) What is this role you are taking on and how will it serve farmers?***

I am the Director of Programs for the Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Commission and Association where I will help develop global market exports, work with industry partners and interface with academic research to promote sorghum, and help grow the organization in Kansas. My mission is to be a phone call away from the farmers I work for and provide the best service possible for the industry.

► ADAM YORK and his wife Erica pictured with their daughter, Sadie Ruth.





# Sorghum Shortcuts

## Enter the Yield Contest

The annual National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest is under way! The yield contest allows growers to showcase their crop and compete with other growers across the Sorghum Belt by comparing yields. The yield contest strives to educate producers on new management techniques, transfer knowledge, improve yields, identify top producers in each state and recognize growers for their yield achievements. Be sure to enter the yield contest before December 1, 2019, for an opportunity to show off your sorghum crop!



United Sorghum Checkoff Program and National Sorghum Producers.

Sorghum Smart Talk features useful information and provides educational resources to benefit sorghum growers and industry stakeholders. Listen to the podcast by finding us on iTunes, Google Play Music, Spotify, SoundCloud, YouTube or Libsyn.



## Former Sorghum Interns Work Back-to-Back on Capitol Hill

National Sorghum Producers prides itself on the ability to transform passionate interns into powerful advocates for the agriculture industry. For the Summer 2019 semester, former communications intern Matthew Winterholler traveled to Washington, D.C., to intern for the House Agriculture Committee.

Haleigh Erramouspe, who completes her internship with Team Sorghum this August, will follow suit and intern on Capitol Hill during the upcoming fall semester. We are so proud of the young leaders being cultivated through Team Sorghum and cannot wait to see the impact they will have during their future careers. Congratulations, Matthew and Haleigh!



Haleigh Erramouspe



Matthew Winterholler

## Save with HitchPin

HitchPin is a mobile app that allows farmers and ranchers to boost revenues while decreasing production costs right from their phone! The app allows growers to perform automatic transfers, hire or provide help for agricultural tasks and broaden customer base through the services accessible in the app. National Sorghum Producers is proud to partner with HitchPin and hopes members can find this innovative app useful in their operations. The app is available through the App Store and online at [hitchpin.com](http://hitchpin.com). Use SORGHUM190401 to receive a discount as a user that also benefits NSP.



## Tune into Sorghum Smart Talk

Sorghum Smart Talk is a joint podcast between the

# Five Steps for Managing Sugarcane Aphid Without Sacrificing Yield Potential or Agronomics



## Hybrid Selection Remains Your Most Important Management Decision

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

Follow these five steps for managing sugarcane aphids:

### 1. SELECT THE RIGHT PRODUCTS

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

- Placing the right hybrid in each sorghum field – and managing fertility and planting rates accordingly
- Selecting hybrids for important agronomics like standability, head exertion, disease resistance and drought tolerance

No sorghum hybrid is “aphid proof” but Pioneer® brand hybrids are available in a range of



maturities, and several have demonstrated tolerance to sugarcane aphids. Look for hybrids with the Pioneer Protector® technology designation, which means

that product is above average in its tolerance to sugarcane aphids.

### 2. CONTROL VOLUNTEER SORGHUM AND WEEDS AFTER HARVEST

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

### 3. HAVE A PLANTING PLAN

Aphids tend to become more active as temperatures increase. They seek out the newest sorghum plants. Planting early can

give seedlings a head start before aphid populations multiply; planting too late can make the field more of a target for hungry aphids.

### 4. SCOUT EARLY AND OFTEN

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

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

### 5. APPLY INSECTICIDE AT THE RIGHT TIME

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

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

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



*Infested sorghum leaf with all stages of sugarcane aphids present.*

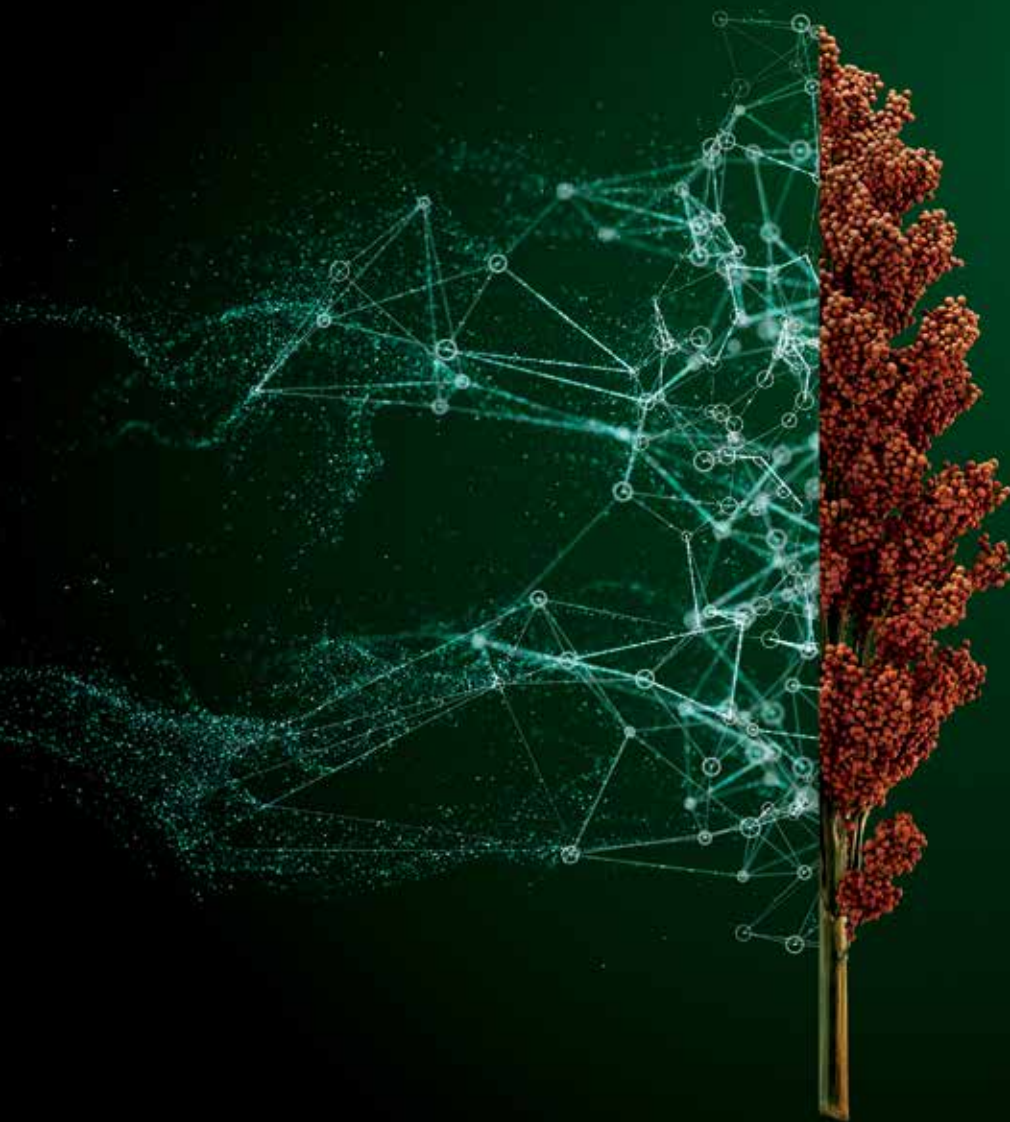
## PIONEER: INDUSTRY-LEADING SORGHUM RESEARCH

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

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

Ask your local Pioneer sales representative about the best sugarcane aphid-tolerant sorghum hybrids for your acres.  
Learn more at [Pioneer.com/SCA](http://Pioneer.com/SCA).





# WHERE MICROSCOPIC DETAILS MEET MACROSCOPIC RESULTS.

Powered by elite genetics for unrivaled yield potential, our sorghum hybrids excel in sugarcane aphid tolerance. Ask your Pioneer sales representative about the industry's strongest lineup of sorghum.

[Pioneer.com/sorghum](http://Pioneer.com/sorghum)



Pioneer® brand sorghum hybrids with the Pioneer Protector® technology designation have a sugarcane aphid tolerance rating of 5 or greater. PIONEER® brand products are provided subject to the terms and conditions of purchase which are part of the labeling and purchase documents. TM, ®, SM Trademarks and service marks of Dow AgroSciences, DuPont or Pioneer, and their affiliated companies or their respective owners. © 2019 CORTEVA. PION9SORG051\_FP

