



NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS **SORGHUM** *Grower*

SPECIAL EDITION

HAPPY

2022

Sorghum Yield Contest

2021 WINNERS INSIDE



Plus

ATRAZINE ACTION IN 2022

Included Inside
SORGHUM CHECKOFF NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS, 4201 N INTERSTATE 27, LUBBOCK, TX 79403
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Chairman's Column

Tackling Tumbleweeds in 2022



Like an army of soldiers advancing across the South Plains, tumbleweeds roll quickly past, leaving traces of their irritating seed, building up on fence rows and serving as literal sharp reminders of the wide open and often unforgiving conditions we face in the middle of the Sorghum Belt. My heart and my prayers go out to my neighbors and friends to the north, particularly in Kansas, who were recently ravaged by fires and devastating winds that wiped out livestock, structures, homes and even lives.

If you drive down Interstate 27 between Amarillo and Lubbock on a blustering 60 mph wind day like I have done several times here in the two weeks leading up to Christmas, you can almost make a game of it—10 points for hitting the small tumbleweeds and 20 for dodging the really big ones. In 2022, farmers are going to have some things rolling our way in similar fashion. Some will be easy to drive over and move on, but others will be quite large and require precise maneuvers to tackle and overcome.

Safeguarding crop protection tools like atrazine and others, speaking of tumbleweeds, could be a large initiative for the sorghum industry this year. I hope we can count on you when and if the time comes, and I would encourage you to read page 4 on what's at stake and the steps you can take, starting today, to help. From regulations, to rural development issues, ethanol policy, and starting a new farm bill, 2022 will be an all-hands-on-deck type of year.

Tough times also present unseen opportunities. As programs and funding relating to climate smart agriculture evolve, National Sorghum Producers is focused on how sorghum is recognized as the climate-smart, resource conserving crop and a focal center of future programs. Sorghum is a solution crop, and sorghum leaders are doing everything they can to tell the Administration and Congressional leaders why.

There truly is strength in numbers, and I thank each of you who made our end-of-year membership campaign successful. Your support is so important to myself, my fellow board members and the industry. If that envelope is still laying on the counter and you're wondering if your contribution really matters, I promise you it does. We have first-class staff and volunteers who go to work each day with you in mind, seeking the most positive outcome for sorghum.

It's a new year, and if you would allow me to paraphrase from Lamentations 3:22-23, "we will not be consumed for His mercies never fail. They renew every morning. All we have to do is keep the faith." I hope you had a merry Christmas, and I wish you a happy and healthy new year!


Board of Directors Chairman

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ON THE COVER: In this special edition of *Sorghum Grower*, we are honoring 2021 Sorghum Yield Contest winners and their outstanding yield achievements. Flip to page 6 for all state and national winners. County winners can be found on our website at SorghumGrowers.com.

Atrazine Action in 2022

By Jennifer Blackburn

Atrazine is at risk, and we need farmers' help. That's it. That's the lead.

In the Fall 2018 issue of *Sorghum Grower*, we told you, "Atrazine is one of many crop protection products producers will need to fight for between now and 2022 as active ingredients are being reviewed or re-registered."

That means we're nearing the finish line, and a lot could be at stake this year. We cannot win this fight without your individual attention and action. Here's why.

The Environmental Protection Agency finalized biological evaluations (BEs), concluding three common herbicides can adversely affect endangered species or their habitats—atrazine, simazine and glyphosate.

In November 2021, grower groups like National Sorghum Producers noted frustration with the EPA when the agency did not use "the best available science and data," as is required by law, in its endangered species BEs for atrazine, simazine and glyphosate. EPA's assessments are overly conservative and potential impacts to individuals within an endangered species can trigger "may affect" and "likely to adversely affect" determinations without consideration of any affect to the species overall. As a result, EPA's final BEs, released Nov. 12, for these chemistries significantly inflated the number of species and habitats found likely to be adversely affected.

To make matters more threatening, the EPA is evaluating its current Level of Concern (LoC), which the EPA uses to compare with calculated risk quotient (RQ) in ecological risk assessments to determine the level of potential risk to non-target organisms and the need for further regulatory restrictions.

As a grower group, data is clear on what the LoC should be. However, NSP knows the dramatic vacillation between figures recently is concerning, and we need a transparent process that includes EPA engagement with farmers at the table.

Sorghum producers submitted thousands of comments in the summer of 2016 defending the product after the release of the EPA's Ecological Risk Assessment for atrazine and in 2018 when the Cumulative Human and Health Risk Assessment for atrazine was released as part of the re-registration review process. NSP will need sorghum producer support in 2022 once again.

Two-thirds of U.S. sorghum acres use atrazine for weed management. NSP estimates losing atrazine would cost growers an additional \$30 per acre, and atrazine allows 74 percent of sorghum acres to be no- and minimum-till. An NSP survey found 79 percent of growers would return to tillage without atrazine, and according to USDA data, eliminating atrazine from sorghum and returning to tilling would mean a 39.6 percent larger carbon footprint.

We are at a critical time in history and if there was ever a time to be engaged in the fight, the time is now, as precedence will likely determine the future of crop protection products. The risks of not engaging and working with the regulatory community to address these procedural pitfalls could have generational impacts on the ability for farmers to utilize crop protection products for decades to come. Text "NSP Text" to 52886 to receive alerts relating to this and other important issues later in 2022.📶



▲ WE CAN ACCOMPLISH farm more together as a collective grassroots. Your voice matters. Text "NSP Text" to 52886 today.



Everything sorghum, with you, wherever you go.

AVAILABLE WHERE YOU GET YOUR PODCASTS



SORGHUM

2021

YIELD

CONTEST

BIN BUSTER WINNER

KASEY GAMBLE
Kiowa County, KS
244.03 BU/AC
PIONEER 84G62

2021 NSP YIELD CONTEST

National Sorghum Producers is proud to announce the winners of the 2021 Sorghum Yield Contest, including Bin Buster winner Kasey Gamble from Kiowa County, Kansas, with the top yield in the contest at 244.03 bushels per acre—the highest dryland yield on record in contest history west of the Mississippi River. The 2021 National Sorghum Yield Contest had six national winners, selected from three categories for both the eastern and western regions of the U.S.

“National Sorghum Producers congratulates the winners of the 2021 sorghum yield contest,” NSP Board of Directors Chairman Kody Carson said. “You will see from the results striking top-end yields. We are proud of these achievements and look forward to recognizing the winners at the 2022 Commodity Classic in New Orleans.”

The national winners will be recognized further in March 2022 during Commodity Classic in New Orleans. To see a complete list of the NSP Yield Contest national, state and county results, or to learn more about the contest, visit sorghumgrowers.com/yieldcontest.

NATIONAL *Winners*

Note: National winners are selected from state first, second and third place winners

IRRIGATED WEST

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. 241.18 bu/ac
Tom Vogel
Hartley County, TX
Pioneer 85P75 | 2. 207.98 bu/ac
Scott Jewett
Harlan County, NE
Pioneer 85P75 | 3. 207.80 bu/ac
SC Farms Partnership
Clay County, NE
Pioneer 84P80 |
|---|---|---|

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. 182.24 bu/ac
Mike Scates
White County, IL
Pioneer 84G62 | 2. 179.71 bu/ac
Jeffrey Barlieb
Warren County, NJ
Pioneer 85P75 | 3. 176.63 bu/ac
Krull Farms
St. Joseph County, MI
Pioneer 84G62 |
|---|--|--|

IRRIGATED EAST

DRYLAND-TILLAGE WEST

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. 170.21 bu/ac
David Knoll
Charles Mix County, SD
Pioneer 89Y79 | 2. 158.47 bu/ac
Matthew Bloss
Pawnee County, NE
Alta G1142iG | 3. 136.69 bu/ac
Lauren Spillman
Sheridan County, KS
Channel 5R45 |
|---|---|---|

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. 221.50 bu/ac
Harry P Johnston
Fulton County, PA
Pioneer 84G62 | 2. 219.79 bu/ac
Santino Santini
Warren County, NJ
Pioneer 84G62 | 3. 189.95 bu/ac
Galt Lane Porter
Decatur County, IA
Pioneer 84P80 |
|---|--|--|

DRYLAND-TILLAGE EAST

Top Yield!

1. 244.03 bu/ac

Kasey Gamble

Kiowa County, KS

Pioneer 85P44

2. 237.39 bu/ac

Katelynn Alderfer

Kiowa County, KS

Pioneer 85P44

3. 228.17 bu/ac

Ki Gamble

Kiowa County, KS

Pioneer 85P44

DRYLAND-NO TILL WEST

1. 234.90 bu/ac

Chris Santini

Warren County, NJ

Pioneer 84G62

2. 231.19 bu/ac

Ella Johnston

Fulton County, PA

Pioneer 84G62

3. 199.69 bu/ac

Robert Santini Jr.

Warren County, NJ

Pioneer 84G62

DRYLAND-NO TILL EAST

STATEWinners

PLACE	STATE	COUNTY	NAME	YIELD (BU/AC)	SEED BRAND	VARIETY
-------	-------	--------	------	---------------	------------	---------

1st	Idaho	Canyon County	Michael Ball	204.31	Pioneer	88P71
1st	Kansas	Stanton County	Winsome Farms GP, Brant & Amy Peterson	204.13	Channel	6B95
2nd	Kansas	Barton County	Gaunt Farms - Terry & Steve Gaunt	158.64	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Nebraska	Harlan County	Scott Jewett	207.98	Pioneer	85P75
2nd	Nebraska	Clay County	SC Farms Partnership	207.80	Pioneer	84P80
3rd	Nebraska	Buffalo County	Max Schubauer	198.42	Pioneer	84P72
1st	Oklahoma	Texas County	Neal Hofferber	169.70	Pioneer	85P75
2nd	Oklahoma	Custer County	Nathan Miller	138.97	Pioneer	86Y89
1st	Texas	Hartley County	Tom Vogel	241.18	Pioneer	85P75
2nd	Texas	Deaf Smith County	Mitch Meyer	196.86	Pioneer	85P75
3rd	Texas	Tom Green County	Matthew W Wilde	191.97	Pioneer	84G62

1st	Arkansas	Clay County	Williams Farms GP	160.05	Pioneer	84P80
1st	Illinois	White County	Mike Scates	182.24	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Michigan	St. Joseph County	Krull Farms	176.63	Pioneer	84G62
1st	New Jersey	Warren County	Jeffrey Barlieb	179.71	Pioneer	85P75
2nd	New Jersey	Warren County	Robert Santini Sr.	172.27	Pioneer	84G62

1st	Kansas	Sheridan County	Lauren Spillman	136.69	Channel	5R45
1st	Nebraska	Pawnee County	Matthew Bloss	158.47	Alta	G1142iG
1st	Oklahoma	Texas County	Roger and Marilyn Fischer	135.25	Pioneer	85Y34
2nd	Oklahoma	Texas County	Cody Fischer	91.64	Pioneer	86P33
1st	South Dakota	Charles Mix County	David Knoll	170.21	Pioneer	89Y79
2nd	South Dakota	Charles Mix County	Lee Linnell	100.50	Pioneer	88P68

STATEWinnersCONTINUED

PLACE	STATE	COUNTY	NAME	YIELD (BU/AC)	SEED BRAND	VARIETY
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1st	Arkansas	Lee County	Benjamin van Biljon	113.36	Pioneer	84P80
1st	Illinois	Clark County	Walters Farms	184.86	Dekalb	DKS38-16
2nd	Illinois	Gallatin County	Jeff Scates	149.53	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Indiana	Daviess County	Steven Halter	174.71	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Iowa	Decatur County	Galt Lane Porter	189.95	Pioneer	84P80
2nd	Iowa	Appanoose County	J&L Farms	117.30	Richardson	G8
1st	Missouri	Audrain County	Atlasta Farms	172.34	Pioneer	84G62
1st	New Jersey	Warren County	Santino Santini	219.79	Pioneer	84G62
1st	North Carolina	Davidson County	Billy H Bowers Farm Trust	154.67	Pioneer	83P17
2nd	North Carolina	Perquimans County	Gretchen S. Ownley	137.04	Pioneer	84G62
3rd	North Carolina	Perquimans County	Wallace N. Ownley	134.97	Dekalb	DKS54-07
1st	Pennsylvania	Fulton County	Harry P. Johnston	221.50	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Tennessee	Obion County	Bill Thompson	151.68	Pioneer	84P80

1st	Colorado	Kit Carson County	Livingston Farms	120.20	Pioneer	86P20
1st	Kansas	Kiowa County	Kasey Gamble	244.03	Pioneer	85P44
2nd	Kansas	Kiowa County	Katelynn Alderfer	237.39	Pioneer	85P44
3rd	Kansas	Kiowa County	Ki Gamble	228.17	Pioneer	85P44
1st	Nebraska	Harlan County	Robison Brothers Land & Cattle LLC	176.47	Pioneer	84P72
2nd	Nebraska	Gosper County	Christopher Holste	149.50	Pioneer	85P75
3rd	Nebraska	Harlan County	Nicholas Holste	149.49	Pioneer	85P44
1st	South Dakota	Charles Mix County	Dylan Knoll	187.73	Pioneer	89Y79
2nd	South Dakota	Charles Mix County	Lee Linnell	135.86	Pioneer	88P68
1st	Texas	Ochiltree County	Tregellas Family Farms	119.97	Pioneer	85Y34
2nd	Texas	Tom Green County	Bernie Fuchs	117.73	Pioneer	85P75
3rd	Texas	Tom Green County	Chris Funchs	111.48	Pioneer	86Y89

1st	Illinois	Bond County	Jim Stoecklin Farm	161.22	Pioneer	85P75
2nd	Illinois	Gallatin County	John Scates	160.93	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Indiana	Daviess County	Steven Halter	179.77	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Iowa	Decatur County	Grey Wells Porter	192.02	Pioneer	84P72
2nd	Iowa	Decatur County	Gage Neal Porter	179.97	Pioneer	84P72
1st	Maryland	Montgomery County	William F. Willard Farms LLC	132.45	Pioneer	84G62
1st	Missouri	Livingston County	HRB Farming Partnership	181.77	Dekalb	DKS54-07
2nd	Missouri	Caldwell County	Zach Rush	146.79	Pioneer	85P44
1st	New Jersey	Warren County	Chris Santini	234.90	Pioneer	84G62
2nd	New Jersey	Warren County	Robert Santini Jr	199.69	Pioneer	84G62
1st	North Carolina	Davidson County	Billy H Bowers Farm Trust	185.56	Pioneer	83P17
1st	Pennsylvania	Fulton County	Ella Johnston	231.19	Pioneer	84G62

Sorghum Checkoff Strengthens Marketing Efforts with Team Approach and New Staff Addition

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program today announced a strategic reorganization of its marketing team. Under the new structure, the Sorghum Checkoff will focus on developing and advancing sorghum as the resource-conserving ingredient and efforts to reveal the potential and versatility of sorghum through increased shared value.

The new marketing team includes longtime Sorghum Checkoff team members who now hold expanded roles from their previous regional marketing positions:

- Shelee Padgett, Director of Emerging Markets & Grower Leader Development
- Brent Crafton, Director of Feed Ingredient Utilization
- Zach Simon, Director of Ingredient Utilization and Pet Food

Padgett is focused on facilitating international marketing efforts, emerging markets and regional relations as well as the Leadership Sorghum program, which offers various sorghum education programs to young and emerging leaders in the sorghum industry. Crafton is responsible for research and program development in aquaculture, livestock and

poultry nutrition programs. Simon is focused on sorghum's role in the pet food industry, renewable fuels and supply chain infrastructure.

"This team approach to developing valuable markets for sorghum will help showcase and advance sorghum's versatility across the entire landscape of the diverse end uses for our crop," Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson said. "We are thrilled Padgett, Crafton and Simon—all seasoned members of Team Sorghum—were able to step into these new roles."

Lanier Dabruzzi, MS, RD, LD, is the most recent addition to the restructured marketing team. She joins the Sorghum Checkoff as the Director of Food Innovations and Institutional Markets and will be responsible for increasing the use of sorghum in the U.S. food supply as an ingredient and stand-alone product. She will also provide marketing and education and identify critical issues and opportunities relating to value-added sorghum marketing opportunities in the food industry.

"Dabruzzi came to us highly recommended for her history

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Sorghum Checkoff Swears in New Board Members, Elects Charles Ray Huddleston as New Chairman



of connecting with consumers and the food industry by highlighting the nutritional benefits of the products she has represented," Ritz Johnson said.

"The experience and deep industry insights she has, coupled with her culinary nutrition skills, are the perfect fit as we begin this new chapter. I have never been more excited about our industry's future."

Before joining the Sorghum Checkoff, Dabruzzi served as the Assistant Director of Food and Nutrition Outreach for The Dairy Alliance. In that role, she used her in-depth knowledge of food, communications and marketing to grow sales through food and nutrition trends, nutrition expertise, menu and product ideation, including working in partnership with MilkPEP on programs and campaigns with the National Football League (NFL) and United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOC).

"I have tremendous respect for our nation's farmers and the safe, nutritious food they produce for us each day," Dabruzzi said. "Sorghum has enormous growth potential in the consumer food industry, and



Lanier Dabruzzi RD, LD, MS

I could not be more excited to lead that effort."

Dabruzzi is a member of the Food and Culinary Professionals Dietetic Practice Group with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Georgia Acad-

emy of Nutrition & Dietetics. Dabruzzi received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Southern California in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and her Master of Science from the University of Tennessee in Nutrition Science. Dabruzzi has worked with the dairy, beef and almond industries for more than 10 years.

The team approach to the Sorghum Checkoff's market development efforts was implemented preceding the Dec. 8 retirement of Market Development Director Doug Bice, who devoted eight years to the Sorghum Checkoff and sorghum industry.

"I would like to thank Doug Bice for his role in bringing added value and demand for U.S. sorghum farmers," Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust said. "Bice has been a tremendous advocate and innovator to our organization and our industry."

A Farmer's Thoughts on Sustainable Agriculture

By Farmer, Ted Bannister, Hays, Kansas

The terms "conservation agriculture," "sustainable agriculture," and "regenerative agriculture" are frequently used somewhat synonymously in farm circles in terms of what farmers and society hope to achieve - to diminish, stop or reverse resource depletion. Depletion is something that I think about all the time - it may be my greatest concern as a farmer. The depletion I'm talking about is comprehensive—depletion of technology efficacy, soil nutrients, water, our rural population, any of which may reach tipping

points that could end farming as I know it.

I recently attended a conference called the Sustainable Agriculture Summit, which was hosted by a group of ag producer groups and food associations. This conference promotes itself as a leading voice in this space, so it was interesting to see the composition of speakers and attendees. Producers definitely composed less than half of the attendees and were predominately representing animal agriculture. The greater share of attendees were nonprofits, pro-

ducer group staff, government staff, press and private company sustainable officers. I have to say, the interest and motivation on this side of agriculture and food are intense. However, my reading was that when this non-producer segment discusses "sustainability", they mean climate, and when they discuss "climate", they mean carbon. That's okay with me at some level; farmers are root to seed deep in carbon. We are already in the carbon business. After all, an acre of grain sorghum produces at least 756 pounds of carbon.

As producers, I'm sure you are aware of "carbon markets" with their carbon credit buyers. Did you know there are at least 100 carbon markets with 60 different measurements and pricing mechanisms? This overabundance of choices is off-putting to many farmers who are left making somewhat ambiguous choices that could translate into thousands of dollars staked on our choices.

These carbon markets are demand-driven by corporations that are facing increasing pressure to be good corporate citizens and show some effort at carbon reduction. Limited by their own flexibility to reduce carbon, they seek offsets through those that can sequester carbon—namely, farmers. Over 900 U.S. companies include a statement about climate/carbon in their corporate bylaws or public press. At least 50 have net zero pledges. With this kind of momentum, it will be odd for a company NOT to have a stake soon. This "greening" is not entirely altruistic or all consumer driven, but investor driven. Endowments, foundations and pension funds want corporate statements on carbon from the companies they own. There are mutual

funds, ETFs and Index Funds exclusively for carbon/climate investment. Another example, an alliance called FAIRR (Fair Animal Investment Risk and Return) claims to have \$45 billion of managed money pledged toward reducing the environmental impact of animal agriculture.

The Federal (and some state and local) government is similarly seeking climate action - they just don't know what action. The government looks at agriculture and sees it as a place to move the needle most while requiring the fewest actors. The primary agricultural levers look to be carbon sequestration and reduced methane from animal feeding. Carbon sequestration is sought through farming practices consistent with the pillars of regenerative agriculture. Keep the soil covered, minimize soil disturbance, maximize crop diversity, maintain a living root and integrate livestock. The reduction of methane produced by livestock feeding is targeted at ruminant enteric fermentation. This is accomplished by feed additives of fats or oils, chemicals, or natural additives. The dairy industry, being more concentrated and with great consumer exposure because of branding, is already

deep into testing methane reducing feed systems.

The problems for policy-makers are large—not just achieving scientific bang-for-the-buck but also achieving buy-in from farmers. Two glaring issues are 1) incentives - do you pay only for farm practices or for measured soil carbon or emission results? And 2) the early adoption "penalty"—for those farmers that are years into regenerative practices by their own compulsion—do they not get compensated? Both of these issues could make or break the success of any climate-related programs.

So how do I feel about this wave of carbon incentives and heavy emphasis on better living through soil health? As a farmer, I am truly concerned about resource depletion, and I think that regenerative agriculture principles offer an answer. If the marketplace of society, in a passionate bidding of carbon sequestration, is there to pay my tuition in adopting regenerative practices that addresses my resource depletion fears, then I better enroll. And yes, I definitely think there is tuition to pay.

Sorghum Checkoff Swears in New Board Members, Elects Charles Ray Huddleston as New Chairman

During the United Sorghum Checkoff Program annual December board of directors meeting, officers were elected and four directors were sworn in to complete their appointment to the board by U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary, Tom Vilsack. Charles Ray Huddleston of Celina, Texas, takes the helm as the newly elected Chairman.

"We are extremely excited to have this group of newly appointed board members join Team Sorghum," Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust said. "Their hard work and leadership will be great assets to not only the board but also to the future of the sorghum. [add in about newly elected leadership]"

The newly elected Sorghum Checkoff executive committee and newly appointed board directors include:

• Charles Ray Huddleston, Chairman, Celina, TX

• Adam Schindler, Vice Chairman, Reliance, SD (re-appointed At-Large seat)

• Jeffry Zortman, Treasurer, Fowler, KS

• Kendall Hodgson, Secretary, Little River, KS

• Macey Mueller, Kansas Member, Halstead, KS (appointed to Kansas seat)

• Kimberly Baldwin, Kansas Member, McPherson, KS (appointed to Kansas seat)

• Kevin Pshigoda, Texas Member, Perryton, TX (appointed to Texas seat)

"With increased sorghum acres in 2021, improving yields, new markets, and new herbicide tolerant technology, this is an exciting time for U.S. sorghum, both internationally and domestically. I am grateful for the support of my fellow board members and I am honored to continue the great work of our checkoff," newly elected Chairman Charles Ray Huddleston

said. "The board is composed of experienced, well-respected leaders who provide valuable and strategic guidance. I look forward to continuing the board's success, and I am excited about sorghum's future."

Tim Lust, Sorghum Checkoff CEO, expressed his gratitude for the steadfast hard work and commitment of retiring directors who have been on the board since 2018.

"The efforts of our retiring directors do not go unnoticed," Lust said. "We appreciate everything Craig, Boyd and Jim have done for the Sorghum Checkoff and are thankful to continue to have them as strong allies for the sorghum industry."

All four appointees will serve three-year terms starting December 2021 and ending December 2024. More information on how to become a Sorghum Checkoff board member is available at SorghumCheckoff.com.



SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

Jan 25-27 International Production & Processing Expo
Atlanta, Georgia

Mar 10-12 Commodity Classic
New Orleans, LA

Mar 11-13 Pheasant Fest
Omaha, NE

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 Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Seeking New Horizons Through Strategic Planning

By Adam York

The Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission is committed to driving value for growers by positioning sorghum as a sustainable, reliable, and profitable crop through responsible investment. But failing to plan is planning to fail. As we peer into a world reshaped by world events of historic magnitude, however, strategic planning at the outset means determining the direction to go, creating goals to get there, and investing resources necessary to accomplish those goals. In December 2021, the Commission convened a special session to establish foundational pillars to enhance its mission of producer profitability into the future. To this end we endeavor to chart a course into this new decade—finding new horizons and new heights for your sorghum while challenging ourselves to advance the industry through cultivation, innovation, and outreach.

Time never stands still and neither should your Commission. The State of Kansas oversees elections for one-third of the Commission's nine Board of Directors annually; and, as Kansas growers produce the largest sorghum crop in the United States, Kansas retains five out of 13 term-limited seats on the national Sorghum Checkoff's Board of Directors, nominated to and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. By sheer necessity, the Commission must build diverse leadership capacity and orientation from its grassroots within Kansas. The next-generation of sorghum leaders is out there waiting to be cultivated for prominent positions of responsibility and service; in fact, unbeknownst to him or herself, a future chairman by the end of this decade could be reading this article currently. Could it be you?

Additionally, the Commission's focus on technological innovation is not insular; it seeks to leverage the broader

industry's cumulative resources—organizations up and down the sorghum supply chain—in order to manage novel, yet disciplined, research and development. This collaborative approach will optimize efficient strategies and market-readiness for new technologies. Through the innovative, cutting-edge, and transparent partnership already established nearly five years ago by the Commission, the Sorghum Checkoff, and Kansas State University, the Collaborative Sorghum Research Investment Program (CSIP) continues to break new ground with a pipeline for steady-handed sorghum improvement research. CSIP even provides a sustainable platform for the State of Kansas to direct public investment into sorghum trait technology to deliver into fields of sorghum growers, like ongoing DropXL research that maximizes sorghum yields while conserving water resources throughout our region. As the sorghum industry continues to expand, collaborative innovation must scale up as well.

With next-generation sorghum leaders guiding innovative technology newly or yet-to-be discovered through our public-private research and development pipelines, the emphasis then rightly falls on effective outreach to ensure growers know and harness sorghum's inherent attributes and nascent advancements. Our strategy develops partnerships with organizations both state and national, public and private, from wildlife advocates to domestic and international market development teams. The result of such engagement should not only increase overall sorghum awareness and reception but decisively reverberate the message among growers and the public that sorghum is a—if not the—tool to solve myriad challenges throughout this century and beyond.

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2	ELLA JOHNSTON	FULTON, PA	84G62	231.19
3	ROBERT SANTINI, JR.	WARREN, NJ	84G62	199.69
DRYLAND-NO TILL WEST				
1	KASEY GAMBLE	KIOWA, KS	85P44	244.03
2	KATELYNN ALDERFER	KIOWA, KS	85P44	237.39
3	KI GAMBLE	KIOWA, KS	85P44	228.17
DRYLAND-TILLAGE EAST				
1	HARRY P. JOHNSTON	FULTON, PA	84G62	221.50
2	SANTINO SANTINI	WARREN, NJ	84G62	219.79
3	GALT LANE PORTER	DECATUR, IA	84P80	189.95
DRYLAND-TILLAGE WEST				
1	DAVID KNOLL	CHARLES MIX, SD	89Y79	170.21
IRRIGATED TILLAGE EAST				
1	MIKE SCATES	WHITE, IL	84G62	182.24
2	JEFFREY BARLIEB	WARREN, NJ	85P75	179.71
3	KRULL FARMS	ST. JOSEPH, MI	84G62	176.63
IRRIGATED TILLAGE WEST				
1	TOM VOGEL	HARTLEY, TX	85P75	241.18
2	SCOTT JEWETT	HARLAN, NE	85P75	207.98
3	SC FARMS PARTNERSHIP	CLAY, NE	84P80	207.80



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For the full list of winners, visit Pioneer.com/NSP2021



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