



NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS SORGHUM *Grower* SPRING 2022



Big Time in The Big Easy SORGHUM RETURNS TO COMMODITY CLASSIC

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Q&A WITH KA-POP! FOUNDER, CEO

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SPRING 2022



ON THE COVER: NSP Chairman Kody Carson, pictured with his wife Kimbra and father Harlan, represented U.S. sorghum farmers at the 2022 annual Commodity Classic, which brings together sorghum, wheat, corn and soybean farmers, plus equipment manufacturers, for the largest farmer-led convention in the country.



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Editor's Desk



Momentum Behind The Resource Conserving Ingredient™

It's been a long time since we've had an issue focused on the sorghum food landscape. That does not mean momentum has slowed in this area—quite the opposite, in fact. If you have seen messaging lately from National Sorghum Producers or our sister organization, the Sorghum Checkoff, we have pushed our new trademark The Resource Conserving Crop™ but we are also strengthening the value proposition of sorghum with The Resource Conserving Ingredient™ with product specialists, nutrition experts, chefs, and many others across the food spectrum to demonstrate why sorghum has a place at the table.

Growth in this area can seem slow at times, but when you start at relatively zero, we have come so far in the past decade! We're dialed in—on the nutrients sorghum offers, the potential claims it can provide related to your health and the qualities that set it apart from other grains. The goal for 90 percent awareness has been set, and we have members on Team Sorghum who are determined to get us there. One of those team members is Lanier Dabruzzi, MS, RD, LD, who came on board with the Sorghum Checkoff in December. Dabruzzi is the new director of food innovations and institutional markets and has career experience connecting consumers and the food industry with products like dairy, beef and almonds. She provides a “state of the industry” and forthcoming opportunities on page 6.

While developing markets and innovative and new end-uses for sorghum are always an exciting opportunity, we cannot forget the dedicated farmers who produce the crop. As we head into the 2022 growing season, we know there are a lot of uncertainties. Input prices are higher than ever, and some inputs are in scarce supply. There are a number of factors driving these exponential increases, including supply chain factors, weather events, domestic policy debates and foreign geopolitical tensions that, when combined, have created a “perfect storm.” We at NSP want you to know we understand the difficulties sorghum farmers are currently facing, and we are doing all we can to assure you are not working with “one hand tied behind your back” because of policy restraints. We are in continuous communication with USDA, EPA and elected officials to help them understand what farmers across the U.S. are facing this growing season. We have your back and will continue to promote, advocate for and defend the sorghum industry from the field to the halls of Congress.

Jennifer Blackburn, Vice President of Communications & Editor

Sorghum is Staking Its Claim, on Your Plate and Nutrition Labels

By Lanier Dabruzzi, MS, RD, LD,
Sorghum Checkoff Director of Food Innovations & Institutional Markets

Sorghum continues to grow in popularity as a healthy, versatile food in the U.S. While it has been a food staple around the world for thousands of years, American consumers are “rediscovering” sorghum and are drawn to its versatility and nutrition profile.

The profile sorghum provides is, frankly, hard to beat. A serving of whole grain sorghum is an excellent source of 12 essential nutrients, more than a serving of corn, wheat, oats, rice or quinoa.

In the world of nutrition, protein is often the defining characteristic when comparing foods. The good news is sorghum stands out among plant-based sources of protein and comparable grains. A serving of cooked whole grain sorghum provides more than double the amount of protein as a serving of quinoa and nearly double the iron as a 3-ounce portion of a beef sirloin steak.

As COVID took center stage over the last two years, the public became more interested than ever about how the food they eat affects their health. The public also saw how various diseases negatively affected the outcome of a COVID diagnosis.

In turn, consumers began seeking out foods that help promote health. Enter sorghum. A serving of cooked whole grain sorghum is an excellent source of protein, zinc, selenium and copper, which may contribute to a healthy immune system. Equally important, research has shown a correlation between sorghum consumption and decreased risk of diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

Looking to the future, the possibilities are endless. Not only is the nutrition of sorghum unparalleled, but the opportunity for application in the food space is equally unmatched. For example, sorghum is a natural source of antioxidants, which is an attribute many food companies are looking for in their product lines.

As with any food, different colors offer different nutrients. The same can be said for sorghum and its variety of colors ranging from white

to black and burgundy hues. One of the exciting areas of emerging research for sorghum is showing that the darker the grain, the more antioxidant properties.

Additionally, initial research has shown the various colors of sorghum grains may offer a natural color alternative to synthetic dyes companies are seeking to replace.

Companies continue to notice sorghum with a growing number of food items containing it as a featured ingredient. Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) shows more than 1,400 branded food items including sorghum, a significant jump from around 300 products almost seven years ago. These items include everything from pasta to cake mix.

Work continues to further increase sorghum in the U.S. food supply through product innovation and inclusion in institutional markets, such as schools. However, it is important for awareness to grow in tandem, and the Sorghum Checkoff is targeting consumer, culinary and health professional audiences with education to continue to elevate the sorghum profile.

Recently, the Sorghum Checkoff worked with Jim Painter, Ph.D., adjunct professor at the University of Texas School of Public Health and professor emeritus at Eastern Illinois University, to compile a literature review of research related to sorghum nutrition and health, and the findings were astonishing.

The nearly 200 studies highlighted sorghum’s role in the prevention of chronic diseases plaguing the United States, specifically diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The research is so compelling the Sorghum Checkoff is exploring a qualified health claim linking sorghum to decreased risk of diabetes.

This research is just one example of information that will be used to target a variety of audiences through media, trade shows and other platforms to further move the needle and increase awareness and demand.

In addition to taste and nutrition, consumers want to know that the foods they choose are good for the planet. The Sorghum Checkoff recently trademarked The Resource Conserving Ingredient™ for a reason. Sorghum has many superpowers but its adaptability to climate challenges like heat and drought, as well as its low water requirement compared to similar grains, is a story worthwhile to the American consumer.

The demand for sustainable sources of protein to feed the growing world population is increasing in tandem with unpredictable weather conditions, positioning sorghum as a reliable source of plant-based protein to meet the demand.

Looking to the future, sorghum is poised for success in the food space due to its versatility, nutrition profile and sustainability story. It is an exciting time to be part of the sorghum industry. 🌾



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SORGHUM ADVOCACY

Boots on the Hill and in The Big Easy

By Haleigh Erramouspe

Sorghum Growers Represented at House Agriculture Committee Hearing

On March 1, the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture held a hearing to review the Commodity Programs Title of the Farm Bill. Nine witnesses testifying from various commodity organizations across the country, including sorghum, corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, rice, peanuts, sugar, sunflowers, barley, dry peas and lentils, outlined the efficacy of Title I programs from their perspectives.

Verity Ulibarri, a sorghum farmer from Melrose, New Mexico, represented National Sorghum Producers at the hearing. Ulibarri, and many of her counterparts at the hearing, testified that Title I must be strengthened given the current cost of inputs with a number calling for higher reference prices under Price Loss Coverage and Agriculture Risk Coverage and higher loan rates.

Ulibarri specifically urged the committee to consider an index or inflator tied to fuel and fertilizer prices to maintain productivity through the turbulent times U.S. farmers and ranchers are currently facing.

▼ UNDER SECRETARY Robert Bonnie discussed USDA climate initiatives with NSP board leadership during their spring meeting at Commodity Classic.

While the issue is not specific to Title I, Ulibarri and others thanked the committee for their work on crop insurance and denoted the important role crop insurance plays, in addition to Title I programs, to maintain a strong safety net for farmers across the country.

Ulibarri also reminded committee members that the now-routine activity of administering ARC and PLC, combined with existing programs and their growing complexity, sheds new light on the importance of staffing at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. She encouraged committee members to provide additional resources for FSA to deliver these programs.

“A thorough title-by-title review of the 2018 Farm Bill is the only way to make sure the 2023 reauthorization accurately reflects the needs of our farmers, ranchers, and producers,” Ranking Republican Member Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA) said, “Collaboration at the full Committee level is necessary to make sure the voices of rural America are heard.”

NSP Board Meets with USDA and House Ag Leadership at Classic

At the National Sorghum Producers board meeting during Commodity Classic, NSP board members and staff met with USDA leadership and discussed regulatory issues facing the sorghum industry. USDA leadership, including Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Under Secretary Robert Bonnie, Risk Management Agency (RMA) Administrator Marcia Bungler and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Terry Cosby all presented key initiatives from their respective agencies and took a variety of questions from board, staff and guests. NSP continues to follow up with USDA leadership on questions and initiatives that arose from these conversations.

As USDA has increased focus on sustainability and conservation, much of the discussion by all three USDA officials centered on these topics. FPAC Under Secretary Bonnie focused on his expectation for the \$500 million USDA program to support drought recovery and encourage the adoption of water-smart management practices, as well as answering questions about the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities in which USDA will be distributing \$1 billion through grants to finance pilot projects that create market opportunities for U.S. agricultural and forestry products that use climate-smart practices and include innovative, cost-effective ways to measure and verify greenhouse gas benefits.

NRCS Chief Crosby discussed the differences in the new climate programs offered by USDA and the existing programs offered through NRCS. He went on to explain how the programs would interact, shared NRCS’s plan to administer the funding for the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities and answered questions from board leadership about various conservation program restrictions and caveats that often deter farmers from signing up.

RMA Administrator Bungler walked through the insurance products available to sorghum producers and gave an update on two new insurance options in development at the Kansas City RMA office: an option that enables irrigated farmers to insure sorghum at higher liabilities and more cost-effective rates and an option that allows specialty farmers to insure sorghum at contract prices. Bungler said she expected these new options to be available for producers in the 2023 crop year.



▲ REPRESENTATIVE Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA) visited the National Sorghum Producers booth at Commodity Classic in New Orleans.

In addition to the USDA officials who presented at the NSP board meeting, NSP CEO Tim Lust and NSP Chairman Kody Carson met with USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. Vilsack hosted a roundtable discussion at Commodity Classic with CEOs and leadership from the hosting organizations: National Sorghum Producers, National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and American Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

USDA leadership was not the only agricultural representation from Washington, D.C., to attend Commodity Classic. House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA) also traveled to New Orleans to visit with farmers and grower leaders. Ranking Member Thompson held a meeting with NSP board members and staff to discuss legislative issues and the 2023 Farm Bill process. He also took time to visit NSP leadership at the booth on the Commodity Classic trade show floor.



Q & A with Dustin Finkel

Founder and CEO of Ka-Pop!



Where did you get the idea to make sorghum the focus of your products?

I am a certified personal trainer, foodie and proud dad to two amazing little boys. Like most of us, I love snacking. However, as an avid health and wellness-focused individual, I could never find something that my family, friends and neighbors would crave while meeting my incredibly high health standards. My goal was simple – simple ingredients, nothing added and amazing taste! It was also imperative we could help better our environment through our products.

After eating one of the so-called ‘healthier’ popcorn options, I had the light bulb moment – could I pop ancient grains, like sorghum, in the same way we pop corn? I placed sorghum on the stove and discovered it was possible! My kids, friends and family loved it, and I loved that it met the highest taste trepidations and my stringent nutrition requirements. We created popped chips, puffs and rings from those initial oven top batches.

Sorghum was a clear choice to be the foundation of our new business. It is full of protein, whole-grain fiber and antioxidants, and its proteins are “among the highest in nutritive quality of vegetable origin and close to those of animal origin products.” Further, the U.S. is the largest grower of this incredible grain which contributes to regenerative farming and increased agricultural sustainability. Sorghum fits the bill.

What makes Ka-Pop! unique?

Too often, natural food products make inauthentic claims, follow an outdated old paradigm of health or just plain don’t taste good. Founded in April 2018, Ka-Pop! is the very first 100 percent super grain snack on the market. Ka-Pop! delivers the trifecta of benefits consumers are looking for – authentic nutrition, great taste and simple ingredients.

Ka-Pop! was featured on Shark Tank in 2020, and we’ve seen over 300 percent growth year over year since launch. We have a powerful differentiator in bringing joy and unbelievably craveable taste back to healthy snacking. We are seeing so much success with 100 percent retailer acceptance and nearly perfect five-star reviews.

We are the only company to use 100 percent ancient grain sorghum with no fillers, no rice, no wheat, no corn, nothing else. We are gluten-free, top-12 allergen free, vegan and non-GMO – but not taste free! We believe everyone should be able to eat food that tastes delicious without compromise – indulge fearlessly!

How has the Ka-Pop! brand evolved over time?

We have evolved in many ways in the past four years and even before we officially launched in the market. Here are a few of my favorite changes:

- Launched two new product-lines: Supergrain Puffs and our newest Supergrain Rings
- New flavors – including fan favorites Churro, Sweet & Salty, Dill Pickle, Fiery Hot and many more
- New packaging



Old

New



How did Shark Tank change Ka-Pop! or what type of influence did that experience have on you?

From a business perspective, there is nothing else like Shark Tank for a smaller brand – it is a long-form Super Bowl commercial. Nine minutes on national television in front of a 40 million plus audience! We sold more in nine days after airing than the entire previous year combined! People love the story and experience, and it provides proof of concept for a brand.

It validated we were on the right track on a personal level. The sharks universally loved the product, the brand and me personally. Anyone who has started a business knows it is a lonely road, and you live for validation. Validation can come in sales, reviews, investment and in my case, Shark Tank feedback. Rohan, one of my Sharks and a stalwart in the food industry said: “Great product... I like you, and I’ll take you anywhere. I would hire you... I would put you in to run any one of my companies.”

While it is rare to get on Shark Tank, I always share with brands that they need to find their own “Shark Tank Moment” to move the needle and separate yourself from the pack.

What are the biggest changes you have experienced in the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) industry, and how does sorghum fit into that?

The CPG industry, specifically in food, has changed drastically over the past 15 years. While big brands dominate volume, small brands drive growth and innovation. You see innovation and value being created in the marketplace. However, there has been little development in distribution, retail acceptance and the like with that growth. It is more complex, more complicated and more expensive than ever to drive retail growth. However, large retailers, like Kroger, are giving smaller brands a genuine opportunity to drive growth in their stores.

A critical driver of small brand growth is introducing new(er)-to-the-market innovation, including ingredient innovation. Ka-Pop! is incredibly proud to have launched the first national brand with 100 percent sorghum as its base. It’s been fascinating to see the growth in awareness of grains like sorghum in both product development and consumer awareness. We want to show farmers sorghum is a viable commercial grain and continue converting acreage to this fantastic crop.

What’s the number one feedback or most surprising feedback you get about using sorghum for Ka-Pop!?

My favorite response is from those who grew up in the southeast. They are way over index on familiarity with sorghum. They’ve grown up with it as a syrup – so while the awareness is there, I have to educate them that it is not just a sugary treat! It’s also incredible to meet others who are super excited we are using such an incredibly healthy and sustainable crop for our products.

Once those who are less aware learn of the benefits, you can see their eyes widen with excitement. Sorghum is not a trendy grain – it has shown its importance for thousands of years and continues today.

Ka-Pop! continues to grow and diversify. What’s next for you?

My primary mission is to continue driving consumer trust in Ka-Pop! and sorghum. There is no reason consumers need to trade health for taste. We will continue to look for products consumers love but perhaps don’t feel great about eating. That’s how we came up with our latest Supergrain Rings. Additionally, I want to continue finding partners, like Kroger, interested in supporting the growth of fundamentally great tasting and sustainable products.

It’s hard to grow big brands in CPG without significant investment. So we are constantly on the lookout for great financial partners, as well.

Is there anything you would you like to share with the sorghum community reading the article?

It starts with our purpose, mission and values – make healthy eating fun and delicious through innovative foods that celebrate the innate nutrition and taste potential of ancient grains. Values:

- “Good Enough Never Is”
- Deeply committed, but always fun-loving
- Everything starts and ends with consumers in mind

We will offer a 30 percent discount to any *Sorghum Grower* readers at our website kapopsnacks.com by using the code “Sorghum” at checkout.

Sorghum Team Bids Farewell to Weinheimer and Everhart-Valentin

After almost 10 years working with the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and National Sorghum Producers, Justin Weinheimer, Ph.D., stepped away from his role as crop improvement director at the end of 2021. Weinheimer returned to full-time operations with his family business, Weinheimer Construction.

“Justin has been a valuable asset to the sorghum industry through his role as crop improvement director for the last decade,” NSP CEO Tim Lust said. “I appreciate the working relationship he held with the sorghum research community and that he excelled partnering with private industry to improve sorghum.”

Justin leaves the organizations with many accomplishments, including leading a groundbreaking partnership with Pioneer in breeding technology that led to the discovery of doubled haploid in sorghum, which speeds up the breeding process in sorghum research. He also formed partnerships with seed companies that led to the launch of herbicide-tolerant sorghum technologies that are now commercially available to farmers.

“Working on behalf of sorghum farmers was a true honor and a highlight in my career,” Weinheimer said. “Sorghum has a bright future, and the people that work for it hold a genuine passion for agriculture by working tirelessly to better the crop. I am truly blessed to have been a part of the great accomplishments

the Sorghum Checkoff and National Sorghum Producers have made over the past decade.”

Other successes include helping the sorghum industry form its first-ever joint position on biotechnology. He also shepherded the industry through one of the most unknown agronomic times, since the discovery of the green bug in 1968, in sorghum history with the arrival of sugarcane aphids in U.S. sorghum in 2013. His leadership led to millions of dollars invested to address the pest issue, plus new stewardship guidelines, pesticide technologies and tolerant hybrids. Weinheimer also contributed to new regulatory approvals that enabled trade with countries like Vietnam.

Kira Everhart-Valentin has stepped down from her role as the sorghum industry’s first-ever sustainability director, a role she began in February 2020.

“Kira hit the ground running with a specific drive to build a sustainable program,” Lust said. “She is to be commended for her commitment to start a program, and a position, for our organization from scratch and develop it to

the point she did in two years. She did it with tremendous vision, without a roadmap, and was able to seamlessly hand it to the next leader.”

Everhart-Valentin launched the first formal sustainability program for the U.S. sorghum industry and is attributed to successful sorghum partnerships with collaborators in the climate, sustainability and ecosystem services market space like Field to Market, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever, Trust in Food, The Nature Conservancy, Cotton Incorporated, NRCS and more.

“Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of my time in the role of the director of sustainability has been seeing how our own industry has continued to grow and respond to the many challenges growers are facing,” Everhart-Valentin said. “I have watched as the sorghum industry has truly stepped up to the plate to tackle these challenges in meaningful ways that are beneficial to the environment and climate while also making sense on the farm. Sustainability has gone from being a vague term that generated confusion, to something that our industry regards practically as a way to continue to farm in a more efficient, economic and resilient way.”

Everhart-Valentin also spearheaded the successful launch of the Sorghum for BIRDS partnership with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever and conducted a first-of-its-kind remote sensing project to benchmark sorghum sustainability.

“I have worked with sorghum for a number of years now, and the more that I watch it perform in farmers’ fields and serve as a key ingredient to an increasingly diverse number of products, the more convinced I am that it has a very important role to play in our future,” she added. “Its ability to thrive in challenging environments while also serving as such a versatile source of protein and nutrition position it to be a key tool for us all in the face of climate change and growing populations.”

Everhart-Valentin worked in the sorghum industry for a number of years prior to joining the Sorghum Checkoff as sustainability director beginning with serving Western Kansas farmers and businesses. Before that, she managed a global program on sorghum and millet with partners across nine different countries.

“It takes someone unique in the sustainability role to understand the grower side as well as the consumer side, and through her experiences and unique talents, Kira balanced that very well,” Lust said. “We wish Kira the best in her future endeavors, and thank her for her contributions to Team Sorghum.”



▲ WEINHEIMER discusses breeding innovation with Leadership Sorghum program participants.



▲ EVERHART-VALENTIN was critical to developing partnerships with groups like Pheasants Forever and farmers alike.



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2021 Annual Report

THE RESOURCE CONSERVING CROP™

NSP has worked for several years with NRCS to amend language that will allow sorghum to be included in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). In April 2021, NRCS announced additional language concerning the definition of a "resource-conserving crop" and a "resource-conserving crop rotation" under CSP "...to be more inclusive of all crops that could be resource conserving and fit within the purpose for which the definition was crafted," giving sorghum a strong foothold in this program.

RECORD EXPORT SALES

In April 2021, there were record-breaking amounts of sorghum export sales and shipment, with 33.9 million bushels shipped and 33.8 million bushels purchased in a single week, predominantly bought by and shipped to China.

2021 VALUE OF SORGHUM EXPORTS

\$2 BILLION
To All Destinations

283 MILLION
BUSHELS
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2ND HIGHEST
Export Value Ever

REGULATORY ADVOCACY

NSP Action

National Sorghum Producers continues to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) throughout the registration and re-registration processes through advocacy, regulatory and legal avenues to assure EPA is using the best available science and data in each step of the process and sorghum farmers can continue to use products that have been proven to be safe and effective.

Defending Crop Protection Tools

NSP understands the importance of defending vital crop protection tools utilized by our growers. Under the leadership of a new Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to revise the rules that govern the use of pesticides and herbicides. NSP will continue to defend farmers' safe and necessary use of these tools.

SUSTAINABILITY MESSAGING AND RESEARCH

Targeted Messaging

NSP sent targeted messaging about sorghum sustainability, including the Winter 2021 Issue of the *Sorghum Grower* magazine and a letter with sorghum sustainability talking points to all agricultural staffers in the House and Senate. This information was distributed through print mailings, emails and leadership talking points on Capitol Hill.

KansCAT

NSP conducted a project with NRCS to: 1) deploy a database for storing and assessing practice information, 2) increasing literacy of farmers and conservation partners using this information, and 3) leveraging conservation practices for value in carbon-focused ethanol markets. More information is available at SorghumGrowers.com/sustainability.

CROP INSURANCE PRICE ELECTION

At the close of 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency (RMA) has set the sorghum crop insurance price election for reinsurance year 2022 at 99.6 percent of the price of corn, compared to 96 percent for 2021. This price election means farmers will have the opportunity to insure grain sorghum at a price almost identical to that of corn.

The sorghum crop insurance price election formula is based on a 10-year rolling average of actual sorghum bids at elevators across the U.S. NSP worked closely with RMA after a 2008 Farm Bill directive to change this formula to be more reflective of sorghum pricing, and since implementation, the change has added **\$89 million in value to sorghum farmers through increased crop insurance coverage.**



\$89 Million
VALUE TO SORGHUM FARMERS
SINCE 2012

D.C. ENGAGEMENT

Despite office closures and restrictions, NSP remains engaged with leaders in Washington, D.C., advocating on behalf of the sorghum industry through virtual and face-to-face meetings, keeping relationships and information sharing flowing between our office and D.C. decision makers.



INDUSTRY PARTNERS



PAC FUNDRAISING RECORD

In 2021, NSP made innovative changes to the Sorghum PAC fundraisers to adapt to new circumstances. This included hosting a series of three fundraisers throughout the spring of 2021, including two interactive online auctions and the first ever Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament. The 2021 Sorghum PAC Series set an organization fundraising record with over \$133,000 raised.

Sorghum Grower MAGAZINE

APPROXIMATELY
23,000
PEOPLE REACHED

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Commodity Classic in The Big Easy

By Lauren Pritchett

National Sorghum Producers and the United Sorghum Checkoff Program participated in a successful return to Commodity Classic March 10-12 in New Orleans.

Highlights from the event included NSP Chairman Kody Carson's on-stage dialogue with general session host Mark Mayfield and leaders from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, American Soybean Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and National Corn Growers Association.

NSP also hosted its annual Sorghum Yield Contest Gala, recognizing winners of the 2021 contest, and the event concluded with the return of the Sorghum PAC Casino Night & Auction, which broke a live auction record.

Classic Trade Show

The show saw nearly 8,000 attendees, including both farmers and exhibitors, and the trade show was sold out with roughly 400 exhibitors on the floor.

NSP and USCP exhibited, highlighting sorghum's natural sustainable attributes, and visited with sorghum

farmers and prospective farmers from across the nation with new and existing interest in the crop.

The USCP booth was visited by two international groups from China interested in discussing opportunities to purchase sorghum for export and to hear perspectives on the upcoming sorghum crop.

House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Glenn "G.T." Thompson (R-PA) visited the NSP booth at the close of the trade show after he met with sorghum board of directors leadership to discuss current issues and sorghum priorities.

General Session

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack took the stage during the General Session as a keynote speaker on Friday, March 11. Vilsack addressed his vision for the USDA and the role of American agriculture in the nation's economic vitality. He included his thoughts on better market opportunities, export performance, rural development and climate programs.

After Vilsack's address, NSP Chairman Kody Carson joined leaders of NCGA, ASA, NAWG and AEM to discuss issues like supply chain disruptions, regulatory challenges and the current sorghum demand picture. He also unveiled our new industry trademark The Resource Conserving Crop™ and took the opportunity to speak on behalf of growers, discussing climate change and sustainability and what that means to him. He received applause from the crowd after his comments:

"When I think of sustainability, what is it? We're barely holding a line. We're keeping our head above water. We're paddling enough so we don't go back, but we're not really getting ahead. The American farmer is better than that. For years we have taken the soil on our farms, and we've made them as good as when we came onto it, or better, to hand to the next generation of stewards. We are asked, as producers, to feed more people across the world than ever before, and we're doing that. We're giving the U.S. consumer the safest and most abundant supply of food the world has ever seen, and we're doing it with one hand

◀ NSP CHAIRMAN KODY CARSON participated in the Commodity Classic General Session speaking with corn, soy, wheat and equipment manufacturer leaders about issues facing our respective industries.

... tied behind our back through regulatory restrictions or policy mandates, but we're accomplishing this. On my farm, I have taken the stance that The Resource Conserving qualities of sorghum fit my needs. [You] must go out and figure out what fits your needs, but then let's all then come back together. We've got a unique group up here because we have a camaraderie and a respect that I think we need to take advantage of right now, that we as U.S. farmers have to band together right now and tell the non-ag [audience] and the rest of the world that we aren't just sustainable. American farmers are so much better than that already."

NSP Yield Contest Gala

This year's NSP Sorghum Yield Contest Gala, sponsored by Pioneer®, gave sorghum growers the chance to showcase their yield achievements during the 2021 crop year. NSP Chairman Kody Carson and Vice Chairman Craig Meeker recognized national and state winners in six categories, congratulating each winner as they received their award (*profiles of national winners can be found on pages 18-19*).

Sorghum PAC Casino Night and Auction

Immediately following the gala Friday night, NSP kicked off its annual Sorghum PAC Casino Night & Auction, sponsored by Sorghum Partners and ADAMA, which set fundraising records once again. This year, casino night consisted of live, online and silent auctions, which have all increased in earnings over the past four years.

"I feel we are very fortunate to have very giving growers, board members, industry partners and staff," NSP Industry Relations Director Jamaca Battin said. "The Sorghum PAC Casino Night & Auction returned in a triumphant way, and our fundraising efforts accomplished a great deal in reaching our purpose to more effectively promote legislative lawmakers who understand and advocate on behalf of sorghum priorities."

NSP is expecting an increased revenue this year of more than \$50,000 to Sorghum PAC at the conclusions of Casino Night & Auction and the Second Annual Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament, which will be held April 30 in Wellington, Kansas (*read more on pg 30*).

2023 Commodity Classic

The 2023 Commodity Classic will be held in Orlando, Florida, on March 9-11, 2023. Join NSP in taking part in Commodity Classic events along with the NSP Yield Contest Gala, Sorghum PAC Casino Night & Auction and future learning sessions. For more information visit, CommodityClassic.com.

2021 NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS YIELD CONTEST National Winners

David Knoll CHARLES MIX COUNTY, SD | DRYLAND-TILLAGE WESTERN

A pleasantly surprising growing season granted David Knoll just over 170 bushels per acre to win the dryland-tillage west category. Knoll managed his sorghum by staying on top of weed control and planting in more narrow rows to shade the crop in order to reduce moisture loss, he said. Soil tests are a management practice he uses to gain more knowledge about his field's fertility. He applied 100 pounds of nitrogen and 50 pounds of phosphorus to supplement the field. Knoll said tillering helped his overall yield performance. He chooses to market his crop through specialty markets and for cattle feed. "I feel lucky and blessed [to be a sorghum yield contest winner]," Knoll said, adding he is appreciative to receive acknowledgement for his success while capitalizing on the opportunity to meet other producers and industry leaders.



PIONEER 89Y79
170.21 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 100,000
PREVIOUS CROP: CORN
RAINFALL: 10 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 10/23/2021

Harry P. Johnston FULTON COUNTY, PA | DRYLAND-TILLAGE EASTERN

Although Harry Johnston's crop received less rain than what is typical, he praises sorghum for remaining steadfast and drought-tolerant during the dry spells, leading him to win the dryland-tillage east category. "The plot both met and exceeded my expectations with the drier weather we had in July 2021," he said. Johnston chooses sorghum for its ability to withstand pressure from deer and because it works well in his crop rotation. Soil tests were an essential component to Johnston's management plan, and he used this data to apply the specified nutrients that were lacking when he received the results of the samples. He applied 200 pounds of nitrogen, 120 pounds of phosphorus, 80 pounds of potash and 6,000 gallons of swine manure. To add to that, he kept a close watch on pest control in order to prevent any outbreaks. Johnston markets his harvested crops to a local mill that processes it for birdseed.



PIONEER 84G62
221.50 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 130,000
PREVIOUS CROP: WHEAT
RAINFALL: 40 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 11/18/2021

Kasey Gamble KIOWA COUNTY, KS | DRYLAND-NO TILL WESTERN

Growing a winning sorghum crop is in the management details according to Kasey Gamble, winner of the dryland-no till west category and 2022 Bin Buster. "I make sure that every tool is in the toolbox in regards to fertilizer, herbicide, insecticide and fungicide," he said. "If you want big yields, you have to use the tools and spend some money, and you'll be rewarded." Gamble emphasized spraying wheat stubble to maintain a weed-free field and combat any volunteer wheat was essential to prevent it from siphoning the moisture needed for a successful sorghum crop. This was his first year to use fungicide to maximize the potential yield in that field. To add to that, the weather was in Gamble's favor with ample rainfall in July and August, combined with appropriate temperatures for the growing season. Gamble markets his crop directly with Smithfield Foods. His impressive 244 bushel yield is the highest in contest history for dryland west of the Mississippi River.



PIONEER 85P44
244.03 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 35,000
PREVIOUS CROP: WHEAT
RAINFALL: 30 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 11/20/2021

Chris Santini WARREN COUNTY, NJ | DRYLAND-NO TILL EASTERN

Favorable weather conditions pushed Chris Santini's crop to the top of the dryland-no till east category with the help of 60 inches of rain during the growing season. "The weather was in our favor this year," Santini said. "It was perfect growing conditions, and the sorghum was never stressed." Santini said past growing seasons led to the decision to plant their crop earlier than the end of May this past growing season, and they marginally increased their seed population to 100,000. Santini also used 2.5 tons of poultry manure as fertilizer to contribute to soil nutrient levels and Lumax pre-emergent herbicide to control weed growth. Her marketing program targets the birdseed industry, selling to a nearby mill.



PIONEER 84G62
234.90 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 100,000
PREVIOUS CROP: CORN
RAINFALL: 60 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 11/16/2021

Tom Vogel HARTLEY COUNTY, TX | IRRIGATED WESTERN

Meeting and surpassing goals is always a triumph when it comes to farming, and Tom Vogel did just that last year with his sorghum crop, winning the irrigated west category. "We were going for 10,000 pound milo, [and] we exceeded that on a 170 acre circle," he said. Vogel credits a meticulous use of management tools like starter fertilizer, pre and post-emergent chemicals and fungicide for his successful crop. Vogel used a 24-row planter to apply a 10-34-0 starter, 24 ounces of generic metolachlor and 16 ounces of Atrazine for pre-emerge. At 5-6 leaf stage he used 16 ounces of Husky and 16 ounces of Atrazine, and lastly, he used a fungicide to promote crop health and protect against diseases. The crop was double crop sorghum, planted strip till into wheat stubble on June 10. While rainfall was short in the months of June and July, a late freeze in the middle of November helped his sorghum finish.



PIONEER 85P75
241.18 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 60,000
PREVIOUS CROP: WHEAT
RAINFALL: 10 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 10/30/2021

Mike Scates WHITE COUNTY, IL | IRRIGATED EASTERN

Mike Scates' winning irrigated east category yield contest plot was planted at 130,000 seeds per acre with 30-inch row spacing to produce an impressive 182.24 bushel per acre yield. Scates previously had soybeans on his contest field and used pivot irrigation to maintain proper soil moisture. He added 225 pounds of anhydrous ammonia, 125 pounds of phosphorus and 175 pounds of potash to enhance the soil's nutrient profile.



PIONEER 84G62
182.24 BU/AC
SEED POPULATION: 130,000
PREVIOUS CROP: SOYBEANS
RAINFALL: 12 INCHES
HARVEST DATE: 11/08/2021

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2021 WINNERS!

Entries for the 2022 Sorghum Yield Contest are **NOW OPEN!**
For entry form and rules, visit SorghumGrowers.com/yieldcontest/.

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NSP Update

Schlegel Honored at SICNA

By Haleigh Erramouspe

The biennial Sorghum Improvement Conference of North America (SICNA) returned in person March 28-30 in Dallas, Texas. The conference, themed Sorghum: Sustainable in a Changing World, included keynote addresses on sustainability and the future of the industry, plus research sessions on breeding, biotechnology, agronomy, physiology, entomology, pathology, utilization and tech transfer. There were also awards presented for general research poster and student poster and oral competitions, plus the Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement award. Close to 100 researchers, students and industry leaders attended the event.

National Sorghum Producers presented Alan Schlegel, Ph.D., the award for Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement for providing exemplary service and going beyond expectations in his achievements for the sorghum industry. Schlegel is a professor emeritus at the Kansas State University Southwest Research-Extension Center in Tribune, Kansas, where he served in various capacities for more than 40 years. His research has focused on nutrient and water management research in dryland and irrigated systems and integration of tillage, water and crop management for more efficient cropping systems.

“There is not an individual in the U.S. who has done more work on sorghum cropping systems than Alan,” NSP CEO Tim Lust said. “Sorghum is The Resource Conserving Crop™, and Alan’s work on tillage and fertility management are cornerstones of efforts to promote this aspect of the crop to end-users and anyone interested in promoting agricultural sustainability. National Sorghum Producers is pleased to honor him with this prestigious award.”

Schlegel published more than 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters in more than 100 trade and technical publications and 300 experiment station and extension publications. He also served in multiple editorial and board leadership positions throughout his tenure in the research community.

The award for Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement was first presented in 1961. Recipients include, among others, the forefathers of the modern hybrid sorghum industry. As of today, more than 60 individuals have received this award. Visit SorghumGrowers.com/recognition to view past award recipients.

National Sorghum Producers also awarded four students for their outstanding research presentations. The winner of the Student Poster Presentation was Mitchell

Kent from Texas A&M University on “Use of Genomic Prediction to Screen Sorghum B-Lines.”

The winners of the Student Oral Presentations were:

- First place: Noah Winans, Texas A&M University with “Evaluating Introgression Sorghum Material while Exploring Genomic Selection as a Screening Method”
- Second place: Troy J. Ostmeyer, Kansas State University with “Split Application of Nitrogen Impacts Grain Sorghum Yield, Quality, and Amino Acid Composition”
- Third place: Fabian Leon Texas A&M University with “Historical Multi-environmental Trials Reveal Elite Grain Sorghum Hybrid Trends from 1970-2021”

SICNA strives every year to promote communication and collaboration in research and development among researchers and stakeholders in cooperation with universities, research centers, public institutions and private entities. It links scientists and researchers with sorghum producers and industry representatives to help drive innovation and discovery in response to the industry’s challenges and opportunities.



▲ NSP CEO TIM LUST presented Alan Schlegel, Ph.D. with the award for Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement at the 2022 SICNA.



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Serving up Sorghum

Kindly Faces, Plastic Trays and Servings of Sorghum

By Hannah Lipps, Caprock Strategies

Every day, public school children across America line up and move through carefully orchestrated lines and collect trays of colorful, nutritious food to fill their tummies and prepare them for a day's learning and play. Before sunrise, in almost 100,000 U.S. schools, dedicated food service personnel prepare to serve 15 million breakfasts and 30 million lunches to the bright little faces that move through their lines.

While we may recall fond memories of the grandmas who dished up our peas and carrots at lunch, behind those kindly faces, hair nets and scoops of mashed potatoes is a complex web of federal regulation that determines which foods make their way onto the lunch tables of America's school children. These 5 billion lunches and 2.5 billion breakfasts every year represent a production cost of \$25 billion annually. Or, once discounted for labor and infrastructure costs, about \$1 billion per month on food alone.

In this vast market of U.S. government food programs, sorghum has the opportunity to fill critical roles as a nutritionally rich, low-cost alternative to widely consumed grains and proteins. Last year, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program zeroed in on a strategy to move sorghum into the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and onto the lunch and breakfast trays of millions of American schoolchildren.

For an emerging food crop like sorghum, the market opportunity is vast, but so is the underlying policy that determines which foods work their way onto those sturdy plastic trays. In order for the federal government to reimburse schools for the meals they serve, the components of that meal must fit a complex matrix of nutritional data that requires school food service providers to average nutrients over the course of a week.

With that in mind, the Sorghum Checkoff developed a comprehensive five-year plan for moving sorghum into school meals. The plan includes multi-front approaches to familiarize school nutrition leaders with how to prepare and serve sorghum,

plans to help students get familiar with a new food item on their plate, plans for school foodservice providers to offer sorghum to their customers, and the proper presentation for critical nutrition information.

But a critical problem presented itself almost immediately. USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs, which serves as the go-to resource when deciding what foods will be reimbursed, does not currently include sorghum, making it difficult for school meals directors to add it to their menus.

National Sorghum Producers stepped in and USDA has recently committed to updating the USDA Food Buying Guide to include sorghum products. In the interim, USDA has approved school nutrition administrators to use a similar product as a nutritional stand-in for menu planning and food purchasing needs.

This means that as the Sorghum Checkoff works to implement its comprehensive plan for school nutrition programming, schools already have a mechanism to add sorghum to their menus. The Kansas State Department of Education has been proactive on this front, informing their school nutrition directors of the new guidance and offering a webinar to highlight a host of school-friendly sorghum-based recipes.

With a steady drumbeat of marketing, promotion and informational resources focused around moving sorghum into the school lunch program, the industry should reap the benefits of increased food market capacity in coming years.

After all, the foods we learn to love as children are the ones we come back to over the course of our lives.



Photo provided by USDA

▲ THE SORGHUM CHECKOFF is working to implement a school nutrition programming plan that will add sorghum to school lunch menus.

United Sorghum Checkoff Program Welcomes Adam York as New Sustainability Director



York is a Clark County, Kansas, native with a farm and ranch upbringing, and he is a Kansas State University graduate with a bachelor's degree in history. Prior to working in the sorghum industry, York served as senior staff for multiple Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives, advising on federal agricultural, environmental and nutritional policies, among others. He returned to Kansas in 2019 to join Kansas Grain Sorghum as the organization's first program director with a focus on expanding the organization's footprint across the state.

"I am thrilled to begin this new opportunity on team sorghum to continue positioning the crop as a serious tool that confronts challenges head on with sustainable and collaborative solutions," York said. "Working closely with producers over the past three years at Kansas Grain Sorghum, and from the prior six years in Washington, D.C., I know firsthand how sorghum farmers are moving the needle to advance positive outcomes for rural and urban communities alike."

York replaces Kira Everhart-Valentin, who was the organization's first sustainability director. Everhart-Valentin pioneered awareness for sorghum in the regenerative agriculture space and put a spotlight on the crop's

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) recently named Adam York as its new Sustainability Director to continue efforts in increasing market value for growers, promoting conservation practices through strategic partnerships and positioning sorghum as The Resource Conserving Crop™.

York 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 thrilled for Adam to join Team Sorghum," USCP Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson said, "After seeing the pathways paved and tremendous work he has put into Kansas Grain Sorghum, we have no doubt he will make incredible strides here at the Sorghum Checkoff."

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versatility and the importance of why it is a reliable and smart choice for farmers and consumers alike.

Two years after the board's intentional and strategic investment in a dedicated sustainability director position, Kira has led several major and successful projects that made sustainability a central consideration and priority across its program areas. Successes include key messaging and brand-

ing being reshaped to highlight sorghum's unique position as a resource-conserving crop, partnerships to further promote sorghum as a quality sustainable ingredient for a variety of food and end products and collecting data to quantify sorghum's positive impact on farms and ecosystems.

"Kira has played a pivotal role in positioning sorghum as a sustainable solution for food, feed and energy sectors. Our sustainable fu-

ture has been paved with her tremendous work while still respecting the importance of maintaining economic stability for sorghum producers," Sorghum Checkoff CEO Tim Lust said. "I thank her for her dedicated work and service to our industry and wish her well in her future endeavors."

More information about sorghum and its sustainable benefits can be found at sorghumcheckoff.com/sorghum-sustains.

Back to the Basics of Basis

WHAT IS BASIS?

Basis is calculated by subtracting the nearby futures price from the cash price, where nearby is defined as the futures contract closest to the expiration without going into the delivery month. Basis captures the effects of local supply and demand, as well as transportation costs on commodity prices.

WHAT IS YOUR BASIS?

Kansas State University's AgManager.info site has an interactive crop basis tool that can be used to examine the historical weekly nearby basis for sorghum, corn, soybeans and wheat for various locations in Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma and parts of Colorado and Texas. Use the AgManager Interactive Basis Tool at www.agmanager.info/grain-marketing/interactive-crop-basis-tool

HOW DOES BASIS WORK FOR SORGHUM?

Sorghum basis is priced off of the corn futures contract. Elevators and other grain buyers will use the corn contract to hedge their inventory if they are holding sorghum. So, it is the difference between the cash price at that location versus the board price.

HOW DOES BASIS VARY ACROSS THE SORGHUM BELT?

Basis is going to vary for a number of reasons. It depends on how close you are to markets. For example, with significant demand from China over the past couple of years, basis has been very strong in many areas but particularly in areas close to terminals where rail cars can be loaded prior to shipping directly to ports.

operations either have to stop buying or truck in grain. The grain merchandiser then has to pay the transportation cost, and as a result of that low grain supply and high demand, the basis shrinks. The cash becomes very high relative to the futures at that point because you have to pay enough in cash to pay for what it costs to truck it to the buyer. So, it's more of a local cash supply situation.

HOW DO CHANGES IN THE MARKET IMPACT BASIS?

Short crops in the Corn Belt are supply issues that support a strong sorghum basis. The shipping of sorghum to China is an example of a stronger basis that was demand driven. So, any of those factors, especially local conditions, are going to drive that number more than anything else. If you have a really big crop and the elevators are stacking grain out on the ground, you don't even have to ask what the bid is for grain—you know the basis is going to be really wide. They'll buy it, but only at a really reduced cash price, which means a weak basis.

HOW DOES BASIS CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR?

In general, basis is typically weaker at harvest time when farmers are selling grain off the

Learn more how basis works with Sorghum Smart Talk podcast, [Back to the Basics of Basis](#).



HOW IS BASIS RELATED TO SUPPLY AND DEMAND?

In effect, your cash price represents local supply and demand, and the CME is more of a national and international price. For example, if you are in an area where there has been a lot of demand from exporters, feedlots, or ethanol plants relative to supply, those

combine. Then it tends to get stronger toward the end of the crop year. It also depends on what is going on in the Corn Belt and in the rest of the world. For example, in years where the crop in the Corn Belt is short relative to demand, the Sorghum Belt tends to see a strong sorghum basis. In years like these, it is particularly important to look at contracting to lock profit opportunities.

HOW DOES ON-FARM STORAGE BENEFIT A PRODUCER IN RELATION TO BASIS?

In the case of harvest time, elevators typically are buying grain at its weakest basis—the lowest cash relative to futures. If you have on-farm storage, you don't have to deliver your grain at harvest time. You can retain it and wait for the basis to get stronger

before you make the cash sale. That is where on-farm storage pays for itself. And, depending on your setup, you could potentially eliminate your wait time at the elevator if you have got your own facilities, and you can keep the combines moving.

HOW BASIS CAN AFFECT PRODUCER PROFITABILITY?

The stronger the basis, the higher your cash price is relative to the board. So, if you can pick up an additional \$0.30/bu, those additional dollars can add up just off of managing basis. There are many farmers who sell grain this way. For example, because of on-farm storage and a farmer's ability to manage basis, their decision to sell is often driven by how strong the basis is. When the basis is strong, the local market is

telling the farmer it needs grain, and it is bidding the cash price up to get it.

IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BASIS AND CROP INSURANCE?

The short answer is no. Both corn and sorghum crop insurance set their price elections based on the CME. The farmer's actual selling price does affect his insurance indemnity calculation. However, since sorghum is not traded on the CME, RMA uses an average basis from multiple locations to arrive at a percentage of the corn price election for sorghum. Sorghum leaders helped develop this calculation methodology, which has considerably increased the sorghum price election over the past decade.

Consider Silage Sorghum *By Sorghum Checkoff Agronomy Director Brent Bean, Ph.D.*

Throughout the High Plains and other dairy and feedyard regions of the U.S., silage sorghum is gaining in popularity. This is largely due to the low water requirement for silage sorghum and the continued introduction of new and improved hybrids. In many regions, the decrease in the amount of irrigation water available is causing growers to consider silage sorghum for the first time.

For new growers, there are many management decisions to consider including hybrid selection, seeding rate, row spacing, weed control and fertilizer needs.

Silage sorghums come in different categories and three main types are described below:

- Conventional – these are basically tall leafy grain sorghum hybrids.
- BMR or brown mid-rib –

these hybrids do, in fact, have a brown mid-rib, but what makes them unique is that they have lower lignin content than conventional hybrids, resulting in increased digestibility.

- Brachytic dwarf – these hybrids have short internodes making the leaves close together, giving the plants a dense leaf appearance. The shortened height should also improve standability.

Once the type of silage sorghum has been chosen, it is important to pick the maturity that best fits the environment and end use. A full-season hybrid will typically have a higher yield potential but requires more water, fertilizer and a longer growing season. Conversely, early maturing hybrids use less water and fertilizer and can be harvested earlier in the season, providing an opportunity for double crop-

ping to winter forage, if desired.

Seeding rates have been declining the last few years. Historically, 120,000 seeds per acre were typically planted. Today's hybrids will yield well at a rate of 60,000-80,000 seeds per acre. The lower seeding rates improve standability late in the season without sacrificing yield.

Row spacing varies across the country and depends on a number of factors. In those areas where high yields are the goal and water is not limiting, a narrow row of 15-20 inches is often desired. In environments with limited water, 30-40 inch rows are more popular.

Nitrogen requirements are based on the expected yield. A good rule of thumb is 8-9 pounds of nitrogen is needed for every fresh weight ton of silage produced. With this in mind, a 22-ton

silage yield will need approximately 185 pounds of nitrogen.

Weed control options are generally similar to those used in grain sorghum. A pre-emergence weed control program is essential with most growers relying on atrazine in combination with one of the group 15 herbicides s-metolachlor, acetochlor or dimethenamid. Controlling grass has long been an issue in silage sorghum. New in 2022 is the introduction of Advanta's igrowth® technology into silage sorghum. This technology allows for IMI-

FLEX™ herbicide from UPL to be applied either pre-emergence or as an in-season post application to control a wide range of grasses.

Insects are normally not a big concern in silage sorghum. The one exception is sugarcane aphids in the southern High Plains, mid-South and mid-Atlantic regions. Three insecticides, Sivanto Prime, Transform and Sefina, will all effectively control sugarcane aphids. In addition, there are now several silage sorghum hybrids that are available with at least some degree of tolerance to

sugarcane aphids. A list of these can be found on the United Sorghum Checkoff Program website sorghumcheckoff.com.

It is very important to harvest the crop when it is in the early soft dough stage. This occurs soon after the grain changes color and can still be mashed between the thumb and forefinger. Once the kernel becomes hard, it becomes much more difficult for the cattle to digest the grain. A properly set grain processor on the harvester is recommended.



Sorghum Checkoff Hosts Commodity Classic Learning Center Session

Commodity and conservation organizations, led by the Sorghum Checkoff, joined forces to co-host a Learning Session at the 2022 Commodity Classic in New Orleans entitled "Finding The 'Sweet Spot': Combining Precision Agriculture and Conservation to Build a Sustainable and Diverse Farming Landscape." The session included an expert panel of

staff from the Sorghum Checkoff, Cotton Incorporated, Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, as well as Kansas sorghum and cotton farmer, Andy Hineman. The panel discussed and answered audience questions on how farmers are building successful operations alongside healthy farming landscapes using precision agriculture to target conserva-

tion practices that increase their overall profitability. The session featured Cotton Incorporated's More Quail Per Bail Program as well as the Sorghum Checkoff's Sorghum for B.I.R.D.S. Program.

Scan the QR code to view the full Learning Session



SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

May 30 Memorial Day
Office Closed

July 18-20 Leadership Sorghum Program V
TDB

August 17-18 Sorghum Checkoff Annual Board Meeting
Wichita, KS

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

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



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Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Meaningful 2021 Sorghum Crop Plus Positive Indicators Drive Exciting Outlook For 2022

By Parker Vulgamore

Sorghum in Kansas had a very meaningful year in 2021, according to the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission's Chairman, Kevin Kniebel, a farmer near White City, Kansas. In his annual testimony to the Kansas Legislature in early 2022, Kniebel reiterated the record-breaking 2021 Kansas sorghum crop, continued key partnerships in sorghum research and key trends in commodity prices and input costs as powerful indicators for a positive 2022 sorghum outlook.

From the Commission's 2021 Annual Report, Kniebel cited the \$2.7 billion national crop as the most valuable sorghum crop in our nation's history. Kansas farmers also produced the largest sorghum crop in the U.S.—a consistent trend—by contributing 55 percent of the national crop last year, equivalent to 265 million sorghum bushels and an 11 percent increase over 2020. According to the 2021 Annual Report, the sorghum industry met a significant increase in demand from international markets with a 21 percent increase in harvested acreage throughout the state.

Building off the key trends driving the record-breaking 2021 national sorghum crop, price and profitability continue to make a strong case for planting sorghum in 2022. Alongside robust pricing opportunities, relative advantages in production costs compared to corn and soybeans also contribute to the unprecedented profit situation shaping up for sorghum. Staff research at Kansas Grain Sorghum based on crop budgets

published by Kansas State University found dryland grain sorghum to be the most profitable option in five of six different regions across the state of Kansas. In those regions, sorghum profitability was extremely competitive to the next best option on average.

Despite rising input costs, sorghum can be a powerful tool for profit in the year ahead, driven by increased demand and growing markets, both domestic and abroad. As indicated by Kniebel, "the sorghum industry commands an increasing footprint in our region." The Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and its farmer-leaders work to drive value for producers by positioning sorghum as a sustainable, reliable and profitable crop through responsible investment.



White Energy Opens Opportunity to Area Sorghum Farmers

By Haleigh Erramouspe

White Energy is one of the leading producers of biofuels and animal feed in the U.S. Between two grain processing facilities in Hereford and Plainview, Texas, White Energy has the capacity to produce approximately a quarter-million gallons of ethanol per year in addition to other co-products such as wet and dry distillers grain.

To achieve maximum production capacity for a year, the company needs roughly 90 million bushels of grain. Currently, White Energy's total grain use comprises about twenty percent grain sorghum, which is around 20 million bushels, but as part of its collaboration with National Sorghum Producers and through its commitment to sustainability and the sorghum industry, White Energy plans to increase that percentage.

"White Energy is pleased to collaborate with NSP as an industry leader striving toward a low-carbon future locally, nationally and abroad. Together, as one collective voice, we will be prominent and influential in shaping that future and the policies guiding it, while at the same time bringing value back to our partner farmers," White Energy Vice President of Commodities and Risk Management Christopher Hughes said.

"To accomplish this, we are pushing to source a greater portion of our grains right here at home benefiting the same communities that have allowed us to grow and succeed as not only a company, but

also as a good corporate citizen," he added. "As we continue pushing to increase plant efficiencies on our path to carbon-neutral, locally and regionally sourced sorghum has become a premiere feedstock and remains vital in allowing us to make these significant strides while producing green renewable biofuels to power America forward."

White Energy is willing to buy grain year-round but said it purchases the majority of its grain at harvest in November and December. White Energy has extensive storage capabilities, which gives it the flexibility to work with farmers on delivery schedules as well as sale methods, whether it is purchasing the grain directly from farmers or through trusted elevators.

White Energy will be offering acre contracts to local producers to purchase all bushels grown on a set amount of acres at a set price. The contracts will include an "act of God" clause, providing producers with a level of protection should drought conditions or other natural disasters result in complete crop loss.

Traditionally, White Energy has had the majority of their grain delivered by rail from the Corn Belt, but moving forward, the company said it will evaluate ways to progress and adapt to be more supportive of its local communities and farmers by sourcing more grain locally. Not only does this economically support the local community, but it also improves the marketability of the ethanol pro-

duced by White Energy by reducing the overall carbon footprint of the production of that ethanol.

"The closer we can source our grain, that just makes our already green biofuel product that much greener with that much smaller carbon footprint," Hughes said. "At the end of the day that's the goal we have: How can we put liquid fuel into people's gas tanks that is as earth-friendly as possible? That's why we're here."

The ethanol industry historically accounts for 30 percent of the total demand for U.S. sorghum. White Energy committed to a Gold+ Level industry partnership with NSP in February, and through the partnership NSP looks forward to sorghum farmers seeing support from one of the the leading domestic markets and one of the nation's leading producers in the ethanol industry.

"Although the ethanol industry has experienced policy challenges in recent years," NSP CEO Tim Lust said, "the enhanced focus on climate and sustainable sources of fuel, feed and fiber make the sorghum and the ethanol industries well poised to partner for success now and in the future. We see tremendous opportunity to do that with White Energy."

For more information on White Energy or to sign up for texts or email with daily bids, visit White-Energy.com. White Energy also welcomes guests and questions at their Hereford and Plainview plant locations.

Sorghum Shortcuts

Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament Open!

The Second Annual Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament will be held on April 30, 2022, at noon in Wellington, Kansas. The tournament, sponsored by Sorghum Partners and ADAMA, features a four-person scramble and will take place at the Wellington Golf Club. The tournament will be followed by a hamburger dinner, happy hour and awards. Registration will remain open until all tournament spots are filled. Learn more at SorghumGrowers.com/sorghum-pac/. All experience levels are welcome.

National Sorghum Foundation and BASF Award Scholarship Winners

This year at Commodity Classic, the National Sorghum Scholarship Foundation and BASF announced the winners of their joint scholarship—Zoe Schultz from Kansas State University and Luke Arthaud from Oklahoma State University. Each scholarship winner was awarded \$2,500 to be applied toward tuition during the 2021-2022 academic school year.

Schultz, a senior agricultural communications major at K-State, grew up on a row crop farm in Grainfield, Kansas. In her application, she said she sees the impact sorghum has on the sustainability of their operation. In the future, Schultz said she sees sorghum playing an integral role in mitigating drought issues in Kansas and believes integrating the crop into more rotations will help producers reach maximum crop efficiency. Upon graduation, Schultz plans to return to her family farm in addition to finding a position working in a commodity organization or seed sales.

Arthaud, a sophomore plant and soil science major at OSU, grew up surrounded by agriculture in the Oklahoma panhandle. He said he sees many of sorghum's innate qualities such as drought tolerance, non-GMO and gluten-free, coupled with its many uses, as a way sorghum can serve as a crop to lead the future of sustainable agriculture into the 21st century and beyond. Arthaud plans to pursue an internship with John Deere this summer and continue participation in a small grains agronomy team, which he hopes will provide opportunities for him to explore future career paths after graduation.

For more information about the National Sorghum Foundation and other scholarship opportunities, visit SorghumGrowers.com/foundation-scholarships/.

2022 Yield Contest Open

The 2022 National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest is now open and includes new deadlines for entry and harvest forms submission.

The new entry deadline for the 2022 Sorghum Yield Contest is October 15. Additionally, the 10-day waiting period between submission of the entry form and the harvest report is eliminated. Harvest reports will be made available to contest entrants beginning October 16 and must be received at the NSP office or postmarked no later than November 25.

The goal of the yield contest is to increase grower yields, transfer knowledge between growers to enhance management and identify sorghum producers who excel in each state and throughout the country. In order to enroll, contestants must be a paid NSP member at the time of entry. More than one member of a family may enroll, but each member must have a separate membership. All entries will be reviewed and divisions will be placed off of yield only. National and state winners will be recognized at the 2023 Commodity Classic in Orlando, Florida.

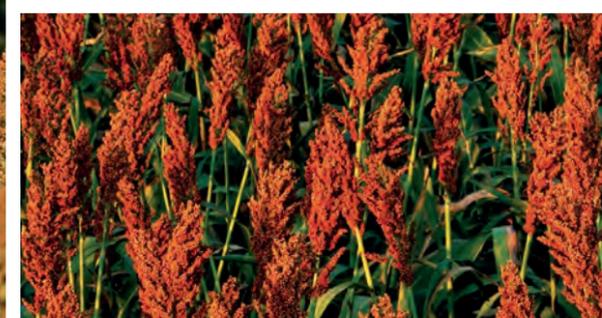
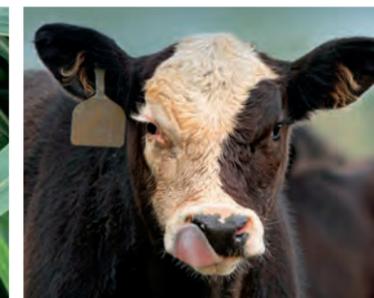
To find the entry form, 2022 yield contest rule changes and more information, interested contestants can visit SorghumGrowers.com/yield-contest/ or contact NSP Director of Operations Garrett Mink at 806-749-3478.

NSP Opens Board Application Process

The National Sorghum Producers began accepting applications on April 4 for five positions on the 2022 board of directors. NSP board members lead efforts to create positive change for sorghum farmers through effective policy and relationships and hold a vision to promote, advocate for and defend the sorghum industry. To be qualified to serve on the board, candidates must be a current NSP member and have a passion for representing sorghum farmers through advocacy and fundraising activities. No prior board experience is necessary, only a desire to improve the sorghum industry.

Applications are due Friday, May 6, 2022, at 5 p.m. CST. Each position includes a three-year term, beginning October 1, 2022, the start of NSP's fiscal year.

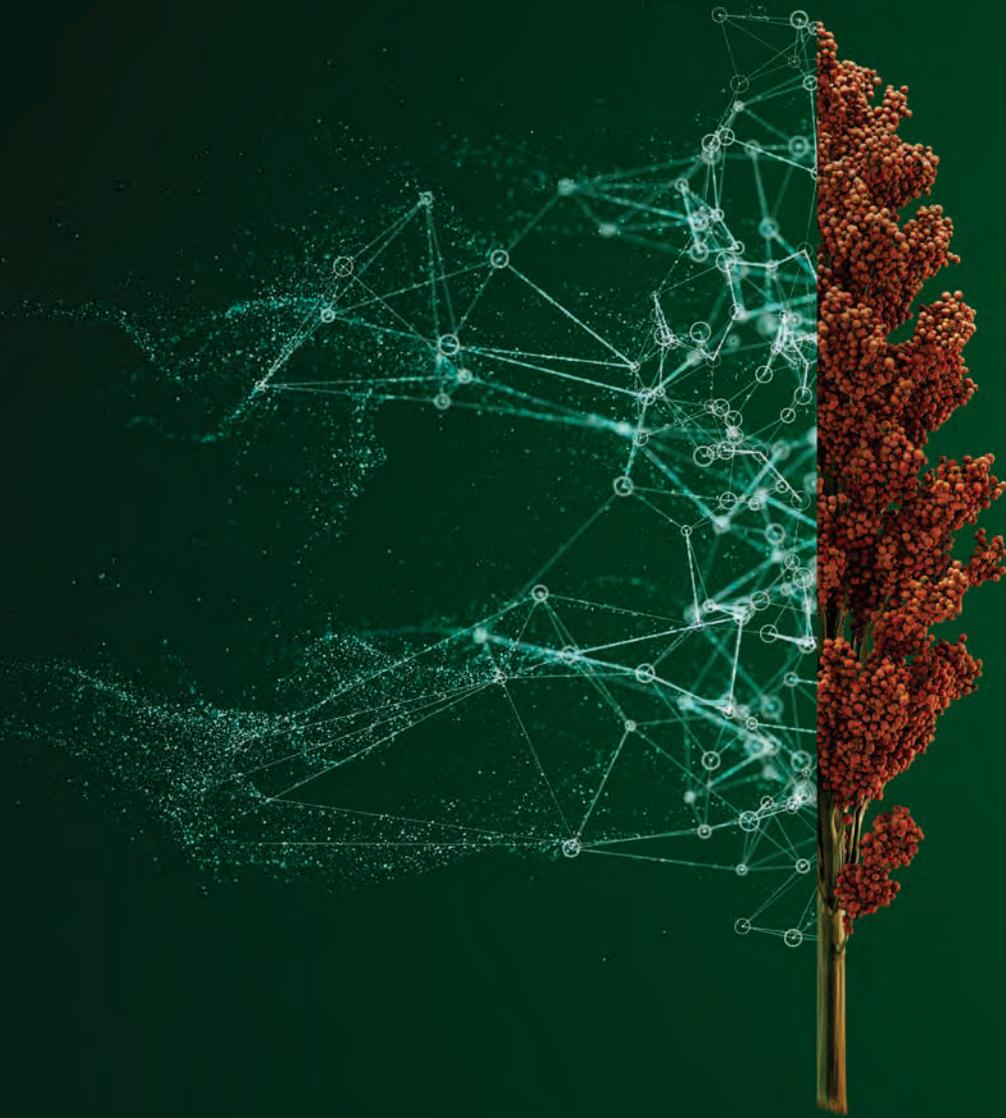
For the application or more information visit SorghumGrowers.com/leadership/ or contact NSP Director of Operations Garrett Mink at 806-749-3478.



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