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SORGHUM *Grower*

SPRING 2020

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

SORGHUM Grower

SPRING 2020



ON THE COVER: Sorghum farmers have regained access to the vital Chinese market after the country signed a Phase One agreement with the U.S. in January. So far, China has purchased over 1 mmt, which has driven basis improvements across the Sorghum Belt. Read more on page 6.

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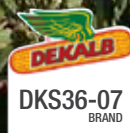
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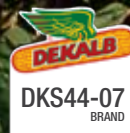
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Spring 2020, Volume 14, Issue 2

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Chairman's Address

The Silver Lining

The proverbial saying "every cloud has a silver lining" has found new meaning for most farmers over the past few weeks. It's obvious to see the United States, and the entire world for that matter, has been shadowed by the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic. Daily life in the U.S. has changed for most Americans, but farmers are continuing to forge ahead with spring field work. While during this crisis agriculture has been deemed essential infrastructure by the Administration, our membership is fully aware that ag is critically essential every day.

The silver lining for sorghum producers within these socially trying times is that the trade deals struck by the current Presidential administration are beginning to bear fruit. It was an absolute honor to announce to the Commodity Classic General Session that nearly 500,000 metric tons of sorghum had been sold for export; the single largest sale of sorghum since the U.S.-China trade dispute started in 2018. Since that time, more sales have transacted, building momentum for sorghum exports.

As the export market for sorghum has heated up, local basis bids have narrowed dramatically. Even here in northwest Kansas, far from an export terminal, basis has jumped \$0.40-\$0.50 over the last month. It is a very welcomed plus up for farm profitability, and as we move into the 2020 planting season for the northern part of the Sorghum Belt, I expect to see an expansion in acreage. With a great number of new hybrids coming to market this year and exciting technologies in the pipeline, I continue to be very optimistic about growth within our industry.

I also continually tell producers that policy is very impactful to their farms. While policy creation is normally throttled back during the silly season of an election year, farm policy implementation is always ongoing. ARC and PLC signups are now behind us, but I would encourage producers to stay engaged with their FSA offices. The deadline for updating FSA farm program yields is Sept. 30. In addition, many sorghum farmers can qualify for disaster aid through the WHIP+ program. If any of your farms are in counties experiencing D3 drought conditions in 2018 or 2019, there is a good possibility your county may be included in the program.

Uncertainty is nothing new to those of us within agriculture. We face the adversity of harsh weather, fluctuating markets and other issues on a daily basis. While the world as a whole is dealing with a pandemic, American agriculture will continue to put on their work boots every day and provide for the food, fiber and fuel needs of our nation.



Dan Atkisson
 NSP Board Chairman

CHINA IS BACK

SORGHUM FARMERS HAVE REGAINED ACCESS TO THE VITAL CHINESE MARKET

By John Duff

Congratulations, sorghum farmers, you did it! After more than two years of economic storm clouds hanging over your industry due to the trade war with China, you're now selling sorghum to the Asian giant once again. From duck feeders, to dairies, to baijiu producers, the engines of China's agricultural economy are once again humming along on U.S. sorghum.

U.S. agriculture overwhelmingly voted for sweeping overhauls of global trading systems when it played a key role helping elect Donald J. Trump president in 2016. And in the throes of a trade war with their largest export partner, farmers largely stuck with President Trump, believing relationships with U.S. trading partners could be even better. Today, sorghum farmers are finally being rewarded for their persistence as sorghum is moving out and basis is moving up.

In late 2017, National Sorghum Producers staff began monitoring discussions between U.S. and Chinese officials. At the time, U.S. sorghum farmers were selling approximately half their crop to China and total exports were coming off historically strong levels, so the prospect of a trade war was unsettling—even if it was largely expected. The situation quickly deteriorated, and in response to U.S. tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminum products, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Commerce self-initiated two investigations into imports of U.S. sorghum. Export volumes and basis across the country both crashed in spectacular fashion (see Figures 1 and 2).

After a seemingly endless number of false starts over what felt like an eternity, the U.S. and China finally reached an agreement on January 15. President Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He held a signing ceremony (attended by National Sorghum Producers Chairman Dan Atkisson of Stockton, Kansas) at the White House and the Phase One deal went into effect on February 14.

Understandably, neither U.S. nor Chinese officials wished to send signals which might distort planting or other market decisions, so we were left to speculate on the deal's exact provisions. However, based on history, we believed the volumes could be highly significant for sorghum farmers. The deal required China to purchase an additional \$32 billion in agricultural goods over the 2020-2021 period relative to the 2017 baseline. Given U.S. exports to China that year totaled \$19.5 billion, this increase—if realized—would represent 64 percent growth over two years. Though this may seem like an impossibly lofty goal, Chinese agricultural imports peaked at \$120 billion in 2018, so we believe it to be imminently achievable.

The news was just as good for the sorghum industry as it was for U.S. agriculture overall. In the 2017 baseline year, U.S. farmers exported 181 million bushels of sorghum worth \$838 million to China. Given 110 million of the 358 million bushels produced in 2019 are projected to be exported, sorghum basis will need to appreciate considerably if production volumes are to increase enough to meet the additional demand associated with the Phase One deal (assuming the increase in exports of sorghum relative to the baseline is similar to the increase in exports of all U.S. agricultural goods).

While we still don't know exactly how many bushels of U.S. sorghum China intends to purchase, we are hearing a large amount of positive information from merchandisers and seeing highly positive market movements. While anecdotal information in the absence of data should be treated skeptically, it is hard to ignore increased export purchase commitments and basis appreciation. Today, we have both—in spades.

Figure 3 depicts the 15 largest weekly export commitments since USDA began publishing weekly data in 1999.



▲ A COFFEE-FUELED legal battle led by National Sorghum Producers farmer members generated approximately 4,500 pages of farm financial information.

The Phase One deal only went into effect on February 14, yet we have already seen two weeks with purchase commitments in the top 15, including the fifth-largest week ever. That week saw 17.5 million bushels in commitments in the days immediately following enactment of the Phase One deal, and most of those commitments could be attributed to China.

With this abrupt increase in purchases, basis has already appreciated significantly (see Figure 4), and we expect this movement to continue as long as commitments continue. Today, most of the appreciation is concentrated around export terminals (where the price of sorghum is now 119 percent of the price of corn for the first time in several years), but if the purchase trend holds, appreciation will likely spread across the country. This change is striking on its own, but given the pace of commitments and basis gains even in the face of COVID-19 concerns is an extremely positive indication of the depth of demand for U.S. feed grains in China.

With so much demand from China, the next few years will be interesting. However, it will be important for U.S. sorghum farmers to send a signal to Chinese merchandisers beginning this year that we are ready and able to meet their needs. This means more acres and more production, and fortunately, the economics are on our side. Consider this: Kansas State University crop budgets for the south central region project a per acre return for sorghum of \$96.57 compared to returns of \$70.34 and \$20.24 for corn and soybeans, respectively. These budgets project the price of sorghum at 91 percent of the price of corn. Think about the advantage for sorghum if basis moves to parity with corn.

Sorghum farmers, China needs your product. Let's step up to that challenge in 2020! 🍌

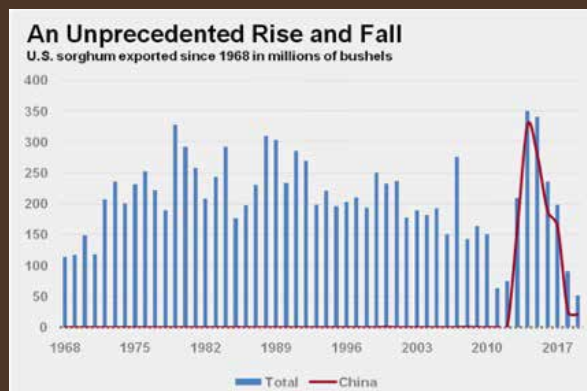


Figure 1

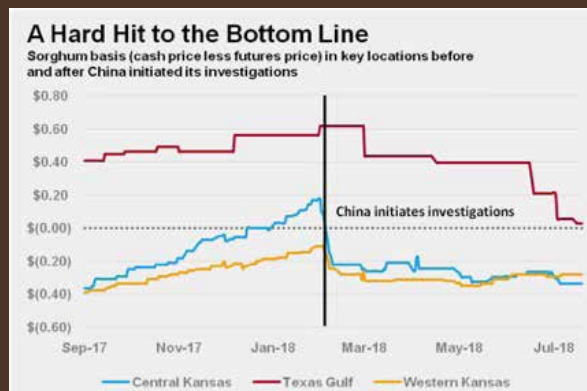


Figure 2

Historic Strength

Top 15 largest weekly sorghum export commitments

Date	Volume	Rank
December 18, 2014	23,003,792	1
September 6, 2007	21,188,563	2
November 20, 2014	18,175,714	3
November 6, 2003	17,631,803	4
February 20, 2020	17,499,919	5
December 14, 2017	17,248,474	6
November 30, 2017	16,005,266	7
November 12, 2015	15,907,003	8
October 27, 2016	15,904,759	9
November 27, 2014	15,505,447	10
September 27, 2001	15,345,927	11
March 12, 2020	14,407,625	12
November 21, 2013	14,012,722	13
November 3, 2016	13,837,770	14
November 6, 2014	13,656,873	15

Figure 3



Figure 4



BARRIERS TO TRADE

SORGHUM OPPORTUNITY SOUGHT IN VIETNAM

By Hannah Lipps

Ten years ago, trading U.S. sorghum to China was just an idea. Today, China pulls the majority of sorghum exports at a premium to other feedgrains.

Why is that? What factors interplayed to foster the emergence of a powerhouse market in the world's most populous country? And who is thinking about the next big thing for international sorghum markets?

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program and the U.S. Grains Council (USGC)—that's who.

When the idea was born for a sorghum market in China, the Sorghum Checkoff was just getting out of the starting gate with a huge mandate: leverage every checkoff dollar to create value for the producer. Observation in 2010 pointed toward China as a potential market, so together with the USGC, leadership at the Sorghum Checkoff conducted a market assessment, fostered relationships with Chinese buyers, educated buyers and end-users, and launched sorghum into a completely new market.

Today, the Sorghum Checkoff is doing the same type of work with an eye toward creating value-added export markets around the world.

Feeding Aquaculture in Vietnam

In August 2017, Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Florentino Lopez boarded a long-haul flight to Vietnam to explore an untapped potential market.

Pangasius is a species of Vietnamese catfish that is sold domestically and around the world. Local diets for pangasius traditionally consist of ingredients such as fishmeal, rice byproduct and a root plant called cassava. This light colored starch plant was a good ingredient

that allowed the fish to express a preferred white filet. However, in 2017, demand from China and the domestic ethanol industry made cassava very hard to come by.

Other ingredients such as corn were introduced to fill in for cassava. Yet, fears of yellow discoloration caused by the xanthophyll in corn soon removed corn as a viable alternative.

"That got us thinking," said Manuel Sanchez, Regional Director of Southeast Asia for the USGC. "We thought sorghum could be a great way we could combat this specific [yellowing] problem. Out of that, we began discussions with Sorghum Checkoff. We knew there was an opportunity, but we didn't have the data on aquaculture. So, we decided that we would conduct the trial ourselves."

After the Sorghum Checkoff funded a joint program with the USGC, sorghum was shipped into Vietnam on a scientific basis.

"We partnered with a local catfish producer in Vietnam," Sanchez said. "The trial was specifically to showcase that we could feed sorghum without affecting filet color. We are positioning sorghum as a potential alternative to cassava."

In the trial, Pangasius were fed a ration including sorghum in comparison to similar diets including cassava and corn. The outcomes when using sorghum were as effective as the competing ration ingredients, and the study concluded that sorghum could be fed up to 20 percent in Pangasius rations with no yellowing or other adverse effects.

Armed with that information, USGC and the Sorghum Checkoff pressed forward with opening a pathway

for trading sorghum into Vietnam. Vietnam requires a pest risk assessment on U.S. sorghum before it can be imported. According to USDA, the assessment, overseen by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is an analysis of the plant pests and diseases known to be associated with the commodity in the country of origin.

"For the past three years, our focus has been on how to position sorghum for the largest compound feed market in Vietnam," Sanchez said. "The catfish trial was there to prepare the Vietnam industry to be aware of sorghum.

"The study was well received in Vietnam, but the problem was they couldn't import it. It pulls a shadow over the work we have done if the customer cannot bring it in."

Industry Collaboration Opens Doors

Enter National Sorghum Producers, the policy arm of the sorghum industry. NSP worked closely with APHIS for almost a year to ensure the process moved forward at a steady pace, while the Checkoff provided analysis and information to APHIS officials.

"The Association is working with APHIS and with multiple government officials in the U.S. and Vietnam to make sure we don't get lost in the shuffle," said NSP CEO Tim Lust. "At times, there may be only a few hot issues in the international trade arena. Right now though, there are so many complex trade policies at play that you have to constantly engage to push your items across the finish line."

The industry expects an announcement from APHIS this spring regarding the pest risk assessment for Vietnam.

What does that mean for moving sorghum into the Vietnam aquaculture market?

Vietnam does have an import tariff for feed ingredients, but they are still a net importer of coarse grains and co-products. The pest risk assessment gives sorghum a trade pathway into a new market and a seat at the table as Vietnamese producers determine how best to meet their feeding needs.

And aquaculture is just the beginning. While the new research on Pangasius can raise awareness about sor-

ghum, there is likely space in other markets. Vietnam is currently the fifth largest corn importer in the world, and the pest risk assessment will give sorghum a chance to compete in that market.

Markets Around the World

The Sorghum Checkoff, in partnership with the USGC, is looking into other international trade opportunities, as well.

One particularly promising market is India. With population growth set to eclipse China for the world's most populous country in the next two to four years, India will need more and more of the world's feedgrains.

Reece Cannady is Manager of Global Trade for the USGC. He said India has a high tariff on imports of U.S. sorghum – 50 percent, in fact – but the industry can work to overcome that barrier in deference to the nation's rising demand.

"They have a [feed] deficit today, and they have a very strict non-GMO market," Cannady said. "Sorghum is a non-GMO product that they can use.

"We have great logistics and all the things a U.S. supply chain provides," Cannady said. "The next step is working with policymakers and associations in India to get that tariff removed, at least for a specific quantity."

The Sorghum Checkoff is in early conversations with the USGC and contacts within India to launch a market assessment, similar to the one opened in China in 2010.

Bottom line: Provide Value to the Producer

Does that mean three years from now most of your sorghum will go to Vietnam or India?

"Not necessarily," Lopez said. "But what we are trying to do is provide competition. We are constantly looking for other marketplaces that will put a premium value on it."

"Our goal is not only to sell sorghum. Our goal is to sell sorghum at a value to the producer. We want to see those checkoff dollars invested by the farmer actually making a difference. The investments of checkoff dollars into foreign marketplaces, when leveraged with other groups, can mean an extraordinary value back to the farmer." 🌾



▲ FLORENTINO LOPEZ, executive director of the Sorghum Checkoff, visited a sorghum feeding trial in Vietnam in 2017. The Sorghum Checkoff continues to seek new markets for sorghum to increase the value to U.S. producers.

World War C Remedies

By Jeff Harrison

Editor's Note: This article was published on March 31, 2020. This article discusses legislative matters up to the aforementioned date.

Ifear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve," Imperial Japan's Admiral Yamamoto in the 1970 film *Tora! Tora! Tora!*

In late February, the second session of the 116th Congress promised to be lame well before the lame duck.

Some inroads on FY2021 appropriations were expected prior to the Democratic and GOP National Conventions in July and August, but conventional wisdom suggested even here a Continuing Resolution to keep government running would be needed to get past the election.

Beyond that, there were few expectations that Washington could achieve much of anything besides keeping the lights on given the sharp partisan divide and the high-stakes election in November.

Then came a new sense of urgency in combating the coronavirus pandemic.

In just three short weeks, the Trump Administration and Congress have unleashed a torrent of legislative and administrative initiatives aimed at meeting the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 virus head on.

In week one, Congress approved the supplemental request of the Trump Administration providing \$8.3 billion to, among other things, procure vaccines and medical supplies and provide grants to state and local health agencies.

By week two, Congress passed a second response aimed at providing paid leave, sick leave, expanded Medicaid and unemployment insurance benefits, and free testing for COVID-19.

In week three, the President signed into law a massive third response package, totaling about \$2.3 trillion to provide direct assistance for low and middle income wage earners, small businesses, and airlines, as well as enhanced unemployment benefits.

This package also included help for America's farmers and ranchers, with a \$14 billion replenishment of the

Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to allow USDA to develop a successor to the MFP for the 2020 crop year, another \$9.5 billion for relief from COVID-19 related economic losses, including for livestock and specialty crops, and an additional \$34.9 billion to USDA to carry out its work.

These extraordinary steps do not include the numerous actions by the Federal Reserve, including lowering interest rates to near zero, the President's emergency declaration under the Stafford Act making roughly \$50 billion in aid available, including 75 percent cost share with states in covering the response to the virus, and the President's invocation of the Defense Production Act allowing the United States government to recruit industry to mass produce things like ventilators, masks, and medical supplies.

Now the seeds of a fourth package, focused on infrastructure, are being planted, where a Highway Bill, a Water Resources Development Act reauthorization, and additional help to agriculture may well be a part.

It was noteworthy that the President welcomed the second legislative response to COVID-19, which was largely crafted by House Democrats, and that Speaker Pelosi applauded the President's invocation under the Defense Production Act, urging him to take immediate action under his new authorities. But it was surreal to read that Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) was praising the President's actions in tackling the impacts of the COVID-19 virus.

President Trump has called himself a wartime president in confronting what's been dubbed by some as World War C.

This reminds us of the fateful decision of Imperial Japan to attack the then neutral United States at Pearl Harbor and Admiral Yamamoto's reported thoughts on the attack at the top of this column.

These are trying times — though they still pale by comparison to other challenges our country has faced and conquered, including World War II and the Great Depression. Nonetheless, amidst hard times, it is encouraging to see signs that an oft divided country is making efforts to unify in order to rise and meet the challenge. 🇺🇸

NSP Leaders Honor Congressmen with Awards, Lobby in D.C.

By Haleigh Erramouspe

During National Sorghum Producers annual D.C. Fly-In Feb. 3-5, producer leaders awarded both House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) and Congressman Roger Marshall (R-KS) with Sorghum Congressional Awards for 2019. The Sorghum Congressional Award is the organization's top honor presented to individuals who work diligently for the sorghum producers they represent and for achievements in creating and implementing farm policy that benefits sorghum farmers.

The NSP board of directors recognized Peterson for his support and leadership crafting the 2018 Farm Bill that provided effective risk management tools, advances in conservation policy and continued support for sorghum ethanol production.

Award Winners

"Chairman Peterson has been a true and devoted champion for U.S. agriculture," NSP Chairman Dan Atkisson, a sorghum producer from Stockton, Kansas, said in a statement. "His leadership through the 2018 Farm Bill provided certainty producers needed during a trying time, and he has remained a steadfast voice of reason throughout his tenure on the House Agriculture Committee."

NSP also recognized Congressman Marshall for his representation of farmers in the U.S. Sorghum Belt. Marshall represents the first district of Kansas, the largest sorghum producing state in the nation, and has advocated for sorghum producers with the Environmental Protection Agency, through support of Renewable Fuels Standard policies and helping to find resolutions for farmers during the China tariff issue.

"Congressman Marshall represents a large number of our grower members in Kansas and has been a powerful advocate for the Kansas Big First," Atkisson added. "We appreciate his relentless efforts to be a champion for sorghum and the Kansas farmers he represents."

Sorghum Capitol Hill Efforts

During the fly-in, 20 members of Team Sorghum met with over 90 Members of Congress and several key officials at the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy to discuss a number of issues.

Trade and Trade Aid

NSP thanked agency officials and members of Congress for their work on passing USMCA and progressing

trade with China. They also urged new trade agreements to significantly expand U.S. agricultural exports. However, it was also noted the U.S. agriculture economy is still struggling due to prior and current trade barriers as well as low commodity prices, and absent significant improvement to the U.S. agriculture economy, additional aid could be necessary to keep farmers and ranchers on their feet.

Renewable Fuels

Fly-in participants commended the Trump Administration's decision to allow year-round E-15 sales but expressed concern that small refinery waivers could undermine the ability of the U.S. to meet the annual Renewable Fuel Standard Program levels established by Congress.

Crop Insurance and Conservation

NSP thanked members for the provision in the 2018 Farm Bill which required the Risk Management Agency to study premium rates for sorghum farmers. On the conservation front, participants urged Trump Administration officials to carry out congressional intent by making sorghum eligible to be used in a resource conserving crop rotation per the 2018 Farm Bill. The rules guiding such payments are currently making their way through USDA at both the state and national levels.

For more information on legislative and regulatory issues facing the sorghum industry, visit SorghumGrowers.com/our-impact. To receive updates from National Sorghum Producers, or view ways to take action yourself, visit SorghumGrowers.com/advocacy.



◀ NSP LEADERS present Congressman Roger Marshall (R-KS) with the 2019 Sorghum Congressional Award.

▶ NSP CHAIRMAN Dan Atkisson presented House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) with the 2019 Sorghum Congressional Award.



Ethanol Fueling Export Markets Around the World

By Jennifer Blackburn

While the ethanol industry is facing challenges today as a result of the Russia-Saudi Arabia oil price war coupled with lower gasoline consumption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, historical demand for U.S. ethanol around the world has continued to grow.

Ethanol exports reached new heights in 2018 with the U.S. shipping almost 1.7 billion gallons to 74 countries, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service. Last year, U.S. ethanol exports were 1.47 billion gallons with total production at 15.7 billion gallons, consuming 517 million bushels of grain and contributing to approximately 21,000 American jobs.

Seeking Demand Outside the U.S.

The pathway to these export levels was made possible when ethanol proponents began looking outside U.S. borders and engaging on both domestic and global trade policies, according to Brian Healy, director of global ethanol development for the U.S. Grains Council. He said the U.S. was, at that time, ramping up ethanol production from 2007 to 2010, and imports of ethanol from Brazil were used to backfill demand.

“There was recognition from the U.S. industry that there was a growth opportunity in foreign markets ethanol could service,” Healy said. “Growth outside the U.S. could further support U.S. feedstock producers here for corn, and sorghum, as well.”

Craig Willis, Growth Energy’s senior vice president of global markets, said, worldwide, the average blend rate is around 7 percent ethanol in the gasoline pool. If you take the U.S. and Brazil out of the equation, he said that rate drops to a little over 1 percent.

“We’d like to get E10 throughout the entire gasoline pool,” he said. “That would mean 20+ billion gallons of potential market development opportunities.”

“We don’t expect to open this much demand overnight. However, opening just one key market such as Indonesia could create more than a billion gallons of new ethanol demand, or 350 million bushels of new grain demand.”

The U.S. exports approximately 10 percent of what is produced with the majority of ethanol exports going to countries like Brazil and Canada, but countries like Mexico and China offer considerable opportunity. Willis said if Mexico can convert to an E10 blend fuel, the country has a potential 1.2 billion gallon market for U.S. ethanol producers.

“There is a huge potential for new demand there,” he said, “so we are spending a lot of time both on the policy side and on the market development side, as well.”

Massive Opportunity in China

Both Healy and Willis agree the big market opportunity is China.

“If there was any market on the planet that could move the bottom line of ethanol producers and their customers and stakeholders the fastest, it would be China,” Willis said. “They are embracing ethanol going forward and, today, blend at about a little over 2 percent countrywide.”

Willis said China had a 2017 policy to reach E10 blends across the country by 2020. While some provinces have embraced E10, fulfilling the mandate to use a blend of 10 percent ethanol and 90 percent gasoline (E10) by 2020 is unlikely as press reports indicate its government has slowed this implementation deadline.

“We just got Phase One signed January 15,” he said. “Of course, the coronavirus situation is going on right now, but, hopefully, once we get back to normalized trade, ethanol can be one of the big winners.”

Other challenges exist with China, as well. China currently imposes a 70 percent cumulative duty on U.S. ethanol.

In addition to fuel, Chinese demand for ethanol coproducts such as dried distillers grains with solubles (DDGS) is potentially significant, as well, and this makes the overall opportunity with China even larger. If margins line up once again for ethanol and DDGS, Healy says China could easily import a billion gallons of ethanol in the future.

Low-Carbon Markets Offer Premium

Another opportunity specific to sorghum, Healy said, is carbon sensitive markets.

"There are certain markets where carbon intensity is the most important metric and where a premium can be realized," he said. "Globally, the world is moving in a direction where there is more incentive to have lower carbon intensity ethanol, and some sorghum plants do have an advantage in terms of carbon intensity reduction."

"If the premium is going to be there," Healy said, "it's going to incentivize greater production of sorghum-based ethanol."

Most sorghum farmers are aware of California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) and its impact on

sorghum ethanol plants, but other fuel markets requiring producers to provide sustainability data are rapidly proliferating. Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, the European Union and Japan are just a few examples of countries or regions with low carbon fuel markets similar to the California LCFS.

Present Day Challenges

Ethanol exports have been setting records the past few years, but, at the time of writing, current conditions associated with COVID-19 could hamper domestic production. Fewer people on the road means less demand, and gasoline prices continue to drop.

While a number of ethanol plants are considering temporarily shutting down, fortunately, managers of plants with physical ownership of sorghum were able to sell sorghum stocks back to companies like ADM and Cargill who are taking advantage of renewed demand in the sorghum export market to China.

These are serious challenges, but ethanol proponents are optimistic the industry outlook improves beyond the year 2020, and building U.S. ethanol export demand across the world remains a critical priority.

WHERE IS U.S. ETHANOL GOING? Top U.S. Export Customers In Marketing Year 2018/2019



**U.S. GRAINS
COUNCIL**
www.grains.org

Source: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service's Global Agriculture Trading System report for marketing year Sept. 1, 2018, to Aug. 31, 2019.

Dollar Amount

1 BRAZIL	\$579 MILLION
2 CANADA	\$558 MILLION
3 INDIA	\$357 MILLION
4 EUROPEAN UNION	\$188 MILLION
5 SOUTH KOREA	\$144 MILLION
Philippines	\$121 million
Colombia	\$86 million
Peru	\$79 million
United Arab Emirates	\$63 million
Mexico	\$55 million

Gallons

BRAZIL	390,181,991
CANADA	330,765,949
INDIA	202,848,815
EUROPEAN UNION	127,914,945
SOUTH KOREA	91,653,301
Philippines	79,848,191
Colombia	64,629,941
Peru	47,773,685
United Arab Emirates	37,776,103
Mexico	33,735,486

Team Sorghum Hires New Director of Operations, Promotes Duff to Executive Vice President

By Sherrie Ray

National Sorghum Producers hired Garrett Mink as the organization's new joint Director of Operations and promoted former NSP Strategic Business Director and United Sorghum Checkoff Program Renewables Director John Duff to Executive Vice President.

"We have exciting, young talent stepping into these operations roles for our organizations with both Garrett and John," said NSP and Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust. "With Garrett's passion for agriculture and operations management, we believe she will be a great asset to the team, and John's leadership with Team Sorghum for the past eight years makes this a natural progression for him and what he can continue to contribute to both of our organizations."


As director of operations, Mink will oversee the day-to-day operations for NSP, organize external board and committee functions and work closely with Lust. Mink will also play a large role in planning organization events including NSP's annual D.C. Fly-In, Commodity Classic and the Sorghum Improvement Conference of North America.

Duff will transition into a new role as executive vice president for both NSP and the Sorghum Checkoff where he will collaborate with board and staff leadership at all levels to leverage existing grassroots networks and build new networks aimed at strengthening the sorghum industry. He will also work directly with staff executive leadership to assist with day-to-day operations and will remain very involved in legislative and regulatory advocacy on behalf of the association.

“
We have exciting, young talent stepping into these operations roles for our organizations with both Garrett and John.
”

Debra Lloyd, Mink's predecessor, has remained in the office as a part-time administrator since Mink started with NSP in December to train and assist through the transition period. Lloyd said she looks forward to spending time with her family and staying involved in church and civic activities.

"We appreciate Debra's servant leadership and the wisdom she provided," Lust said. "She has served Team Sorghum with great integrity, and we are excited to support Debra and her husband Ed as they take some time to relax and enjoy life."

For more information about Team Sorghum, visit SorghumGrowers.com and SorghumCheckoff.com.



Garrett Mink



John Duff



Debra Lloyd

SORGHUM SAW ITS FUTURE CLEARLY AT 2020 COMMODITY CLASSIC



By Sherrie Ray

San Antonio hosted more than 9,350 agricultural producers, leaders and advocates during the 2020 Commodity Classic. Of the 9,350 total registrants, a record-breaking 4,678 farmers flooded the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center for the largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show. The annual convention, held at the end of February, is presented by the National Sorghum Producers, American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

Team Sorghum had a full schedule, including a spring NSP board of directors meeting, the 2020 NSP Yield Contest Awards Gala and the annual Sorghum PAC Casino Night and Auction. Sorghum board directors and staff were continually engaged throughout the week, working the trade show booths and attending a variety of meetings and learning sessions.



Classic General Session

During the Classic General Session on Friday, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue delivered a keynote address covering trade, productivity and sustainability. Prior to Perdue's address, attendees focused in on a video of President Donald Trump personally addressing Commodity Classic and assuring attendees of his commitment to U.S. farmers.

Following Secretary Perdue's remarks, NSP Chairman Dan Atkisson and leadership from other Classic affiliate organizations took the stage to talk about current issues pertaining to each industry. Atkisson took the opportunity to address NSP's action on behalf of growers relating to resumed trade with China, the current infrastructure challenges faced by sorghum producers and sustainability efforts being made within the sorghum industry.



NSP Yield Contest Gala

This year's NSP Yield Contest Gala, sponsored by Pioneer, highlighted 2019 NSP Yield Contest national and state winners. Both NSP Chairman Dan Atkisson and Sorghum Checkoff Chairman Craig Poore of Alton, Kansas, addressed the audience about the respective work each organization is doing on behalf

of the sorghum industry and progress and milestones accomplished in the past year. Winter Johnston of McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, was inducted into the Yield Contest Hall of Fame in the Dry Land-No Till East division. Learn more on page 20. CEO Tim Lust recognized NSP's ongoing Director of Operations Debra Loyd for her years of service to both sorghum organizations, and he also recognized his parents, Glenn and Barbra Lust, as it was their first time in attendance to Commodity Classic. (cont. on pg 22)



2019

YIELD CONTEST WINNERS



DRYLAND NO-TILL EAST

CHRIS SANTINI

206.80

With 60 inches of rain in New Jersey during planting, growing and harvesting seasons, Dryland-No Till East winner Chris Santini found just the right time to put her seed in the ground. Santini said a culmination of ideal soil conditions, effective fertilizer application and the opportunity to plant allowed her to grow a crop yielding nearly 207 bushels per acre.

“[I get satisfaction] in knowing that we can compete with other proud farmers,” Santini said, reflecting on what it means to be a sorghum yield contest winner.



DRYLAND NO-TILL WEST

KI GAMBLE

194.99

Dryland-No Till West winner and past Hall of Fame inductee Ki Gamble is a sorghum farmer from Greensburg, Kansas, and has always been a heavy hitter in the NSP Yield Contest—this year was no exception. Gamble contributes a timely plant date, a sugarcane aphid-free growing season and minimal weed pressure to his 195-bushel harvest.

“It means a lot to have recognition in the industry we work so hard for,” Gamble said.



DRYLAND TILLAGE EAST

SANTINO SANTINI

212.57

Although sorghum was difficult to get planted in the 2019 growing season, regular moisture helped Dryland-Tillage East and 2019 Bin Buster winner Santino Santini grow a fantastic sorghum crop yielding almost 213 bushels per acre. With lower commodity prices than typical, Santini said his operation is careful to use only what is necessary to produce an effective crop. The New Jersey farmer is no stranger to growing the nation's top yields and is proud to continue that legacy.

“It's nice to know that a farmer from New Jersey can compete with farmers across the United States,” Santini said.



DRYLAND TILLAGE WEST

RON GLISSENDORF

172.04

Ronald Glissendorf earned the national title in Dryland-Tillage West after going through one of the “most difficult and interesting years” he can remember. Glissendorf said he could not remember a time he had experienced excess moisture from start to finish but still managed to produce an impressive yield of 172 bushels per acre thanks to smart management decisions and a little luck.

“It gives me confidence that I might be doing a few things right and that Mother Nature was good to me,” Glissendorf said.



IRRIGATED NO-TILL EAST

ROBERT SANTINI

206.18

New England farmer Robert Santini won the Irrigated-No Till East category with a yield of 206 bushels per acre. While excess rainfall and planting difficulties impacted Santini’s operation, he was able to produce a competitive crop.

Santini’s operation, River Hollow Farms, is not the only Santini operation to make it into this year’s top placings. He is joined by Chris, Santino and Michelle Santini who each won their respective categories.



IRRIGATED NO-TILL WEST

NATHAN MILLER

160.25

Irrigated-No Till West winner Nathan Miller said the 2019 growing season was extremely difficult due to several forced re-plants, excess moisture and hot spells in July. Despite the challenges facing Miller, his sorghum plot still produced a 160 bushel yield thanks to effective fertilizer application and irrigation technologies.

“Extremely humbling,” Miller said, reflecting on his recent win in NSP’s Yield Contest. “I enjoy learning and always try to eliminate yield limiting factors.”



IRRIGATED TILLAGE EAST

MICHELLE SANTINI

199.66

Sanduff Farm's Michelle Santini won the Irrigated Tillage East category. Rainfall in the northeastern parts of the country coupled with sound management practices helped push Santini's yield to nearly 200 bushels per acre.

Santini is surrounded by family members who push one another to be competitive in the sorghum yield contest. She is one of four Santinis recognized as national winners in the 2019 NSP Yield Contest.



IRRIGATED TILLAGE WEST

KIMBERLY GAMBLE

206.18

Kimberly Gamble, Irrigated-Tillage West winner, reports a successful year for the Kansas farm despite excess moisture and a summer dry spell. Gamble said she did the best she could with the hand she was dealt and harvested almost 205 bushels per acre.

"We can't control the weather or the markets," Gamble said. "We just maximize how we work with our circumstances."

Kimberly and her husband had top yields in 2019, and she credits this accomplishment to her family's competitive nature and motivation to be the best they can be.

**VISIT SORGHUMGROWERS.COM/YIELD-CONTEST
FOR ALL WINNERS & RULE CHANGES**

BEST OF THE BEST



MEET SORGHUM HALL OF FAME WINNER WINTER JOHNSTON

By Samantha Barnett

In the hills and valleys of McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, a sorghum farmer has proven it is possible to produce competitive yields outside of the Sorghum Belt. Through smart management practices and the ideal growing conditions offered by the northeastern coast, one sorghum farm family has risen to the top time and time again.

Hall of Fame Inductee Winter Johnston is only the second sorghum farmer to be inducted into the National Sorghum Producer's Yield Contest Hall of Fame and the first to be inducted into the Dryland-No Till East Division.

"I didn't expect to be put into the Hall of Fame at all," Johnston said, reflecting on her recent accomplishment.

Johnston grew up on a dairy farm just 15 miles away from where she currently farms in Fulton County, Pennsylvania. When she married her husband, Harry Johnston, they started farming together on a plot he already owned, and they grew their operation from there.

The couple grows sorghum, corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. Their dryland operation sprawls across nearly 2,000 acres in addition to 2,500 acres they custom farm.

Johnston's husband Harry has a degree in agronomy which he utilizes on the operation. His education helps determine chemical applications, crop rotations and management practices.

"My husband can pretty much make just about anything grow," Johnston said.

Her responsibilities are "pretty much everything [her husband] doesn't do." Johnston said she selects hybrids, picks up seed, orders chemicals and organizes deliveries for their expansive operation.

This agronomic background and cooperation allow

the couple to produce crops, especially sorghum, in a way that is not only competitive in the yield contest but profitable to the operation.

Johnston said most of the grain sorghum raised on their farm ends up as bird seed. After harvest, the couple hauls their grain to an elevator and is processed in a manner that makes it ideal for the specialty feed market. She said their grain sorghum typically gets a premium price, as compared to corn.

Although 2019 was a trying year for most farmers, Johnston's operation fared well. With initial concerns about excess moisture affecting the sorghum yield, Johnston was pleasantly surprised to harvest an impressive yield.

"Sorghum kind of likes the dry and the wet weather," Johnston said. "There's really nothing it doesn't like."

A culmination of sorghum's ability to adapt to an array of conditions and smart management have helped place Johnston among the top yielding producers since 2012.

Johnston said she and her husband decided to enter NSP's Yield Contest after seeing another farmer in the area be recognized as a national winner. Convinced they could do just as well, the couple signed up and have been competitors ever since.

"We've always wanted to have the best we can have," Johnston said.

Johnston said she never expected to be put into the Hall of Fame but is thankful for the opportunity to be inducted. She said being recognized nationally for her operation's achievements amongst other farmers is a privilege.

"Obviously I know we can make things grow," Johnston said, "but I never expected to be put into the Hall of Fame." 🌾



LET'S MAKE WAVES

*Tune into the Sorghum Smart Talk podcast on iTunes,
Google Play, Spotify or sorghumsmarttalk.libsyn.com*



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www.richardsonseeds.com

Cont. from page 15

Sorghum PAC Casino Night & Auction

The annual Sorghum PAC Casino Night and Auction kicked off at the conclusion of the NSP Yield Contest Gala. Throughout the night, there were a variety of raffles, auctions and casino games for guests to enjoy. In 2010, the board of directors established the bipartisan political action committee, commonly known as the Sorghum PAC, to further promote the legislative interests of sorghum producers. During this year's fundraiser, more than \$90,000 was generated to support NSP political endeavors. Have ideas for next year's event? Contact Sorghum PAC event coordinator Jamaca Battin.

Trade Show

Over 9,000 farmers and agribusiness men and women from across the nation filled the trade show floor this year. Producers from

across the nation and several international countries made appearances in educational sessions and booths throughout the Henry B Gonzalez Convention Center.


Exhibitors visiting the sorghum booths were able to converse with fellow growers and board and staff members who spent time informing visitors about Leadership Sorghum and the Sorghum Smart Talk podcast plus market education information.

Staying in San Antonio

Commodity Classic will return to San Antonio, Texas, for the 25th annual convention. Join NSP on the San Antonio River Walk March 4-6, 2021, for the silver celebration. Take part in Classic events and learning sessions, along with the annual NSP Yield Contest Gala and Sorghum PAC Casino Night and Auction. For more information, visit www.CommodityClassic.com.



▲ NSP BOARD OF DIRECTORS Chairman Dan Atkisson talks about the industry on the main stage at Commodity Classic.





ALWAYS GLUTEN FREE

INGREDIENTS

2 cups cooked Pearled Sorghum Grain
7 Roma Tomatoes, diced
1 can Pinto Beans, drained & rinsed
1 can Black Beans, drained & rinsed
1 can Corn, drained
1 medium Purple Onion, diced
1 Green Pepper, diced
1 Orange Pepper, diced
2 Avocados, diced
1 Jalapeno, diced

DRESSING

½ cup Vinegar
½ cup Oil
½ cup Sugar
1 tsp Salt
1 tsp Pepper
1 tsp Garlic Powder




Nu Life Market's gluten free Pearled Sorghum Grain is an excellent alternative to couscous, quinoa, and pasta.

INSTRUCTIONS

In a small bowl, mix together all of the dressing ingredients and set aside. Mix together the cooked *Pearled Sorghum Grain*, tomatoes, pinto beans, black beans, corn, onion, green pepper, orange pepper, avocado, and jalapenos. Pour dressing over sorghum mixture and stir until well combined. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Visit www.NuLifeMarket.com
For free shipping on purchases over \$45,
use coupon code: **sorghum19**





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Plant Nutrition

The Next Big Thing

By Samantha Barnett

Today's buzzwords—ancient grain, gluten free, regenerative agriculture—drive the market. The sorghum industry is perfectly positioned to take advantage of the current market's attitude and create significant market opportunity in the consumer food space for sorghum farmers across the U.S.

According to a recent report from the Sorghum Check-off, sorghum demand in the restaurant food service industry grew 29 percent from 2018 to 2019. The grain now appears in several major fast food outlets, like Taco Bell and Chick-fil-A, which provided sorghum high consumer visibility.

Recently, several companies using sorghum in their product formulations have made huge progress toward mainstream market entry. Ka-Pop! Snacks is a leading product in the consumer foods industry in regard to ancient grain formulations and has attracted the attention of various retailers and news outlets.

Ka-Pop! Snacks

As much as he loves health and fitness, Ka-Pop! Snacks CEO Dustin Finkel loves eating even more. After binging on “healthy chips” loaded with empty calories, Finkel turned to his ancient grain-stocked pantry and began devising a plan to create the perfect alternative to unhealthy snacks—Ka-Pop! Snacks was born.

Through careful thought and consideration, Finkel found that sorghum fit perfectly into the snack's formulation. Ka-Pop! Snacks is the only snack commercially available using only ancient grains, with a primary focus on sorghum, in its recipe. Strategic marketing helped Finkel get Ka-Pop! Snacks on the shelves of grocery stores, like Whole Foods Market, and into the hands of consumers.

On Jan. 19, Finkel made an appearance on Shark Tank, a popular TV show, to pitch Ka-Pop! Snacks to a panel of investors. This TV appearance could allow for U.S. sorghum to penetrate mainstream marketplaces, creating potential market opportunities for sorghum producers across the U.S.

Household Name?

With commercial availability of food grade sorghum increasing, consumers are more comfortable accepting the grain as a household name. Sorghum grows more

attractive daily to consumers who are seeking products aligned with plant-based protein, gluten-free and sustainably-produced labels.

The versatility of sorghum allows for flexibility in numerous product formulations. Whether you are looking to produce a crouton or popped snack, sorghum has the culinary properties to satisfy.

The market opportunity food grade sorghum offers U.S. farmers is virtually untapped. If companies like Ka-Pop! Snacks continue to advocate for the benefits of ancient grains, specifically sorghum, farmers may want to consider planting a few acres of food grade sorghum to help meet growing market demands. 🌾

Right Rice

RightRice CEO Keith Belling loves rice but does not care for the empty calories or carbohydrates he feels come along with it. On his quest to make the perfect rice, he formulated a product high in fiber and protein while still maintaining the nutritional integrity of its ingredients—RightRice.

RightRice, a vegetable-based rice alternative, has recently launched a line extension called RightRice Medley. The new products feature various ancient grains, including sorghum, in its formulations aiming to replicate rice pilafs.

Whole Foods Market, Kroger and Sprouts are just a few of the large grocery stores to stock RightRice in store while companies like Amazon and FreshDirect offer the product commercially online.

Pop Bitties

When a passion for culinary arts and a healthy lifestyle collided, Mark's Mindful Munchies CEO Mark Andrus created Pop Bitties, an air-popped whole grain sorghum snack.

Pop Bitties offers consumers the opportunity to enjoy a gluten free, whole grain and environmentally conscious product. Pop Bitties is one of the few popped sorghum brands commercially available.

Numerous groceries along the Eastern coast, like Brothers Marketplace and Roche Bros. Supermarkets, stock Mark's Mindful Munchies in store for convenient pickup. If you are located elsewhere in the country, Pop Bitties are also available for purchase on the company's website and Amazon.



Sorghum *Update*

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

When Trade Works: Local Communities, Global Marketplaces

By Adam York & Reed Middleton

The family farms of Kansas work hard to supply and meet the needs of their customers, not only locally, but around the world, from trading partners in Europe and Africa to buyers on both sides of the Pacific. With the ever present concern for the welfare of their families, their local economies, and their consumers at home and abroad, Kansas farmers work best when trade works, period. Kansas farmers are increasingly plugged into demand driven by the global economy. Their successful livelihoods bolster Main Street businesses and promote vibrant public services. By working to expand exports through their Sorghum Checkoff, Kansas farmers are investing not only in a better future for themselves, but for their rural communities, as well.

Kansas is an export state. In fact, the Kansas Department of Commerce reported that exports for 2019 across all industries in Kansas totaled \$11.6 billion, up from the previous year on a continued year-over-year trend despite two years of international political pressures increasing trade tensions. Sorghum is the state's ninth largest export product, totaling 1.4% of total 2019 exports—or \$158 million in output directly from the sorghum growers' fields. While recent years have trended downward for total sorghum exports, 2020 could see that share and its value grow even larger as traditional export markets may reopen to U.S. sorghum. Simply put, our sorghum growers know export opportunities for their crop are vital for their incomes as well as the economic output of their state in general.

When trade works, Kansas communities benefit. Standards of living increase. Financial and mental health stabilize as the ever-flowing waves that carry the stresses of farm management break away against the bulwark of budget sheets ending up in the black. Main Street businesses that farmers

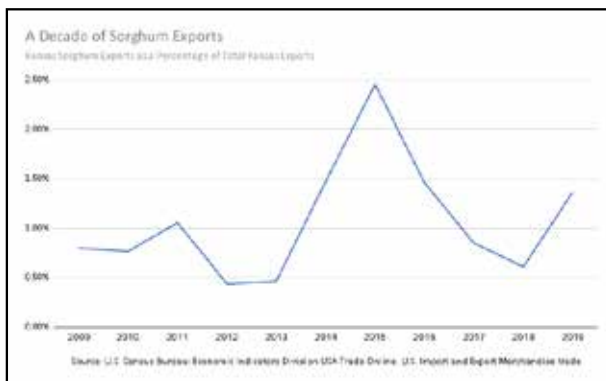
and their families patronize prosper, and in turn, those companies' employees can count on secure paychecks for their own families. Public services, like schools, rural hospitals, roads and bridges all benefit from increased government revenues due to upticks in the rural economy. In Kansas, one of the enduring examples of rural America, the farmer is indeed the spark that jumpstarts community prosperity.

By working to expand exports, the Sorghum Checkoff and the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission build value for the farmer and provide key opportunities to engage grassroots leadership at home, across the country, and around the world. Engage with your commission to connect with marketing strategies and build value for your farm, or participate with the Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association to advocate and educate policymakers regarding increasing

those trade export opportunities by sharing your hometown story. Whether you are a sorghum farmer who is able to invest precious time by serving on either the state commission or national checkoff boards, willing to host our friends from foreign nations interested in buying your product, or simply doing what you do best to grow the most productive and efficient crop as profitably as you can, your investment builds a

better, shared future for you as well as for your community.

Farmers are the lifeblood of their local economies; when trade works, farmers thrive and their communities prosper. Kansas is no exception due to its powerhouse status as a key U.S. export state. When trade works, small towns and rural services reap the benefits. By building and capitalizing on farmer-led engagement and investment, sorghum presents a sustainable pathway for rural Kansas to plug into the global economy and thrive throughout this century and into the next. When trade works, farmers work best.



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NEWSLETTER

sorghumcheckoff.com | Spring 2020

Advanced Cropping Solutions for Sorghum Coming Soon

A robust pipeline of herbicide technologies for sorghum will be making their debut beginning this growing season. Many growers have heard the buzz surrounding not one, but three different up-and-coming technologies for weed and grass control in sorghum. One technology in particular will be demonstrated at several field days this summer across the Sorghum Belt.

IGROWTH® BY ALTA SEEDS AND UPL

Alta Seeds from Advanta has developed non-GMO imidazolinone (IMI) herbicide-tolerant technology for grain sorghum. This unique technology is known as igrowth® and will enable farmers to spray an IMI herbicide for pre or postemergence control of both broadleaf and grass weeds, a technology to which sorghum farmers have not yet had access. Traditionally, these types of herbicides would cause severe damage to a sorghum crop, but with the ability to plant an igrowth® hybrid, an IMI herbicide can safely be applied. UPL Lim-

ited (UPL) is in the process of labeling the IMI herbicide imazamox for use in igrowth® sorghum. The company has not released the official name of the chemical at the time of writing.

Because the technology is a recessive, non-GMO technology developed through traditional breeding, the sorghum product is export friendly and maintains its value to global customers and marketplaces.

Growers can attend the official launch of igrowth® sorghum at Alta Seeds Sorghum Frontiers field days this summer which will be held at three different farms. There will be an indoor learning session with CEU opportunities and a field plot tour where growers will be able to see igrowth® sorghum varieties in the field, test plots demonstrating the effectiveness of imizamox, UPL's companion herbicide, as well as other Alta Seeds technologies like APHIX, their sugarcane aphid tolerant sorghum hybrids. Both Alta and UPL will have representatives present at the field days to answer questions and

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Advanced Cropping Solutions for Sorghum Coming Soon

2

Sorghum Checkoff Launches Sustainability Initiative, Hires Everhart-Valentin as Sustainability Director

3

Sorghum Checkoff Officer Sworn In, Officers Elected



present information. Lunch will also be provided at the following events:

May 28 - Corpus Christi, TX

Aug. 18 - Enid, OK

Sept. 2 - Larned, KS

Growers who attend the field days will have the first opportunity to pre-order igrowth® sorghum for the 2021 planting season. To learn more about the Alta Seeds Sorghum Frontiers field days for igrowth® sorghum and sign up for updates, visit AltaSeeds.Advantaus.com/igrowth.

DOUBLE TEAM™ BY S&W SEED COMPANY AND ADAMA

At Commodity Classic 2020, S&W Seed Company and ADAMA announced their collaboration on the continued development of the ACCase tolerant technology in sorghum. The ACCase tolerant sorghum (ATS) was developed by S&W in collaboration with the Sorghum Checkoff using traditional, non-GMO breeding techniques. The Double Team™ system will enter the marketplace through S&W's Sorghum Partners® brand and is expected to be commercially available in limited quantities in the spring of 2021. While S&W continues work on ACCase tolerant hy-

brids, ADAMA will develop weed control systems and support stewardship of the technology. ADAMA is also pursuing a label for quizalofop herbicide to be used over-the-top of ATS sorghum for grass control. S&W and ADAMA are collaborating to have extensive field trials in 2020 to verify further hybrid performance and refine the use of the Double Team™ system in an overall weed management program. To learn more about the



Double Team™ system, visit SorghumPartners.com/sw-seed-company-and-adama-announce-double-team.

INZEN TECHNOLOGY BY CORTEVA® AGRISCIENCE

Corteva® Agriscience continues to make progress on their Inzen sorghum technology, which is the name given to their sorghum hybrids tolerant to sulfonyleurea (SU) herbicides. These are typically referred to as ALS-tolerant

hybrids. The herbicide labeled to be used in Inzen sorghum is nicosulfuron, a well-known herbicide used in corn. Nicosulfuron was labeled for use in Inzen sorghum under the trade name Zest™, which provides over-the-top grass control in sorghum. Although the herbicide was fully approved for use in 2016, time was still needed to develop suitable hybrids for planting in the U.S. Corteva® plans to hold in-field training for their field staff at selected sites this summer

to analyze and showcase the Inzen technology.

All three technologies are expecting a commercial launch for either the 2021 or 2022 growing seasons if developments continue at the current pace. The Sorghum Check-off will be working closely with Alta Seeds, S&W

and Corteva to keep growers informed and educated on important events, stewardship guidelines and best management practices surrounding these exciting new herbicide technologies. With three new cropping solutions entering the marketplace, proper stewardship will be essential to ensure U.S. sorghum growers have opportunities to increase yield potential and combat troublesome weeds in sorghum like never before.

Sorghum Checkoff Board Launches Sustainability Initiative, Hires Everhart-Valentin as Sustainability Director

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program has launched an initiative to increase market value for growers by positioning sorghum as a sustainable solution for food, feed and energy sectors that serves the global community and its needs for nutrition and environmental health. The board also recently named Kira Everhart-Valentin as the organization's first sustainability director.

Everhart-Valentin will be responsible for developing and leading the sorghum industry's sustainability initiatives and will continually assess opportunities for investment and collaboration to increase the value of sorghum for farmers and industry stakeholders.

"We are delighted to have Kira join the Sorghum Checkoff," Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Florentino Lopez said. "Her unique skill set and experience will bring a meaningful perspective to developing and maintaining a sustainability strategy that appropriately highlights sorghum's potential as an environmentally sustainable crop while still respecting the importance of maintaining economic stability for sorghum producers."

Everhart-Valentin is a graduate of Kansas State University and has a master's

degree in political science and a bachelor's degree in agricultural communications and journalism in addition to bachelor's degrees in modern languages and international studies.

She has worked in the sorghum industry for a number of years, beginning with serving Western Kansas farmers and businesses. Most recently, she served as the program coordinator with the USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab on Collaborative Research on Sorghum and Millet at Kansas State University, working extensively internationally.

In this role, she managed a global program on sorghum and millet with partners across nine different countries. The program linked U.S. teams with international teams across various areas of sorghum innovation and technology, including genetic improvement, agronomic practices and end-use processing.



Kira Everhart-Valentin was hired as the Sorghum Checkoff's first sustainability director.

"I'm excited to help define what sustainability means to sorghum as a crop and an industry," Everhart-Valentin said. "I hope to connect sorghum's many environmentally sustainable qualities to end users and consumers in a way that responds to the increasing demand for sustainable production practices while bringing value back to the sorghum grower for utilizing those responsible practices."

Sorghum Checkoff Board Directors Sworn In, Officers Elected

Five Sorghum Checkoff board directors were sworn in during the December 2019 board meeting in Lubbock, Texas.

Returning to the board is Kent Martin of Carmen, Oklahoma. Newly appointed to the board are James Haase of Eads, Colorado; Jeffry D. Zortman of Fowler, Kansas; Kendall Hodgson of Little River, Kansas; and Joshua Birdwell of Malone, Texas.

The newly sworn in board members were appointed by the U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue in August and will serve a three-year term.

New leadership was also elected during the December board meeting. Craig Poore of Alton, Kansas, will serve as chairman, Kent Martin of Carmen, Oklahoma, as vice chairman, Boyd Funk of Garden City, Kansas, as treasurer and

Jim Massey of Robstown, Texas, as secretary.

Martin Kerschen of Garden Plain, Kansas; Clayton Short of Assaria, Kansas; and Daniel Krienke of Perryton, Texas, completed their terms as board directors. The exiting board directors were honored for their service to the Sorghum Checkoff at a ceremony on Dec. 11.

"We extend our deepest appreciation to Martin, Clayton and Daniel for their many years of service on the board," said Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust. "Their countless hours of dedication and hard work will continue to generate results into the future for sorghum farmers and this industry."

For more information on how to become a Sorghum Checkoff board member, visit SorghumCheckoff.com.



(Top) Outgoing Director Dan Krienke, (Middle) outgoing Director Clayton Short, (Bottom) newly-appointed board directors.

SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

April 10 Good Friday
Office Closed

May 25 Memorial Day
Office Closed

July 3 Independence Day
Office Closed

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

USCP MISSION

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



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Sorghum Shortcuts

National Sorghum Producers Board Applications

National Sorghum Producers is accepting applications from candidates who desire to serve on the NSP board of directors. Candidates must be a NSP member and must possess a desire to improve the sorghum industry, working on behalf of growers through fundraising and lobbying activities. The NSP board of director positions are not limited to growers, and there is no experience necessary to apply. If you wish to seek leadership opportunity within the sorghum industry through one of our three available positions, NSP encourages you to apply.

Applications are available on the NSP website at SorghumGrowers.com/Leadership and will be accepted until 5 p.m. CST on May 8, 2020. For any questions regarding applications, please contact Garrett Mink at 806-749-3478 or garrett@sorghumgrowers.com.

Yield Contest Rule Changes

Changes to the 2020 National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest were announced at the 2020 Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas.

For both east and west regions, the irrigated division will no longer be divided into tillage and no-till. All irrigated divisions have been combined into a single "Irrigated" division divided by region.

A FSA Form 578 will now be required for submission showing a minimum of 50 sorghum acres on the applicant's farm. Multiple 10-acre entries may be entered from one farm, and only one winner per FSA number is eligible to be a state and national winner.

The first, second and third place national winners in each division by region will be named from the first, second and third place state winners based on yield. Additionally, the Go For 250 awards for eligible 250 bushel yields or more will no longer be available.

Please visit our website at SorghumGrowers.com/yield-contest for more information and 2020 contest rules and entry form.

Sorghum Foundation Scholarships

The National Sorghum Foundation has three scholarships available for college students studying agriculture in

the 2020-2021 school year. Each scholarship includes an award of \$1,500 to be applied to one semester of tuition expenses. All scholarship applications must be post-marked by June 1, 2020.

Bruce Maunder Memorial Scholarship:

This scholarship is presented in honor of Bruce Maunder, 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. Applicants (sophomore - senior) must be enrolled in an agriculture-based department.

Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship:

Applicants (sophomore - senior) must be pursuing an undergraduate degree and must be enrolled in an agriculture-based science curriculum related to agronomy, plant pathology, entomology and/or plant breeding with emphasis on sorghum.

Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship:

Along with an award for tuition, this scholarship covers recipient's travel expenses to Washington, D.C., with the National Sorghum Producers during its annual legislative fly-in. Eligible applicants include undergraduate students (sophomore - senior), graduate students or students in law school. They must be enrolled in curriculum involving agriculture economics, agriculture law, or agricultural policy and must show a significant interest in agriculture policy or law.

Please visit our website at SorghumGrowers.com/sorghum-foundation for more information and application links.





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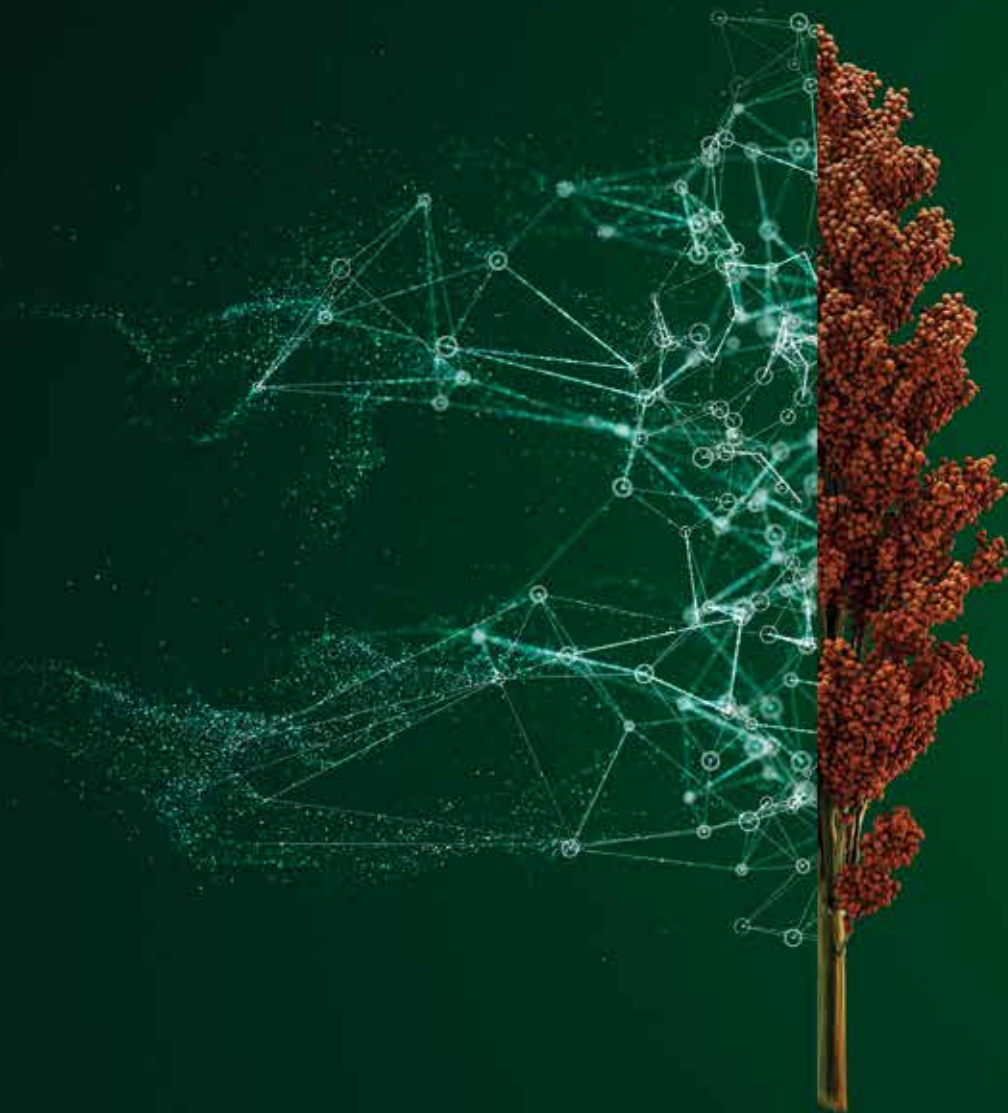


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