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ON THE COVER: Grassroots leaders are at the heart of National Sorghum Producers, and these individuals make up only a few of our leadership base. From board and committee members at all levels to Leadership Sorghum members and graduates and farmers across the Sorghum Belt, our grassroots are growing deep and reaching far.



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Editor's Desk



It All Starts with Grassroots

When people ask me what I do for a living, I often say I work for a non-profit, grassroots organization made up of farmers. While that can produce some blank stares, I always think to myself, “if they only knew.” If they only knew how passionate the farmers are who make up this industry, and if they only knew how blessed I feel to work for you, see you in action and support and cheer on your tenacity to achieve and advocate for this way of life we all love.

I recently had the opportunity to spend a week in Kansas blending two of my passions—photography and visiting farmers. I told our CEO a long time ago I was not going to sit behind a computer screen all day every day, and he never expected me to, which is one of the many reasons why I believe National Sorghum Producers is a truly grassroots organization. Our leadership believes in listening to our growers and seeking their best interests, and that means jumping in the combine with you, sitting down at your kitchen table, and I’ve even attended a few Bible studies, kids’ sports events and other activities.

Without a doubt, we would not have been able to achieve as an industry the level of financial support through trade assistance, farm programs and other mechanisms without grower leaders who were willing to step away from the farm, travel to Washington, D.C., and advocate on behalf of your fellow sorghum farmer.

This magazine centers on Grassroots Leadership, and as we began planning editorial content, we felt there would be no better way to highlight grassroots leadership than to have the stories told by our grassroots themselves. In this issue, you will hear a lot of stories about each individual’s path to leadership and different programs and initiatives they are involved in that are leading change in sorghum, in their communities and on their own farms at home.

Going forward, we will continue to rely on those who know best—the folks who make up the Sorghum Belt, as we call it, and have their hands in the dirt advocating for a cause greater than their own. We appreciate those of you who answer the call to leadership and those who support us through membership, time and other resources, as well. We are truly honored to work on your behalf.

Jennifer Blackburn
Editor and External Affairs Director



A Beginning Farmer's Path to Leadership

By David Junker - McCook, Nebraska

My path into farming began as a 32-year-old, married father of two, living in Omaha, Nebraska. The only hands-on knowledge of farming I had was from detasseling corn a single summer in Grand Island, Nebraska, in high school and driving grain trucks during harvest for my father-in-law whenever I could use vacation days to help.

Then, an opportunity to move my family 280 miles and begin farming with my in-laws in southwest Nebraska was offered.

My wife and I had great jobs—she was a respiratory therapist and I was a restaurant manager. We had wonderful friends and built a new home in the city we had loved for 10 years. Even so, it was an easy decision to make. A chance to raise our boys in a community of 8,000 versus 800,000 people had us pretty excited to offer them a childhood like our own.

To say I was nervous making a leap into farming would be an understatement. I cannot say with certainty that if I

knew beforehand the broad swath of knowledge needed to farm I would have been so keen to start.

There were things I expected to learn such as operating tractors and combines and the implements that attach to them, planting and harvesting crops and fertilizing. But there was far more knowledge I needed to gain such as mechanical skills, the broad range of chemicals and the various applications they serve, soil health and temperatures, plant health, accounting, international grain markets and so much more.

It was extremely overwhelming without having any background in agriculture to make sense of it all right away. Luckily, I had a patient father-in-law who also happens to be an excellent dryland farmer with over 40 years of experience. He has shared his land, equipment, knowledge and time with me, and I couldn't ask for a better mentor and business partner.

Together we farm 1,500 dryland acres, rotating grain sorghum, wheat, corn and soybeans. We are slowly incorpo-

◀ JUNKER VISITS with Sorghum Checkoff Crop Improvement Director Justin Weinheimer, Ph.D., during the first session of Leadership Sorghum in Lubbock where participants learned about sorghum breeding and genetics.

rating my two boys in our operations by allowing them to drive tractors and help with repairs.

Although I have a great second-generation farmer helping me everyday, initially, I didn't have much confidence in my farming skills and knowledge. Whenever we would go to any farming related programs, I would either hang close to my father-in-law or choose a seat at the end of a table in hopes I wouldn't be drawn into a conversation about farming that would make me look dumb and incompetent.

Being around groups of life-long farmers, agriculturally college-educated farmers, and even generational family members who knew more than me brought out anxiety I hadn't felt since 8th grade speech class.

This wasn't going to work for me if I truly wanted to have the confidence to run the farm and teach my boys the trade, so I decided to suppress my introverted tendencies and talk to some local farmers my age who were on commodity boards about all aspects of farming to increase my knowledge. They were extremely helpful as most farmers are.

My first chance for growth came with the Syngenta Leadership At Its Best program in Washington, D.C., representing the National Association of Wheat Growers. Over the course of five days, my class (16 people representing various wheat groups) was taught how to become better leaders, better listeners and communicators and even how to lobby.

▼ JUNKER AND OTHER members of Leadership Sorghum Class IV went to Washington, D.C., in January 2019, to learn about the congressional process and meet with USDA-AMS.



It was a great program that really helped me overcome some of my fears of interacting with leaders in agribusiness.

My second chance came a couple of years later when I was encouraged to apply for Leadership Sorghum, Class IV. When I was chosen as the only Nebraskan to join a group from Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, I was ecstatic.

This was the program I was looking for as we not only had the opportunity to learn leadership skills, but we also got to see firsthand the entire life and economic cycle of sorghum.

Our class experienced seed breeding in Texas, witnessed sorghum being turned into human food products in Kansas, went to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and saw the ports that handle grain in New Orleans to name a few highlights. This phenomenal program is not only educational but also helps pave the way for my success in life on and off the farm.

I am extremely thankful to have met all the wonderful people at the National Sorghum Producers and the Sorghum Checkoff, and I feel grateful for the time and resources they have put into the program. When graduation for my class rolls around in December, I'll be happy to see all of my new friends but sad the 15-month journey will be over.

Farming can be an extremely solitary profession. We work long hours in tractors, combines, setting water, checking fields and more. Sometimes waving at a car passing by the field or going to a seed agronomy meeting might be our only social contact outside of our family.

I've learned through these programs that we need to have friends that will continue to push us outside of our comfort zone and to make new friends and contacts that will help us try new ideas any time we can. Also, going to any and all kinds of programs and meetings, participating in discussions and asking questions helped me.

My knowledge and confidence have both vastly improved because of the Leadership Sorghum program, and I am looking forward to using them as a newly appointed board member of the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board. In my new position, I am hoping to help other people enter farming. I want to help take away some of the fears I initially faced, give them any contacts I have, if I can't help directly, and educate those outside agriculture, showing them the positive things we do. Once I finally realized all farmers have a wealth of knowledge and are more than willing to share it, if you're willing to ask, my fears and anxieties subsided.

Looking back, my wife and I are proud of the decision we made to move our family despite the obstacles. It has been a blessing to our family, and we are grateful to be considered grassroots of the sorghum community.✂

David farms with his wife and family in southwest Nebraska, growing corn, sorghum, wheat and soybeans. He is a member of Leadership Sorghum Class IV and will graduate from the program in December 2019. He was also recently appointed to the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board.



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A Defense Initiative

LED BY PRODUCERS FOR PRODUCERS

By Matt Huie - Beeville, Texas

How do I get a seat at the table? When negotiations affect my family or our way of life, that's always the first question I ask. Oil and gas leases, pipelines, wind farms, eminent domain issues, farm policy rules and Texas Department of Agriculture issues—the list goes on. How do I inject myself and the interests I represent into the negotiating process? Participation is at the core of our democracy, and in this country, we have the great privilege of being able to exercise the right to be heard by those in power.

As a farmer and rancher from Beeville, Texas, I am particularly passionate about speaking up about the policies, laws and regulations that impact the American agriculture producer. With each passing election, rural and agricultural representation diminishes and policies are increasingly designed by those with limited exposure to the real issues facing folks like me.

It is on us and our trade associations to educate lawmakers and explain to folks who all too often have little or no idea how things actually work in commercial production agriculture. Fortunately, our democracy affords us that opportunity. My advocacy for the American farmer has taken this plain country boy to the state legis-

lature in Austin, to Capitol Hill and the White House. When policy and politics collide, it is our job to do our best with the cards we are dealt and help craft the best rules and regulations we can.

As many farmers and ranchers across the country know, there is one arena that is increasingly dictating farm policies in which we currently have no voice. Courts across the country have issued rulings that overturn existing agricultural rules and regulations or have rewritten them entirely.

This country's judicial system was designed to be insulated from political influence, yet many single-issue interest groups have begun to identify sympathetic courts where judges or juries can affect agricultural policies without hearing a farmer's perspective.

Take, for instance, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in California. In 2015, this court ruled the Environmental Protection Agency's registration of the insecticide sulfoxaflor (the active ingredient in Transform) was invalid due to insufficient studies on its impact on bee populations. This ruling came amid a crisis for Texas grain sorghum producers; the sugarcane aphid was decimating sorghum crops across my region in South

Texas and sulfoxaflor was one of the only products capable of safely treating it.

Even though bees do not pollinate grain sorghum, this court moved to craft policies that precluded my ability to protect my own operation. Fortunately for sorghum producers, Dow, assisted by National Sorghum Producers, was able to successfully navigate the problem and Transform has become a staple product for both sorghum and cotton.

Unfortunately, not everything has or will end this well. Everyone has seen the recent cases against Roundup, and Bayer stock has dropped precipitously after the results of civil jury trials awarding millions despite the science being clear that glyphosate is safe. Will glyphosate be pulled from the market because of these cases?

Similar cases are being talked about against the triazine class. When the court system is used to circumvent the regulatory process, what is our recourse? Back to our question; how do we get a seat at the table to affect policy that is being dictated by individuals and small interest groups through the court system?

At a meeting of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness (SWCA)—

Photo by House Agriculture Committee Staff

▲ HUIE TESTIFIED in May 2019 before the House Agriculture Committee Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management on the state of the farm economy.

of which I currently serve as past president—I had discussions with representatives of the Texas Grain Sorghum Association about these questions and the dangerous precedent these cases set. SWCA is a diverse alliance of agricultural organizations comprised of major commodity groups, financial institutions and other businesses across the greater southwestern United States.

While Texas Sorghum started this conversation, the board of directors quickly recognized this was a concern that stood to impact all producers. In 2017, we established a small committee made up of various member organizations to explore ways for the producer's voice to be heard in this emerging arena.

After months of research and deliberation, our committee arrived at the concept of a Producers' Defense Initiative. In essence, this is a legal defense fund—an entity organized to collect money to cover attorneys' fees, amicus brief filing costs and other legal expenses. The core of the Producers' Defense Initiative is right there in its name—this is a mechanism financed by producers for the sole purpose of defending producers.

The registrants for many of the products at risk in the 9th Circuit Court already established legal resources to ensure their participation in the judicial process.

Activist groups certainly have the legal resources available to make their case in court. It is the voice of the American producer, the purchaser and user of these products and the operator of the land being regulated who are absent from the courtroom.

Once established, this legal defense fund could aggregate funding for a variety of means of legal participation. The first option is the drafting of amicus briefs, which are supporting documents contributed by entities who are not party to the case but have a strong interest in its outcome.

Some legal defense funds use resources to conduct workshops where they educate lawyers and the public on certain emerging legal issues. Another option would be to retain legal counsel and actually bring litigation against parties who have recklessly targeted American agriculture.

All of these methods and more are on the table with our Producers' Defense Initiative, but because this is a producer-oriented venture, we are still focused on building up from the grassroots level to flesh out its structure.

This concept was well-received by the SWCA and was given the green light to explore its construction. Since then, we have met with many other organizations—comparable legal defense funds, potential partners in revenue collections and experts in the field of environmental and agricultural law—to discern a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities on this path. While there are challenges, we have yet to meet with anyone who did not wholeheartedly agree this is a great idea for the American farmer and rancher.

We have a lot of work left to do before you can see the name "Producers' Defense Initiative" on a case citation. If you have read this far with interest, it does not take a lot of imagination to create complicated questions and have grave concerns over unintended consequences and pitfalls.

We're still taking meetings with interested allies and are always ready to listen to other producers with ideas on how to make it better. I believe, though, the reason we have received this much support and enthusiasm is because we all recognize the importance of speaking up for ourselves. Whether it is in Austin, Washington, D.C., or a courthouse in San Francisco, we need a seat at the table.✋

Matt and his wife Shambryn grow grain sorghum, cotton and corn on their farm in South Texas. He is the past president of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness and is an active member of the South Texas Cotton and Grain Association and the National Cotton Council, advocating often on behalf of the agriculture industry.



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TAPS for Success

By Tracy Zink - Indianola, Nebraska

Growing up on a multi-generational farm in southwest Nebraska was an excellent opportunity to play, break and build things and dream. As I grew, I started to dream of venturing to where there would surely be variety in each day, where things would change from year to year and where I could make a difference in the world.

I wanted a challenge and getting off the farm was the only place to find it. It didn't take me long to realize how incredibly ignorant I was, and it took tens of thousands of miles and close to 30 years before I could get back and become fully engaged in the myriad challenges encountered in the profession of agriculture.

Our farm includes both irrigated and dryland acres using no till as much as possible, and we rotate between milo, corn, soybeans and hard red winter wheat. Water is typically our limiting factor with all our ground, so a majority of our irrigation attention is focused on sprinkler pressures and patterns and then working to maximize our ability to absorb whatever water is provided on all our acres.

I remember taking numerous years of swimming lessons as a child. However, my parents went with somewhat of a "throw her in the deep end" approach to my taking over the daily decisions and operations of the farm. I am blessed to have their trust and support as well as a genius (and patient!) agronomist, an even-keeled and very capable farming partner, two supportive sisters, equipment and financial guidance, Farm Service Agency programs and staff assistance, area producers and a large network across the country who advise, support and laugh with me through the years.

I have spent most of my spare moments over the past eight years reading magazines, attending conferences, researching past techniques and future technologies, and trying to understand the whys and proven trends over the course of history that make farming successful in southwest Nebraska. While I believe I am making good progress, it's humorous to realize how far behind I really was.

Finding a way to blend technical knowledge with actual farming experience for this region is my greatest challenge. During my first winter of conferences and articles I learned that tiling could increase yields significantly.

Realizing southwest Nebraska has annual rainfall of 14-20 inches, it makes sense now why my dad suggested I keep reading. As silly and embarrassing as it is to admit, I still learned from it, and I continue to search and research more feasible options for our operation.

There are several events I try not to miss—Cover Your Acres in Oberlin, Kansas; Farmers Business Network's Farmer2Farmer conference in Omaha, Nebraska; annual Crop Production Clinics sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's extension program; Executive Women in Agriculture by Farm Journal magazine; the Sorghum Symposium; regional trade shows; individual seed company meetings; Commodity Classic; and any financial and marketing meetings offered. I come home recharged and excited to share what I learned from every single event.

One of the best learning experiences I've had is

participating in the University of Nebraska Extension program's Total Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS) competition. TAPS goal is to provide a way for producers to evaluate profitability and input-use efficiency in an engaging and educational manner.

TAPS began in 2017 and has expanded in each of the last two years with the 2019 competition including irrigated corn and sorghum, subsurface irrigated corn, a new winter wheat competition, and collaboration with Oklahoma State University to offer an irrigated corn competition in Guymon, Oklahoma.

Each participant's "farm" is comprised of three randomized plots totaling approximately one-half acre. The yields and costs are amplified to 1,000 acres in order to make the competition representative of a mid-sized farm. Several components are the same for all, herbicide and residue management, while the measured parameters of crop insurance, hybrid, population, irrigation, fertilization and marketing are used to determine and reward the most profitable, the most efficient, and the highest yield in each category.

We reintroduced sorghum into our dryland rotation, and I was very anxious to evaluate if it was viable for our irrigated acres. TAPS provided the perfect environment. What I didn't realize is how much more it would provide me than just a "farm" to experiment.

TAPS provided more in the way of sponsored technology I wasn't aware of or wasn't sure could add financial value, and it helped guide farming recommendations or key decisions through an entirely new peer group that is both competitive and supportive.

The TAPS final review is published to provide everyone more by summarizing the specific details and results of each competitor's techniques and methods to analyze when and if we implement irrigated sorghum. One element from the TAPS experience that we are putting into practice on our farm is chemigation—applying nutrients through the pivots. It was evident across all crops that it has the greatest potential to increase yields with the least amount of implementation costs.

One of the most valuable things I learned from participating in the TAPS program is how vital a detailed marketing plan is for success. All of the articles and classes preach it; however, it has always been a big scary monster to me and having this experience demonstrated that there is no single right way to market grain. You just have to stay aware, have a plan and take action.

Anyone can learn, but not everyone will make the effort to implement what they've learned. The TAPS program empowers its participants to share the responsibility of achieving excellence—which is the epitome of leaders developing leaders.✂

Tracy farms sorghum, corn, soybeans and wheat in southwest Nebraska with her family. She is also a graduate of the Nebraska LEAD program Class 35.

Sorghum Markets



#MiloinMinnesnowta

By Joe Krippner - Marty, Minnesota

If you take a road trip through Minnesota during the growing season, it looks like many other parts of the Midwest—a sea of corn and soybeans. However, in 2014, my neck of the woods—Marty, Minnesota—had a field that looked a bit different. So different in fact, that many of my neighbors stopped and asked me what crop I was growing. That crop was grain sorghum.

I've always been willing and interested in trying new things and experimenting with different crops. Like most of my neighbors, the vast majority of my land is planted in corn and soybeans, but I also have numerous specialty crops, including edible beans, barley, rye, sweet corn, peas, alfalfa and sorghum.

That particular year I was looking for a crop to go on my marginal acres to replace small grains. I came up with sorghum based on information I gathered at Commodity Classic and other ag forums I attended. After some research, I had the confidence to start with an experimental 10 acres of grain sorghum.

Like most farmers, I was not going to plant a new crop unless I knew I could sell it. Knowing that sorghum is very comparable to corn in feed value, I twisted my neighbor's arm to buy it for his dairy operation.

I work closely with the dairy operation with other

commodities and believed sorghum would work because of its value and our plan to use it as a complementary ingredient in the ration. While we faced some challenges incorporating sorghum into the feed mix, I had a successful harvest and was enthusiastic to continue growing sorghum.

Just a short year later I discovered a new market for my sorghum through various contacts I had made from the sorghum industry. A nearby bird seed manufacturer was excited to source locally grown sorghum. The company took a chance on me, and as they say, "the rest is history."

Many of my family members farm, but I have built a completely separate operation from the family farm. Working as a certified crop adviser at Cold Spring Co-Op affords me the opportunity to be exposed to trainings and forums and allows me to share my experiences and successes with other farmers in my area.

On my own farm, I set out to find a crop to plant on my marginal ground, but in the process, I also increased my profitability by 25 percent by replacing small grains with sorghum. My experience with sorghum was so positive I began to recruit progressive farmers in my area that wanted to take their profits to the next level by growing a premium product for the bird seed manufacturer.

◀ JOE KRIPPNER, pictured with his son Matt, wife Sherry and daughter Jaedyn, has found profitability growing sorghum in Minnesota by supplying a local bird seed market.

While I am willing to try new things production-wise, I am old school when it comes to social media. In 2015, Monsanto was running a Twitter campaign titled #MyFarmMyYield. Just like I twisted my neighbor's arm to buy my first bushel of sorghum, our district salesman twisted my arm and set up a Twitter account for me.

Fast forward to later in the harvest season when I tweeted a photo with the hashtag #MiloinMinnesnowta. Well, this caught the eye of Kansas Sorghum Executive Director Jesse McCurry, and he encouraged me to apply for Leadership Sorghum, a program created by the Sorghum Checkoff.

As I was researching information about sorghum, I spoke with some of the members of Leadership Sorghum, and they shared a lot of great information with me. Applying for Leadership Sorghum seemed like the most logical next step for me to increase my knowledge of the crop and increase sorghum acres in central Minnesota.

Being a member of Leadership Sorghum Class III was a tremendous and worthwhile experience. I gained knowledge about the whole industry from seed production to export markets, but the most important thing I gained was a network of other farmers and industry professionals.

The program also taught me my strengths and weaknesses as you tend to learn a lot about yourself when working with others. Growing up on a farm, dining etiquette and putting an outfit together was not a top priority for me, but you must look the part in certain business meetings. I think it's funny that before Leadership Sorghum, I never owned a suit. Now, I have five!

Through the leadership program, I could ask my class members questions and get immediate feedback and recommendations. What would have taken me a couple seasons to figure out and get up to speed happened quickly and came at a critical time. That connection hugely benefited my operation, but more importantly, it allowed me to pass that on to the people in my area. Although I completed the program in 2017, I continuously use my class members as a resource either via group text or by picking up the phone.

What have I learned in the six seasons growing sorghum in the north country through my own experiences and through others who have helped me along the way? Planting sorghum at a higher population, around 75,000-85,000 seeds per acre for non-irrigated acres, ensures achieving one good head and no tillers. We do not have enough time for tillers to mature.

A good majority of sorghum in the area is planted

in 22-inch rows, which helps space plants out to utilize sunlight and provide a quicker canopy for weed control. I've also found planting a quality early variety is best so it will mature in time.

I've planted test plots a few years, and as you look at increasing toward a medium maturity sorghum, yields will plateau with the early varieties in a normal growing season. In shorter seasons, where a freeze comes early, the medium maturity sorghum does not mature and yield, and test weight falls off sharply.

This season I continue to change the landscape and interest in my area by planting more sorghum. With sorghum being such a beautiful crop in the field, I planted a mix of bronze and red sorghum varieties right along a busy state highway. As I expected, questions are coming, and this Minnesotan plans to share the sorghum knowledge I have while I continuing to diversify my operation.

Joe farms grain sorghum, corn, soybeans, edible beans, barley, rye, sweet corn, peas and alfalfa near Marty, Minnesota. He is also a member and graduate of Leadership Sorghum Class III.



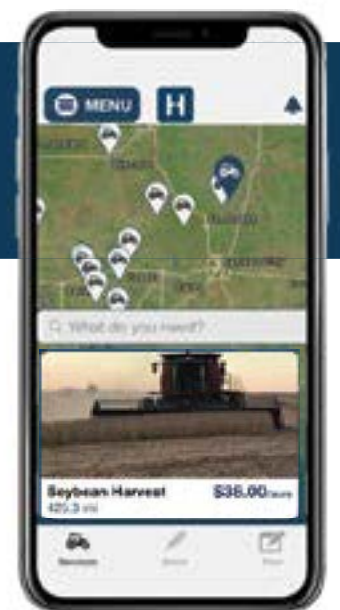
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THANKSGIVING SORGHUM STUFFING

Make this recipe

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 cups sweet potato, peeled, chopped

1 8-ounce package mushrooms, sliced

1 large green apple, cored, chopped

1 large red apple, cored, chopped

1 cup carrots, peeled, chopped

1 cup celery, chopped

1 bunch kale, torn

1 large red onion, sliced into thin wedges

1 lemon, sliced

2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme

1 stick butter, cut into 8 pieces

3-4 tbs olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

8 cups cooked whole grain sorghum

2 tbs fresh parsley, snipped

2 tsp fresh sage, snipped

1 cup toasted pecans, chopped
- Lemon-Garlic Dressing:

1/2 cup olive oil

3 tbs lemon juice

2 cloves garlic, minced

Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

- 1

Preheat oven to 400° F. Line a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with foil. Spread squash, mushrooms, apples, carrots, celery, kale, onions, lemon, rosemary and thyme over foil.
- 2

Top vegetables with butter pieces. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast vegetables for 25-30 minutes or until tender, tossing occasionally.
- 3

Meanwhile, in a small bowl whisk together ½ cup olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper. Set aside.
- 4

In a large serving bowl, combine roasted vegetables, sorghum, parsley, sage and pecans. Drizzle with lemon-garlic dressing.

For this recipe and more, visit:
SimplySorghum.com



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A Day in Washington is a Day Worthwhile

By John Williams - Enfield, Illinois



by increasing taxes and fees or cutting benefits. Some battles were fought hard with success and in others we came up short, but the experiences have better equipped me for the battles we face today as agricultural producers.

I became involved with sorghum leadership in 2011 after a successful Vote Yes campaign to pass the Sorghum Checkoff referendum. Through various advocacy roles I've held on behalf of National Sorghum Producers, I was invited to participate in the D.C. Fly-In.

The average person who is back at home on the farm has no idea what truly goes on in the office of a Senator, Congressman or Congresswoman or the agriculture committee room and the amount of work, information and time that goes into creating and passing a farm bill. Additionally, people think their vote and voice does not matter or make a difference, but the fact is, it makes a great amount of difference.

Over the last 100 years, the definition and scope of family farms and what it means to be one has changed greatly. Most family farms sprawl across several thousand acres. We at home understand this, and our local politicians generally understand this, as well.

However, when we turn on CNN and Fox, we see legislators who are not from a farm background, and they do not understand the family farm as it is today. They use words like mega farm and corporate farm. Their door is constantly revolving, and people walk in and out of legislators' offices 24/7, asking to fulfill specific needs and wants.

We have a story to tell, and there is a saying in Washington, D.C.—if you're not at the table you might be on the table, which unfortunately is happening to agriculture through policies, regulations and reduced funding at an alarming rate.

There is a banner that hangs on one of the Congressional offices I've seen that says FOOD IS AMMUNITION. This does not mean it is a nickel and dime barter system like it was 500 years ago. We are talking multi-billion-dollar deals locally and abroad that impact our bottom line right back here at home—like the China anti-dumping (AD) and countervailing duty (CVD) cases

I am a farmer from southern Illinois where three generations of my family have planted sorghum, corn, soybeans and wheat. In 1983, I took a part-time job in the insurance industry, which led to the beginning of many leadership roles on local, state and national boards.

I've dealt with governmental issues at all levels and faced government bodies always looking for more money

announced two years ago that had an immediate impact on the price and future exports of sorghum.

Typically, two days is the actual time NSP Fly-In participants spend on the Hill where we all average about 15-20 appointments. I happened to be in D.C. with National Sorghum Producers when the trade news hit in 2018, and we utilized those two days to the fullest extent. As an organization we armed ourselves legally then took to the Hill to defend ourselves and seek action on behalf of American sorghum farmers.

When I come back home from these trips, everyone always asks, "Did you do any good?" The answer is always a resounding, "Yes, we did good."

How do I know I did good? I know when I see the reflection in the way sorghum is more equally treated under the crop insurance guidelines. I know when I see the prices sorghum receives under the farm safety net programs. I know when I see crop insurance premiums continue to be subsidized, I know when I go to the FSA office and ask for permission to do some land improvements and my request is granted, and I know when AD and CVD cases are dropped against U.S. sorghum with a mere send of a tweet by our President.

Did we do good? We did great. The highlight of all my trips to Washington, D.C., is when I finally made it to the West Wing of the White House for a meeting with former Agricultural Adviser to the President Ray Sterling. What an honor it was to go through security and into the room where many U.S. and international statesmen have held meetings and conferences.

I humbly say this with all the respect I can muster—it has been a great honor to serve and go to Washington on behalf of sorghum farmers, and I will continue to do so as long as I am able. In this Administration, we are not out of the woods yet, and as trade negotiations continue with China, USMCA lingers in Congress and other trade deals are evaluated, we will need continual producer input and influence. Your voice will count if you make it.

John farms with his family near Enfield in southern Illinois where they grow sorghum, corn, soybeans and wheat. He is a member of the National Sorghum Producers Legislative Committee and testified on sorghum growers' behalf during the 2014 Farm Bill debate.

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A Sacrifice Worth Making

By Amy France - Marienthal, Kansas

“I would never be away from my family if it didn’t pay!” A dear friend told me this when I was preparing for my next advocacy journey. At first, I was offended, then shocked, then determined to explain.

My mind began to reason—maybe in the world of agriculture we are attached to our livelihood a little differently. Perhaps it’s because our heartstrings are tied tightly to this thing we call our job.

We show our children what hard work is all about. We care for this beautiful land, work all hours of the day and night and sometimes miss bedtime prayers and goodnight kisses even when we aren’t guaranteed a paycheck for our blood, sweat and tears. Making sacrifices seem to be the way of the agricultural world. I think it’s because we see the value—the long-term investment that turns into value.

It’s not always about the money in the bank today. What if the work and the advocacy we do today determine our children’s paycheck tomorrow? Whether it’s the grassroots of the family farm or the grassroots of an organization, there is no growth without a solid root system and a little bit of sacrifice.

My involvement in grassroots organizations like National Sorghum Producers and Kansas Farm Bureau was not driven by a particular policy or even at first a strong passion for agriculture. It began as a need—a need for knowledge and a deeper understanding of this third-generation farm I had mar-

ried into coupled with my newfound longing to keep it going.

Grassroots organizations are a safe place to ask questions, gather knowledge and take advantage of opportunities to grow and support a worthwhile cause.

My own root system grew stronger by the minute. Asking questions, seeking knowledge and connecting with wonderful people has been critical to my own growth and success. From testifying before the Senate Agriculture Committee for the first 2014 farm bill hearing in Kansas to hosting food bloggers on my farm and traveling to Washington with fellow sorghum growers, I’ve never stopped learning and improving the tools in my advocacy arsenal.

Mentors have been key and are a sounding board and continual source of knowledge, support and encouragement. As my knowledge grew and my involvement increased, I was encouraged to take risks and say “yes” to bigger opportunities, including leadership positions like on the NSP board of directors. Feeling like you lack the knowledge to serve was a reality for me, but I’m grateful I sought those leadership positions anyway. My background wasn’t rooted in agriculture and I was new to this arena, but I quickly learned even I can make a difference.

Less than one percent of the U.S. population is involved in farming today—I was not the minority. The questions I asked in lawmaker offices were probably very similar to questions other non-farming consumers might ask. It also gives

me hope to know the way I see things and the explanations I offer may resonate with congressmen who have never left the city limits but are determining whether or not we can use [insert your favorite chemical here].

As our world gets further away from sorghum fields and green pastures, we, the grassroots of our country, have to leave the comfort of our dirt roads a little more often and take our place at the table. The best part is we have a safety net in a grassroots organization like NSP.

They do the homework for us. They keep us informed on the policies that affect us as growers, and they give us the tools to make decisions in planting and caring for our crops. When it is time for action and we cannot get away, they do the fighting for us until we can join them again on the front line.

So next time you are invited to become involved and you think about the time it takes you away from the farm and the sacrifices it requires, I urge you to take a moment and consider your actions today are for the next generation of farmers who will benefit from your investment in their future—and your own.✂

Amy and her husband Clint farm sorghum, corn, soybeans and wheat with their son Caleb and his wife Kennedie near Marienthal, Kansas. They have four other children—Madison, Delaney, Calli and Jury and a granddaughter, Prim. Amy is a director on the National Sorghum Producers board and an active member of Kansas Farm Bureau.

Why I Contribute to the Sorghum PAC

By Bobby Nedbalek - Sinton, Texas

Getting your foot in the door is half the battle when it comes to advocacy. As a farmer, it's important I stay in front of those who are crafting policies impacting my bottom line, and that's why I have always been a staunch supporter of political action committees that support my interests here at home.

When my wife Mary Ann and I decided to move to the old 160-acre family farm I grew up on in South Texas near Corpus Christi, it took the help of my two uncles and many sideline jobs to become a farmer, but I also needed some type of insurance and affiliation with an agriculture organization. That led to the start of a long advocacy journey that began with Texas Farm Bureau (TXFB) where I became familiar with PACs and how important they were to supporting people.

With TXFB, I learned the value of being involved in discussions about the farm bill and regulations where on-farm input was sought. As a TXFB director, I had the opportunity during the 2008 farm bill to meet with Collin Peterson and other important lawmakers. I've met with President Obama, both Texas Governor and President George W. Bush, and I worked on Rick Perry's campaign, both for Texas agriculture commissioner and governor.

I started contributing to the ag fund with TXFB and to individual candidates, and I am as passionate about giving today to the Sorghum PAC. Sorghum is a staple in South Texas and on my farm, and while every commodity is in the game fighting for fair treatment, I have



a responsibility to this commodity and devote my time and financial resources to ensure it has a seat at the table.

Perhaps we needed it most when tariffs with China were enacted and sorghum was dealt a heavy blow from their ministry of commerce. Sorghum needed representation—quick—and fortunately years of relationships built in Washington, D.C., helped resolve the issue.

The whole thing boils down to the fact you cannot be different than

anyone else if you do not support a campaign or someone who is going to speak on behalf of you or your area, and there is a cost for you to be considered a player or as someone who cares. Once you establish a relationship or friendship through that commitment, it's easier to call on those individuals when you do have a real problem.

No one knows or feels the circumstances that producers feel at the farm level any more than farmers. It brings a passion for farming into those conversations with political leaders and regulators that makes all the information in a conversation genuine.

It gives me a great bit of satisfaction to realize that effort is extremely important and supports what needs to be done to preserve sorghum's profitability. It does not happen by itself though, and it is incredible how much good is done with so little in the sorghum business. That's why I give to the Sorghum PAC.✍

Bobby is a National Sorghum Producers board member from Sinton, Texas. He operates a 6,000-acre farm with his family, growing grain sorghum and cotton. Nedbalek is also a past Vice President of Texas Farm Bureau.



Photo provided by Texas Farm Bureau



Sorghum *Update*

Brought to you by Kansas Grain Sorghum

An Insider's Guide to Grassroots Leadership and Congressional Staff

By Adam York

As American citizens, interaction with elected leaders, and their staff, is critical to our civic duty. As sorghum growers, it is also vital to protecting our industry. While powerful lobby firms or big dollar companies wield both sophisticated resources and rosters of Beltway insiders, leadership from the “grassroots” remains the most effective method to advance an agenda at all levels of government.

With six years on Capitol Hill, from staffing the reception desk to managing legislative teams for various Members of Congress, I saw firsthand how constituent advocacy, or “melting” the phone lines, to congressional staffers made the difference whether Members voted yea or nay on the House floor. So, who are our congressional staff and how do we, as a grassroots network of sorghum growers, best utilize their resources?

The average congressional policy staffer, or legislative assistant, is typically a recent college graduate with just a few years of federal service who likely already manages a portfolio of numerous, complex policy issues and commitments. Quality staffers learn how to glean information quickly, and, while extremely hardworking and knowledgeable over many topics, given the scope of issues debated in Congress each week, staffers must resort to be a mile-wide-inch-deep.

Therefore, you, the constituent and leader within the sorghum industry, are the expert. Staffers want to hear from you about how policy proposals affect your livelihood. In my own experience as a young staffer, my job depended on listening and taking solid notes on the issues, which became difficult if nobody came to the table or picked up the phone. Still, constituents may wonder what exactly a congressional staffer needs to hear to best inform his or her boss or how the staffer operates with the information after effective grassroots advocacy.

Staffers are taught about the Three Ps: policy, politics, and procedure. All three Ps must combine for any bill to become law, so, if calling, emailing, or simply standing by for a Capitol tour, relate your advocacy to these three aspects of their job to advance the agenda. First, explain how the policies affect you, the producer. Whether those policies have wide support or opposition, of course, determines the politics. To keep your staffer from walking blindly into a minefield, she will appreciate hearing from you who may be on the other side of your argument. Regardless of the final policy direction, your candor will always build goodwill.

Finally, a good staffer will be knowledgeable of proper procedure, or parliamentary rules within the House and Senate like various forms of legislation or key distinctions between the two chambers. Never miss the opportunity to ask your staffer questions. Solicit his or her opinion on legislative scenarios. The response will always be interesting and may even be telling of where the elected official currently stands. Once the staffer seems fully informed, follow up often to encourage continued consideration.

The saying goes that Congress exists not to pass laws but to stop bad ideas from ever becoming law. Strong grassroots advocacy winnows the consensus from just the rest of the chaff. Stay active, focused, and on message. Encourage your friends and colleagues within the sorghum industry to join the association, as well, and together, research and pursue sorghum action alerts in Washington or at the Statehouse. With knowledge of the staffer's role, follow up frequently with staff as they are eager for intel and thankful for enlightenment. Simply put, if you are not engaging your congressional staff, conflicting agendas with their own grassroot networks may already be framing the debate.

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Utilizing Sorghum Stalks for Grazing

Grain sorghum stover left standing after harvest provides ground cover during the winter and also serves as an inexpensive source of forage for cattle to graze.

Approximately 50-60 percent of the plant dry matter of grain sorghum remains in the field after harvest. As a rule of thumb for estimating the amount of forage available, simply multiply the number of grain bushels harvested by 60. For example, a grain sorghum yield of 80 bushels per acre would leave approximately 4,800 pounds of stover in the field ($80 \text{ bu/A} \times 60 = 4,800 \text{ lbs.}$).

The stover value of grain sorghum and corn are similar, although stalks of sorghum typically are taller than corn following harvest. This height difference allows for better utilization of the sorghum stalks and leaves, especially in regions where deep snow may accumulate for several days.

On average, sorghum stover contains 7.5 percent crude protein with total digestible nutrients (TDN) of 65 percent. The highest quality of stover occurs immediately following grain harvest and gradually decreases because cattle consume the best forage first and the stover degrades over time. The ener-

gy and protein levels of sorghum stover are nutritious for cows in mid gestation to late gestation, though supplements may be needed for heifers in late gestation. In a sorghum grazing study conducted by the University of Nebraska, steers consuming grain sorghum stover gained an average of 1.32 pounds per day over a 65-day grazing period.

Severe plant damage caused by sugarcane aphids can lower sorghum stover quality. However, a Texas A&M University study showed that even heavily damaged sorghum still had a TDN value of 60. According to Ted McCollum, Ph.D., former Texas A&M beef cattle nutritionist, this TDN value is more than adequate for beef cows in late gestation and early lactation. The sooty mold on the leaves that often accompanies sorghum heavily infested with sugarcane aphids may occasionally cause palatability issues, but it is not toxic to cattle.

Trials conducted in Nebraska showed no negative effects on corn or soybean yields following grazing of stalks—even in no-till or ridge-till systems. The top 0-3 inches of soil may have somewhat more compaction, leading to a slightly reduced water infiltration rate

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Three USCP Board Directors Complete Their Terms



compared to ungrazed areas. To avoid compaction issues, growers should not allow cattle to graze stalks in the late spring when conditions may be muddy.

Growers may have some concerns over the loss of organic matter and nutrients consumed by cattle that would otherwise remain on the field. However, most of the nutrients are returned to the soil in the form of manure, and only

between 10 and 12 percent of the organic matter potentially is lost. Normally, grazing removes less than 50 percent of the stover while the remaining crop residue is left on the field for erosion control.

Another concern of sorghum stover grazing is prussic acid. If grain sorghum is harvested prior to a killing freeze, or if glyphosate was not used to kill the plant, any new growth can potential-

ly contain high amounts of prussic acid. Cattle should be kept out of these fields until a hard freeze has killed the new growth. Growers should wait 5-7 days after a killing freeze before allowing cattle into the sorghum field to provide sufficient time for the prussic acid to dissipate. A more thorough discussion on prussic acid can be found on the Sorghum Checkoff website—www.SorghumCheckoff.com.



Photo by Anne St. Blanc Lampe

Sorghum Producers Appointed to the Sorghum Checkoff Board of Directors

On August 28, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue appointed five individuals to serve three-year terms on the United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) board of directors.

The 13-member board is

authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996. The Secretary selected the appointees from sorghum producers nominated by certified producer organizations or qualified state organizations.

Kent Martin from Carmen, Oklahoma, was re-appointed to the board, and newly appointed directors include James Haase from Eads, Colorado, Jeffry Zortman from Fowler, Kansas, Kendall Hodgson from Little River, Kansas,



KENT MARTIN

and Joshua Birdwell from Malone, Texas.

Kent Martin, re-appointed to an at-large seat, is a sixth-generation farmer and rancher from Alva, Oklahoma. He grows grain and forage sorghum, wheat, rye and cowpeas while managing an Angus cow-calf operation with his wife, Konya, and his two children. Martin also owns and operates a consulting business, Martin Agonomic and Environmental Consulting, LLC, that conducts unique international contract research, provides agronomic legal support and consults on soil contamination and remediation. Martin serves on the Oklahoma Sorghum Association board of directors and was also a member of Leadership Sorghum Class II.

James Haase (not pictured) will fill the second at-large seat. After moving to Colorado in 1998 to work as a utility lineman, Haase began farming full time in 2015. Haase farms sorghum, hard red winter wheat and corn on a three-year rotation with his wife and in-laws. On top of his farmland, Haase oversees 4,500 acres of native rangeland and a cow-calf operation.

Jeffry Zortman is one of the two newly appointed Kansas board members. Zortman grows dryland and limited-irrigation sorghum with his father. In addition to farming, Zortman is developing and marketing a software called iTrack. In his spare time, Zortman volunteers as Fowler Friends

Church's treasurer, Bible quiz coach and the technology and sound director.

Kendall Hodgson grows sorghum, wheat, alfalfa, soybeans, corn and cotton with his wife Melinda and their son on their 100 percent no-till operation. Hodgson also manages a cow-calf and backgrounding herd. He is a long time advocate of the agriculture industry, serving as the President of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers Board in 2006 and on the National Sorghum Producers Board from 2012-2018.

Joshua Birdwell fills the Texas board seat. Birdwell farms sorghum, corn, cotton and wheat with his grandfather in Malone, Texas, where he resides with his wife Brandi and their three children. In addition to the 7,000 acres of row crops, Birdwell also manages a cow-calf operation, hay business and a small trucking company. He was also a member of Leadership Sorghum Class II.

The newly appointed directors will be sworn in at the Winter 2019 Sorghum Checkoff board meeting, and together with the returning board members will work with Team Sorghum to create opportunity and direct positive change in the sorghum industry.

The Sorghum Checkoff welcomes these new board members and looks forward to seeing the fresh perspective they will bring to the board to positively impact the sorghum industry.



JOSHUA BIRDWELL



KENDALL HODGSON



JEFFRY ZORTMAN

Three Sorghum Checkoff Board Directors Complete Their Terms

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program's Winter 2019 board meeting will mark the end of six years of service for board directors Daniel Krienke, Clayton Short and Martin Kerschen.

Krienke is a third-generation farmer who grows sorghum, wheat and corn on 7,000 acres of dryland and irrigated land. He farms in Ochiltree County, Texas, where

with his family in Saline County, Kansas. He is active within the sorghum industry, serving not only as a Sorghum Checkoff board member but also in many capacities for Kansas Grain Sorghum for more than a decade. Short currently

good profits, workload spread and drought tolerance make sorghum the perfect addition to his crop rotation. In 2016, Kerschen traveled to China with a delegation of Kansas sorghum producers to promote coarse grains and assess market trends.

The Sorghum Checkoff would like to thank Krienke, Short and Kerschen for their years of commitment and hard work in the sorghum industry.

"These individuals have all been

instrumental in leading the strategic direction of the sorghum industry on behalf of fellow sorghum growers," said Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Florentino Lopez. "Their example of leadership will continue to generate results into the future."



DANIEL KRIENKE



CLAYTON SHORT



MARTIN KERSCHEN

his sorghum is sold primarily to Seaboard Farms in Perryton for swine feeding. Krienke previously served on the Texas Grain Sorghum Association and National Sorghum Producers board of directors.

Short farms 2,000 acres of sorghum, soybeans and wheat

grows sorghum for several specialty markets, including malt sorghum for Bard's™ Beer.

On Kerschen's operation in Garden Plain, Kansas, he grows sorghum, wheat and soybeans using a mixture of conventional, reduced and no-till methods. He believes

SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

Nov. 22

Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board Meeting
Lincoln, Nebraska

Nov. 28-29

Thanksgiving
Office Closed

Dec. 10-12

Sorghum Checkoff Annual Board Meeting
Lubbock, Texas

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

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



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LEGISLATIVE CONTRIBUTOR
Contributors receive the quarterly *Sorghum Grower* magazine and the weekly Sorghum Notes newsletter, allowing you to stay informed on issues impacting your farm.

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A Tribute to Bruce Maunder



National Sorghum Producers said goodbye this year to a friend, mentor and exceptional man—Dr. Bruce Maunder, who passed away August 5, 2019. Maunder was a lifetime advocate for sorghum and a man admired throughout the industry for his dedication to the crop and for the people he inspired along the way. Maunder’s commitment to the industry has made his name synonymous with sorghum to this day.

Early Life
Bruce was born May 13, 1934, in Holdrege, Nebraska. He grew up from 1939 until 1950 in Lincoln, Nebraska, with summers often near Grand Island, Nebraska, on an irrigated farm developed by his maternal grandfather who settled there from Germany in the 1800s. This contrasted with his paternal, distant grandfather who was traced to Governor Bradford of the 1620 pilgrims.
Bruce graduated from both the Overseas High School of Rome, Italy, as well as Northeast High School of Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1952. His bachelor’s degree in agronomy was awarded by the University of Nebraska in 1956 and his Master of Science and Ph.D. were from Purdue University in plant breeding and genetics in 1958 and 1960, respectively.

A Career in Sorghum
Dr. Maunder accepted a sorghum breeding position with DEKALB Genetics in Lubbock, Texas, in 1960 with responsibility for worldwide sorghum improvement, having products from this program in as many as 49 countries and grown on as many as 10 million acres. He became a Senior Vice President of DEKALB in 1991, retiring after 37 years in 1996. Following active plant breeding, Bruce accepted an offer to volunteer with the National Sorghum Producers for 20 years as a Research Adviser and as manager of the National Sorghum Foundation.
Additionally, Dr. Maunder served as an adjunct professor at Texas Tech University. He also held numerous national positions, including President of the Crop Science Society;

on the board of Diversity magazine; on the World Food Prize under Dr. Norman Borlaug, his favorite mentor; and the Sorghum Crop Germplasm Committee at USDA. For some 21 years, he was active with the USAID INTSORMIL program as chair of the external evaluation panel.
Besides the development of improved hybrid sorghums, Bruce was especially proud of Honorary Doctorate degrees in Science and Agriculture received from both the University of Nebraska as well as Purdue University. In addition to many distinguished service awards, he was presented the Monsanto Crop Science Distinguished Career award in 2000.

Honoring Dr. Maunder
Bruce dedicated over 60 years of his life to the sorghum industry, and it is easy to say he has had one of the greatest impacts on sorghum not only in the United States but worldwide. His efforts created progress in crop technology and shifted sorghum research in a profound way.
“Bruce was a dear friend, mentor, and champion of sorghum,” National Sorghum Foundation Chairman Larry Lambright said. “His contributions to our crop were significant and are well documented. As a plant breeder his focus was on product improvement thus enabling the farmer to be more profitable.”
“In his time volunteering at National Sorghum Producers, he continued his dedication of promoting and supporting sorghum improvement and utilization,” Lambright added. “As Chairman of the National Sorghum Foundation, Bruce was dedicated to enabling deserving students to pursue their academic goals through scholarships provided by the foundation.”
NSP will be forever grateful for the lasting legacy Bruce has left behind. He was devoted to sorghum and the people within the industry. Bruce taught us the importance of helping others, and he has inspired many who knew him.

“Bruce was a passionate supporter of sorghum and a great mentor to me personally,” NSP CEO Tim Lust said. “He showed others the value and importance of detail and supported the industry in every way he could. He will be deeply missed.”

Condolences
Cards and condolences may be sent to the family of Dr. Bruce Maunder at Kathy Maunder, 4511 9th Street, Lubbock, TX 79416.
Donations can be made to the National Sorghum Foundation in honor and memory of Bruce at SorghumGrowers.com/foundation. Proceeds benefit scholarships for college students, a program Bruce was so passionate about and devoted to; together, with his wife Kathy, the Maunders have supported scholarships and other funds through the National Sorghum Foundation and at seven universities.✂

Sorghum Shortcuts



FIVE STEPS FOR MANAGING SUGARCANE APHIDS WITHOUT SACRIFICING YIELD POTENTIAL OR AGRONOMICS

NSP Elects New Leadership

The National Sorghum Producers board of directors recently elected Doug Keesling of Chase, Kansas, to the board. Three directors were reappointed and officers were elected.



Keesling is a fifth-generation farmer from central Kansas where he grows sorghum, wheat, corn, soybeans and livestock. He also owns Keesling Seed Farms, a comprehensive farm input supplier. Keesling has previous experience with state and national wheat grower organizations, the Trump Agriculture Advisory Committee, International Grains Program, Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture and many others.

Kody Carson of Olton, Texas, was re-elected to the board along with Bobby Nedbalek of Sinton, Texas, and Larry Richardson of Vega, Texas. The NSP board also recognized outgoing director Larry Earnest, a sorghum farmer from Star City, Arkansas, for his leadership and dedication to the sorghum industry.

NSP Chairman Dan Atkisson and Vice Chairman Kody Carson were re-elected to their respective officer positions. Don Bloss of Pawnee City, Nebraska, remains as past chairman.

2019-2020 Foundation Scholarships Awarded

The National Sorghum Foundation recently awarded scholarships to three students for the 2019-2020 school year, totaling \$4,500.

- Noah Winans, Kansas State University agronomy major–Bruce Maunder Memorial Scholarship winner
- Allee Koestner, Iowa State University agronomy major–Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship winner
- Hillary Harris, Johnson & Wales University culinary nutrition major–Sorghum Feed and Food Scholarship winner



Noah Winans



Allee Koestner



Hillary Harris

Each scholarship provides students with \$1,500 to assist with education expenses. To learn more about this year's recipients, go online to SorghumGrowers.com/newsroom.

The National Sorghum Foundation is also accepting applications for a joint scholarship with BASF. Applications can be found at SorghumGrowers.com/foundation-scholarships.

Sorghum PAC Casino Night Planning

National Sorghum Producers will be hosting its renowned Casino Night in San Antonio in February. Throughout the night there will be a variety of raffles, auctions and casino games for guests to enjoy with the purpose of raising money to further promote the legislative interests of sorghum producers.

The annual Sorghum PAC fundraiser is a must-attend event at Commodity Classic that raised more than \$95,000 through ticket sales, sponsorships and auction items last year. Auction items will become available for bidding in early February through our online auction. If you wish to support NSP political endeavors through this event in 2020, please contact Jamaca Battin at jamaca@sorghumgrowers.com.

Hybrid Selection Remains Your Most Important Management Decision

Sugarcane aphids were first observed in grain sorghum fields in 2013. Since then, the pest has spread rapidly across the major sorghum-growing regions in the U.S. 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 these important considerations to help maximize yield potential:

- Place the right hybrid in each sorghum field — and manage fertility and planting rates accordingly
- Select 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 and using an insecticide seed treatment 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 aphids are light-colored with dark feet and cornicles; adults may develop stripes and green wings. In high numbers, they can cause significant yield loss.

Scout for aphids once a week after emergence and at least twice a week after aphids appear. They 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, such as Transform® WG, when thresholds reach more than 50 aphids per leaf on more than 20% 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

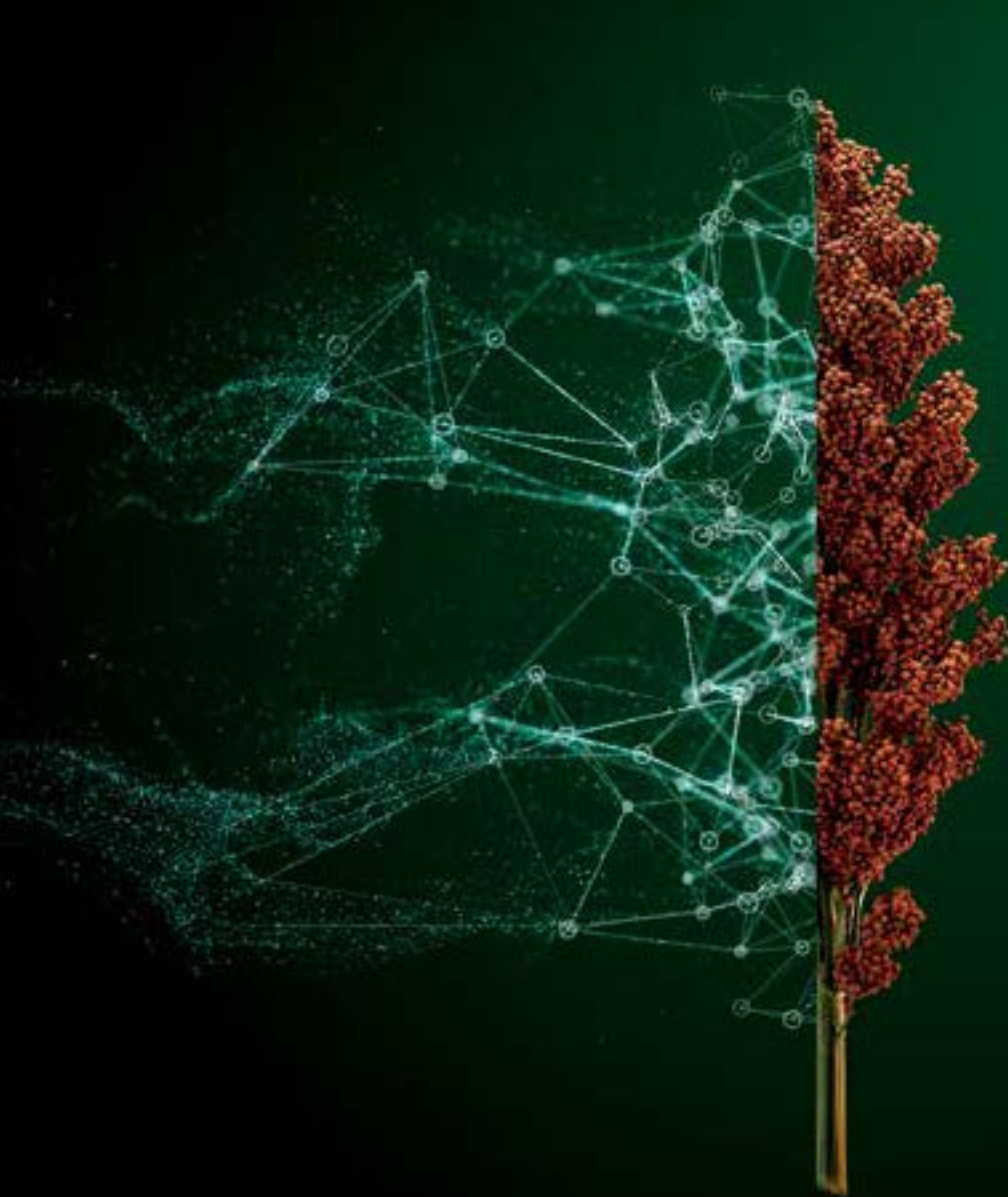
Our researchers are continually developing new sorghum hybrids from our elite germplasm with enhanced sugarcane aphid tolerance traits. They go well beyond field observations to help ensure yield potential under aphid pressure.

- 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.



The foregoing is provided for informational use only. Please contact your Pioneer sales professional for information and management suggestions specific to your operation. Pioneer® brand sorghum hybrids with the Pioneer Protector® technology designation have a sugarcane aphid tolerance rating of 5 or greater. Transform WG is not registered for sale or use in all states. Contact your state pesticide regulatory agency to determine if a product is registered for sale or use in your state. Always read and follow label directions. 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. PION9SORG061



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



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

