

SUMMER 2024



NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS

SORGHUM

Grower



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OVERTURNED**
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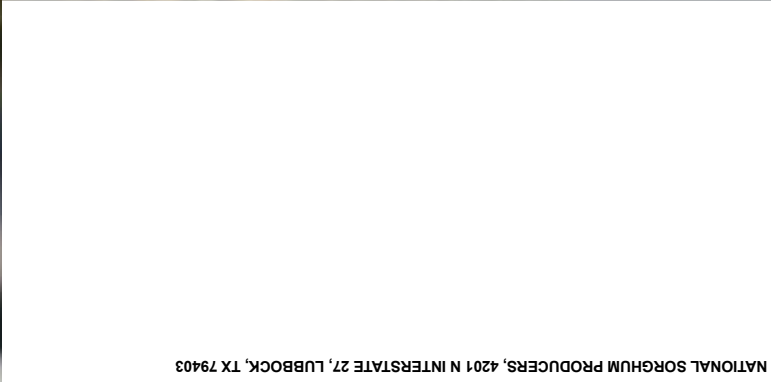
Also

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NATIONAL SORGHUM PRODUCERS **SORGHUM** Grower

Summer 2024
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Director's Cut

A Fresh Vision for Sorghum's Future



As we launch this editorial addition to *Sorghum Grower* magazine, I searched for a title that could set my remarks apart from the other extremely talented contributors to this space.

A director's cut is an edited version that is supposed to represent the director's own approved edits, in contrast to the editor's original release. Much like this definition, my goal, and the reason I chose Director's Cut is to deliver my vision for the National Sorghum Producers and the broader work we are undertaking at Team Sorghum from the view of the Executive Director.

While I have yet to complete my first year with NSP, that date is quickly approaching in early November. My learning curve has been steep but rewarding as I stepped back into association management, a familiar role that has represented nearly 30 years of my professional career. While familiar, the approach at NSP is also different. The association has supported the development of subsidiary organizations designed to make growers more profitable, in addition to being awarded grant funding to gather data and position sorghum for the emerging sustainability and biofuels markets. NSP's active partnership with the Sorghum Checkoff provides numerous opportunities to share knowledge and expertise from a growing staff across a range of program disciplines.

The diverse uses for sorghum—food, feed, fuel and fiber—reflect the potential sorghum enjoys today and demands a strong and unified response from Team Sorghum—the association, the checkoff, grant projects and subsidiaries.

Rapid program development has created significant staff growth—in employee numbers and the skills and strengths they bring to their new roles. Leadership has actively engaged in strategic planning, staff development and program coordination activities at every level of our organizations to leverage resources and maximize impacts from our limited budgets.

Internally, we refer to this as “punching above our weight class.” Team Sorghum has a history of successfully influencing outcomes that benefit the industry, but the diversification of programs outlined above has expanded that influence exponentially. This issue of the magazine is a good example of punching above our weight class.

I look forward to regular contributions to the magazine, and I hope you do as well. I am also available between issues by email (greg@sorghumgrowers.com) or by phone at 620-253-3137.

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Photo by Hunter and Jessie Bevill - Claude, Texas



SUMMER 2024



ON THE COVER: Brant Peterson is using a mobile drip irrigation system called Dragon-Line to maximize his water-use efficiency over the Ogallala Aquifer, translating into big water savings, input efficiency and even improved yields on his farm in southwest Kansas.

Farm Bill Side-By-Side

A Comparative Look at Approaches by the House and Senate

As the November general election approaches, the countdown is on with only 13 days both chambers of Congress are in session to reconcile the distinct farm bill proposals from the House and Senate. National Sorghum Producers, and the agricultural community at large, remains vigilant, stressing the necessity of a robust framework to ensure continued support. Differences in safety nets, conservation efforts and crop insurance between the proposals highlight the urgency and complexity of reaching a compromise that secures the economic stability and prosperity of farm country. Here's a look at the proposals as they currently stand at the end of July headed into August Recess.

HOUSE

Chairman Thompson's Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024

Passed through committee via a bipartisan vote on May 23, 2024



SENATE

Chairwoman Stabenow's Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act of 2024

Released on May 1, 2024



SENATE

Ranking Member Boozman's Farm Bill Framework

Released on June 11, 2024



Included in All Three

- Doubled MAP/FMD funding
- Voluntary base acre update
- Authorization for biofuel orphan programs
- Increased support for beginning farmers and ranchers

Points of Contention:

- Climate guardrails in Conservation Title/IRA funds
- Use of CCC dollars - who has the authority under Section 5
- SNAP payment error rates and cuts to the Thrifty Food Plan
- The timeline forward is tricky given election timelines, appropriation schedules and differences between the Senate, House and partisan politics

In Numbers

\$1.5 trillion legislative package

Conceptual - no score yet

Safety Net

- Commodities receive increases to statutory reference price calculated by increases in cost of production
- Agriculture Risk Coverage level increased to 90% and the maximum payment rate is increased to 12.5%
- Sorghum's proposed statutory reference price is \$4.40, an 11% increase from current
- The marketing assistance loan for sorghum is increased by \$0.12
- 40% increase in the likelihood of receiving assistance through ARC or PLC, national increase in average net indemnity by over 20%

- Effective reference price calculation changed to simple 5-year average
- Only provides increase for some commodity statutory reference prices (Sorghum does not appear to be one of these commodities)
- PLC payments may not exceed 20% of the effective reference price
- Introduces a 110% escalator based on cost of production for marketing assistance loans
- Restricts commodity payments for entities with an Adjusted Gross Income exceeding \$700,000
- Agriculture Risk Coverage coverage level increased to 88% (These policy changes are estimated to result in loss for sorghum)

- Average increase of 15% to statutory reference price
- Effective reference price calculation changed to 88% of 5-year olympic average and escalator increased to 120%
- Increased coverage level under Agriculture Risk Coverage

Conservation

Reallocates Inflation Reduction Act dollars, without climate guardrails, into Title II, Conservation. This investment builds into the 10-year baseline, which will ultimately increase funding for future farm bills

Reallocates Inflation Reduction Act dollars, without climate guardrails, into Title II, Conservation. This investment builds into the 10-year baseline, which will ultimately increase funding for future farm bills

- 25% increase in funding for conservation programs
- Reallocated Inflation Reduction Act dollars in the Conservation Title without climate guardrails

Crop Insurance

Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) coverage level increased to 90% and premium subsidy increased to 80%

Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) coverage level increased to 88% and premium subsidy increased to 80%

- Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) coverage level increased to 90%
- Increased premium support for crop insurance at the 70% and 85% coverage levels

Points of Concern

There is a disagreement with the Congressional Budget office on the scoring of policy changes in the House Farm Bill. The House Ag Committee had calculated \$50 billion in savings through the reallocation of Commodity Credit Corporation dollars, while the CBO scored these savings at \$12 billion, resulting in a \$38 billion disparity

Estimates show Stabenow's bill could reduce the safety net for crops across the High Plains. Sorghum is estimated to lose 10% to the baseline over a 10-year period

take action.



Counting Crops and Counting on Data: Why NASS Surveys Matter

By Sydney Lundberg

National Sorghum Producers hosted the USDA National Statistics Agriculture Service (NASS) staff this summer in the Texas Coastal Bend for an in-depth look at sorghum harvest and continue conversations regarding NASS data.

NSP initially engaged with NASS in the early fall of 2023 after discovering significant discrepancies in the reported price of sorghum. Over the past year, NSP has worked in coordination with NASS to not only resolve the immediate issue, but, more importantly, to unearth the root cause and ensure accurate price reporting moving forward.

Why NASS Data Is Important

The reports produced by NASS influence the values used in publications by other government agencies, both within and outside of USDA. As increased cost of production and the farm safety net have been at the forefront of farm bill discussions this year, NASS price data has had significant policy implications.

It is used in production cost estimates developed by the Economic Research Service (ERS), calculating the cost of policy changes by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and, specifically for sorghum, NASS price data is used in the price election methodology, which is in turn used to set reference prices for the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) commodity programs.

Each of these play a significant role in determining the changes that will or will not be made to Title I in the coming farm bill; therefore, accurate data is vital to effectively

demonstrate the urgent need for an increased safety net for farmers.

NASS Visits Texas Coastal Bend

In June, Wil Hundle, NASS Regional Director, and Troy Joshua, NASS Statistics Division Director, joined NSP staff in the Corpus Christi area for a two-day harvest tour. Over the course of the visit, the group was joined by NSP board directors Scott Frazier and Danny Beyer to tour grain elevators, on-farm storage facilities and the Port of Corpus Christi.

This combination of sites provided an invaluable first-hand opportunity for NASS staff to see and experience the impressive hustle of South Texas sorghum harvest and interact with growers, elevator managers, grain merchandisers and port superintendents.

Each individual of the group met with briefed NASS staff on the volume and rapidly shortening timeline of harvest throughout the region. As the visit progressed, it became increasingly apparent that consolidation of the agricultural industry coupled with technological advancements is resulting in more and more sorghum being transported directly from the field to the port, foregoing elevators and impacting NASS price data collection. Driving past a mile and a half long line of trucks waiting to offload sorghum at the Port of Corpus was an



impactful experience for the group, learning the grain would be loaded directly onto the second of seven ships this season destined for export to China.

Producer Attitude Toward NASS Surveys

Overwhelmingly, the individual producers who spoke with NASS expressed reluctance to share their personal data. Discussions centered on hesitation to share data other USDA agencies already had, the inconvenience of surveys, inaccuracies in reported data and, most commonly occurring, the lack of value sensed by growers in completing them.

The first core value of NASS is trust. The agency holds firm to this pillar and protects the data it has been entrusted with as well as the privacy of the individual or business which reports the data. This is not only important to NASS staff, but further it is enforced by law. NASS is subject to the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act, which ensures that data collected for statistical purposes may not be used to identify individuals or businesses.

Although this summer's in-person experience with NASS will lead to improved data collection and reporting for sorghum, the data the agency is able to provide is only as accurate as the data it receives. While they can be cumbersome, the surveys sent out by NASS can be a valuable tool. The information is used to produce various reports, which ultimately impact the outcome of policy. Additionally, NASS reports are available to the public and may be used as a tool by growers to influence grain marketing, planting decisions, cost of production estimates and future financial investment decisions.

When accurate data is provided, value-added impacts to the industry and your operation can result. Look for a second installment of analysis into NASS, data collection and data use in the next issue of *Sorghum Grower* this fall.✍

Understanding the Corporate Transparency Act: What Farms and Agribusiness Need to Know

By Greg Ruehle

The Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) was enacted into law in 2021 with reporting set to begin this year. The CTA requires businesses registered in the United States to report information on those individuals who benefit from the business as owners and investors. For farmers and agribusinesses, this means increased transparency in ownership and control, impacting the way you manage and report your business operations, or you could face a fine.

In order to achieve the objectives of the CTA, the Department of Treasury, which provides oversight through the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), will provide financial institutions, law enforcement agencies and other authorized users conditional access to a directory of data containing information on who either owns a business or holds an equity interest.

More Main Street than Wall Street

The CTA focuses on businesses with fewer than 20 full-time employees, \$5 million or less in gross receipts or sales and an operating presence in the United States. Corporations, partnerships and other business entities, estimated to total at least 32 million, that are not considered exempt, must seek an exception or file a beneficial ownership interest (BOI) form by Jan. 1, 2025, or face civil penalties (up to \$500/day) and criminal penalties (up to two years imprisonment).

Under the CTA, a beneficial owner is defined as an individual who either holds significant control over a company or possesses 25% or more of the company's ownership interests. There are 23 types of entities exempt from the BOI reporting requirements. These entities include publicly traded companies meeting specified require-

ments, many nonprofits and certain large operating companies. For a full list of exempt entities, visit www.fincen.gov/boi-faqs.

Why This Matters for Farmers and Agribusinesses

Farmers and agribusinesses need to be aware of the CTA, especially those structured as LLCs, corporations or limited partnerships, as they may fall under the CTA's reporting requirements. Understanding and complying with these regulations is crucial to avoid significant penalties.

Farm operations often involve complex ownership structures with multiple family members holding various stakes in the business. The CTA's requirements mean that every individual who benefits from the farm must be reported, ensuring transparency in ownership and control.

Deadlines and Penalties

Unless you have filed for an exemption, the initial report is due Jan. 1, 2025. New entities formed during 2024 must report within 90 days of being organized. New entities starting in 2025 and forward must report within 30 calendar days of their formation. Any updates to the BOI report must be made within 30 calendar days of the change in information submitted.

Understanding the CTA and its implications is essential. Staying informed and compliant will help ensure your business operates smoothly within the law. For specific questions related to the CTA, it is recommended to contact your Secretary of State office.✍

Combating Drought with Innovation: NSP Vice Chair Amy France Testifies

By Jennifer Warren

Amy France, Vice Chair of the National Sorghum Producers, testified in June at the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,

and Forestry's Republican Subcommittee on Conservation, Climate, Forestry, and Natural Resources. The hearing, "Hearing on the High Plains: Combatting Drought with Innovation," addressed innovative solutions to drought challenges.



France stressed the critical need for a stable water supply, highlighting the importance of adapting new technologies, improving practices and policies, and utilizing drought-resistant crops like sorghum. She said, "The agriculture sector has put great time and effort into keeping pace with technological advances and other conservation efforts in response to both market and environmental demands. As a farmer on the High Plains, my vision is to make agriculture more sustainable so that future generations can have the same opportunities we have today." Read or watch her full testimony at agriculture.senate.gov/hearings.

National Sorghum Producers Honors Michael Lenz And Larry Richardson With Outstanding Achievement In Sorghum Improvement Awards

By Jennifer Warren

National Sorghum Producers presented Michael Lenz and Larry Richardson with awards for Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement at the Sorghum Improvement Conference of North

America in April. These awards, presented at the biennial gathering of the U.S. sorghum research community, acknowledge and honor their exemplary service and achievements in the sorghum industry.

Lenz's career began following his graduation from Iowa State University in 1980, leading him to significant roles at several prominent companies in the sorghum industry. His innovative breeding strategies have significantly shaped the sorghum landscape, addressing critical issues such as greenbug biotypes and ergot. His work has led to the release of over 50 commercial hybrids under 25 unique sorghum brands, making a substantial impact on the U.S. sorghum industry.

"Not only can we contribute the release of many new commercial hybrids to Mike Lenz and his work with sorghum," NSP CEO Tim Lust said, "but he also led the development of molecular markers for downy mildew resistance and eliminating tall off-types in sorghum fields, which have set new standards for crop uniformity and disease resistance."

The second award recipient, Larry Richardson, has dedicated his career to advancing the sorghum seed industry through his leadership at Richardson Seeds. Since his start in 1981, Richardson has steered the company to become a frontrunner in producing food-grade and ultra-short grain sorghum varieties. Richardson Seed was also one of the first companies to commer-

cialize and promote BMR sorghum for silage as well as the grazing and hay markets.

"Richardson's commitment extends beyond his company and work with the seed industry," Lust said. "He has been a fervent leader through many organizations, including the NSP board of directors, and his integrity and proactive leadership continue to influence industry standards and practices, earning him widespread respect and admiration across the sorghum industry."

The award for Outstanding Achievement in Sorghum Improvement was first presented in 1961. Recipients include, among others, the forefathers of the modern



Michael Lenz

Larry Richardson

hybrid sorghum industry. As of today, more than 60 individuals have received this award. Visit SorghumGrowers.com/recognition to view past award recipients.

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From the Field

Growers Advised to Monitor and Take Preventative Measures Against Heightened Chinch Bug Activity

By Brent Bean, Ph.D., Sorghum Checkoff Agronomy Director

Chinch bugs are not a new pest in sorghum, but for reasons that are not well understood yet, they have been an issue for some Kansas and Oklahoma growers the last few years—especially the last two years. The area of concern is primarily south central Kansas and northwest Oklahoma.

Lifecycle and Migration. Chinch bugs feed on a wide range of grass species but primarily become a problem in sorghum when they overwinter in wheat. The first generation of chinch bugs begin developing in wheat in the spring. Once the wheat dries down for harvest, the chinch bugs migrate to nearby recently planted sorghum. Usually the infestation level is confined to the edge of the sorghum field closest to the wheat; however, many growers have reported their entire fields being infested. This is particularly true in double cropped sorghum planted soon after wheat harvest.

Damage and Symptoms. Chinch bugs damage sorghum by sucking juices at the root zone just below the soil surface or behind the leaf sheath. In addition, they secrete digestive enzymes that damage the surrounding tissue. This damage then opens up the tissue to diseases and other insects. Symptoms of injury will include yellow leaves and leaf sheaths and potentially stunted and wilted plants. Symptoms will be more pronounced under drought stressed conditions. Small plants can be completely killed requiring replanting.

Preventative Measures. The first line of defense is to plant insecticide-treated seed. Gaucho® (imidacloprid), Poncho® (clothianidin) and Cruiser® (thiamethoxam) are all effective seed treatments that should provide three weeks of control. In a few situations, the chinch bug population may overwhelm the seed treatment and still be a problem, but seed treatments should help.

Treatment Recommendations. Treatment thresholds will vary with plant size, but the most common recommendation for seedlings less than six inches is two or more chinch bugs on 20% of the plants. In addition to the leaf blade, look under the leaf sheath to find chinch bugs and on and just below the soil surface. These pop-

ulations may eventually crash, or, in some cases, persist and produce a second generation that reaches an infestation level high enough to affect the sorghum later in the season. At this time we do not have a reliable threshold for chinch bugs on more mature sorghum.

Ongoing Research. The United Sorghum Checkoff Program is sponsoring trials with Kansas State University scientists to screen hybrids and lines for chinch bug tolerance as well as screening insecticides for their effectiveness on this pest. These results will be passed on to growers as soon as they are available.



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Exploring the Sorghum Culinary World with Chef Chase Obenchain

Chef Chase with Jennifer Warren

Can you share a bit about your culinary background and how your passion for sorghum developed?

I always say I'm a practically trained savory chef, a classically trained pastry chef, and I have a degree in culinary science. Essentially, that is to say, I learned to cook on my own or in restaurants and kitchens throughout my career, I trained under some of the foremost pastry chefs in the world in Baking in Pastry Arts at the Culinary Institute of America where I also received my degree in Culinary Science, which is a lot like food science, but rather than working in labs, we worked in kitchens.

I grew up in a small town just outside of Greensboro, North Carolina, and that is where I learned how to cook. Greensboro, much like the rest of North Carolina, is rooted in farming, so I was no stranger to fresh produce and farmer's markets. My parents separated at a young age, and I was often home alone and needed to learn how to fend for myself since my father worked long hours and I wanted to be able to give him something to eat when he got home.

I learned how to cook out of necessity to feed myself and support my dad.

It wasn't until high school that I realized cooking was something I truly loved, enjoyed and wanted to pursue in life. At that time, I started spending more time at the local farmer's markets, trying new produce, and testing new ingredients I had never tried before. That's where I found sorghum. But rather than grain sorghum, I found sorghum syrup from local farms in my area of North Carolina.

I was immediately fascinated by its distinct, tangy flavor and similarity to molasses without the bitterness. I started using it on everything from glazing meats and vegetables to topping biscuits, even sweetening my tea. I enjoyed it so much that I always had a jar in my house, and, eventually, when I went to college, I always had a jar in my dorm. When I went to Culinary School, I brought my fascination for sorghum with me. I taught myself how to use it as a flour in gluten-free baking and later did one of my final projects in my baking degree around ingredients that remind me of home, which for me was a roasted black walnut mousse with a sorghum syrup glaze, peach compote, gluten-free sorghum cake, and candied black walnuts.

For me, sorghum has always felt like the ingredient that communicated my identity as a chef, and celebrated my past, my community and the hard-working people that I love. Throughout the last seven years of my career, I've worked to build awareness and knowledge around sorghum before it was ever even my job to do so. During my time as the Innovation Chef at Campbell's Soup, I led projects testing the resiliency and functionality of grains in retort pressure cooking. During my time as a corporate chef for Dole, I developed numerous menu concepts that leveraged sorghum as a key ingredient for some of the largest foodservice operations in America.

Sorghum is an ingredient I feel not enough people know about, an ingredient that has too much value and versatility to continue to go underutilized. I couldn't be more honored to have the opportunity to represent the hard-working sorghum farmers of America and want them to know that they have someone that loves sorghum as much as they do helping spread the word.

As the inaugural Corporate Chef Consultant for the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, what are your primary goals and objectives?

Well, first and foremost, my goal is to set a strong and sturdy foundation for the future of sorghum as it pertains to cooking and implementation in foodservice and retail products. That foundation setting comes in many forms, from developing standardized recipe formats to highlighting and refining versatile cooking applications for sorghum in its many forms to the development of tailored baking blends for sorghum flour.

To boil down my goals into something tangible, my primary goal is to build out a robust culinary portfolio that easily communicates the depth of functionality of sorghum

and empowers chefs and consumers alike to use it—no matter their background, comfort with cooking or diet.

What do you perceive as the biggest challenges and opportunities for sorghum in the culinary industry?

The biggest challenge is also the biggest opportunity at the same time. As it stands, there is a lack of name recognition with sorghum. I am always talking to chefs from all parts of the food and beverage industry, and one of the biggest takeaways I've found is many chefs just haven't heard of sorghum.

Once chefs hear about its uses and functionality, they're always interested and want to know a bit more. Many want to test it, work with it and eat it. Chefs are a naturally curious bunch, so this naturally leads to a lot of great conversation around how sorghum can be used and how different chefs might look to menu it.

To sum it up, our biggest challenge is also our greatest advantage, people don't know about sorghum and it makes it feel new and exciting. This also allows us to build messaging and position sorghum however we want, rather than having to break preconceived notions on how to use it or challenge any established consumer understanding of sorghum.

How do you envision integrating sorghum, both in foodservice and home cooking?

Something I have said since beginning this role, "sorghum is so versatile in culinary application, I want to make it feel more difficult not to use it." Sorghum as a whole grain is extremely user friendly, easy to cook and difficult to overcook, making it a perfect fit for home cooks and foodservice operations alike. This makes it perfect for consumer's or operators with little cooking experience to instantly pick up sorghum and use it without any need to fear mushy grains or burnt pans, which is all too common with more ubiquitous grains like rice.

A culinary functionality that I think is currently underutilized is sorghum's use in breading and frying. Whole grain sorghum flour can be used in place of or in conjunction with traditional wheat flour in breading and frying. Sorghum flour not only makes fried foods crunchier, but it can also extend the hold time of fried foods without the breading getting soggy or falling apart. It even works great in traditional beer batter and tempura applications.

I could go on and on about sorghum, but really, I don't want people to feel like sorghum is something that they are switching out another grain for because they can. Sorghum is distinctly more flavorful, easier to use, more nutrient dense and often creates a more delicious product than recipes that don't use it. Sorghum is not a swap-it-in ingredient. It is an ingredient so functional and delicious chefs should be using it just to make better food.

Are there any specific partnerships or collaborations you're excited about in your new role, and how do you plan to leverage these to promote sorghum?

One partnership that I am extremely excited for and passionate about is the Sorghum Checkoff's partnership with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever. I'm an avid birdwatcher and extremely passionate about American wildlife, specifically game birds. Populations of quail and pheasants have dropped drastically across America in the last 30 years and the ability to work with the Checkoff to support the growth of more sorghum as a habitat for these iconic species that define American bird hunting is massively exciting to me.

I'd love to be able to host dinners to showcase the use and flavor of both pheasants and quail as well as sorghum. There is an old saying amongst chefs, "What grows together, goes together" this would be a perfect forum for showcasing that.

Something else that I think could be impactful would be to host corporate chefs from across Food Service and Consumer Packaged Goods to Kansas and experience what it's like to walk along the sorghum fields and potentially even host a hunting outing. So many chefs across America are just as passionate as me about knowing where your food comes from and celebrating the great country that we live in. I know we could make a massive impact from just getting more people out to meet the farmers, see the fields and understand the ecological impact that goes into growing sorghum.

Could you share a sneak peek of any innovative sorghum recipes you're currently working on or planning to develop?

I'm always working on and thinking about new applications and recipes showcasing sorghum's functionality, so this is harder for me to narrow down a favorite. My current focus however is building out a globally inspired recipe database to show how sorghum is currently eaten or could be applied to cuisines from across the globe. I'm only at the onset of the project, but I've got a lot of delicious results and recipes on the way from savory to sweet in both food and beverage. One of the first recipes that I've had a great time developing and testing is a new sorghum-centric take on the Cajun classic, Gumbo. Which is a hearty and spicy stew with sausage, shrimp, vegetables and of course sorghum. It comes together in a beautiful way. It's rich, meaty, savory and perfect for a cool day. Another personal favorite I recently completed is a twist on a traditional Japanese green tea called Genmaicha, which is a blend of steamed green tea leaves and toasted brown rice. Mine however, of course, removes the rice and utilizes toasted whole grain sorghum. It's the perfect tea for an early morning or cool evening with both the flavor

of green tea and a really comforting grainy flavor from the toasted sorghum that makes it feel more substantial, roasty and nutty in a way that is extremely satisfying.

I've got plenty more recipes coming to showcase French pastry, South American cuisines, tortilla and taco applications, Asian dishes and stir-fries—you name it! Keep an eye out for updates, because you won't want to miss what we've been working on.

What message or advice would you like to share with sorghum farmers about the impact of having a dedicated chef promoting their crop?

I want the farmers to know that not only do they have a chef that is dedicated to spreading the word on sorghum, but they have a chef who is deeply passionate about American agriculture, farming and rural communities leading the charge.

Sure, I can say that I'm building applications for sorghum, talking to chefs daily about its uses, benefits and ability to strengthen their companies at a global scale. I can say I'm advocating sorghum's use as a solution to the largest companies in America, but I don't think that means anything if they don't know that I have their best interest at heart. I want the farmers to know that I come from a community and background rooted in close relationships with farmers and understand the hard work that they do every single day to even get their crops to the point where I can work with it and use it in my recipes.

My lasting message would be this, farmers are the hardest working people in America, and I do not take lightly the responsibility placed on me to represent their tireless work. I will do everything I can every single day to justify my position as a voice for their work and champion the application of the crop that we all love on menus and in products across America.

Hungry for more?

Chef Chase answered more of our questions! Read them online at SorghumGrowers.com/magazine



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Stewarding Water *Wisely*

By Jennifer Warren



Photo provided by Dragon-Line

In arid southwest Kansas, water is not just a resource; it is the lifeblood that sustains agriculture and livelihoods. The precious commodity can make or break a farmer's success, determining the viability of crops and the future of farming communities.

Brant Peterson, a fifth generation farmer from Johnson, Kansas, understands this better than most. By implementing Dragon-Line, a mobile drip irrigation (MDI) technology, on his farm in this water-stressed region, he decreased water use by 15%—an approach that not only conserves the vital Ogallala Aquifer but also ensures a sustainable future for his land and his family.

The Ogallala Aquifer encompasses 174,000 square miles, supporting one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country. While Peterson already switched many of his acres to less water-intensive crops, like sorghum, converting traditional center pivot irrigation technology to MDI was a strategic investment that is paying off.

"After considering the feasibility of Dragon-Line versus the cost, I ultimately decided to switch because I was

convinced that I would be more efficient and save water," Peterson said. "If those two things proved [to be] true, then the money would take care of itself."

How MDI Works

Dragon-Line is an innovative MDI system that marries the efficiency of traditional drip irrigation with the flexibility and cost-effectiveness of mechanized systems like center pivots and lateral moves. The system features emitter tubing attached to flexible hosing that drags along the soil surface, delivering water directly to the crop root zone.

Each tube has its own emitter that is pressure compensating and self-flushing, and the length of tubing controls total flow, ensuring the same amount of water is emitted on every inch of the field whether at the tower or at the end of the pivot system. This approach drastically reduces water loss due to evaporation and wind drift while preventing soil compaction, resulting in more efficient water usage.

"On accident, you're going to see 15% of your savings," Peterson said. "If you really work at it, you'll get

20, 25 and even up to 30[%], depending on how efficient you are."

Reduction in evaporation loss is significant with MDI. A study conducted by Kansas State University in Garden City, Kansas, showed a 35% difference in soil water evaporation before the canopy closes compared to in-canopy spray nozzle systems.

Besides immediate savings in water usage, Peterson is also experiencing more uniform stands and positive yield trends, highlighting the efficiency of his new irrigation system across every acre of the field.

When many farmers across the High Plains struggled with drought conditions during the 2022 growing season, Peterson's fields told a different story.

"Before I could ask my aerial applicator how a field looked, a text came in saying, 'before you ask, I want to tell you that is one of the three most uniform fields I've flown all year, anywhere,'" Peterson said, shocked at the pilot's conjecture.

Presenting his success with MDI that year to his local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS),

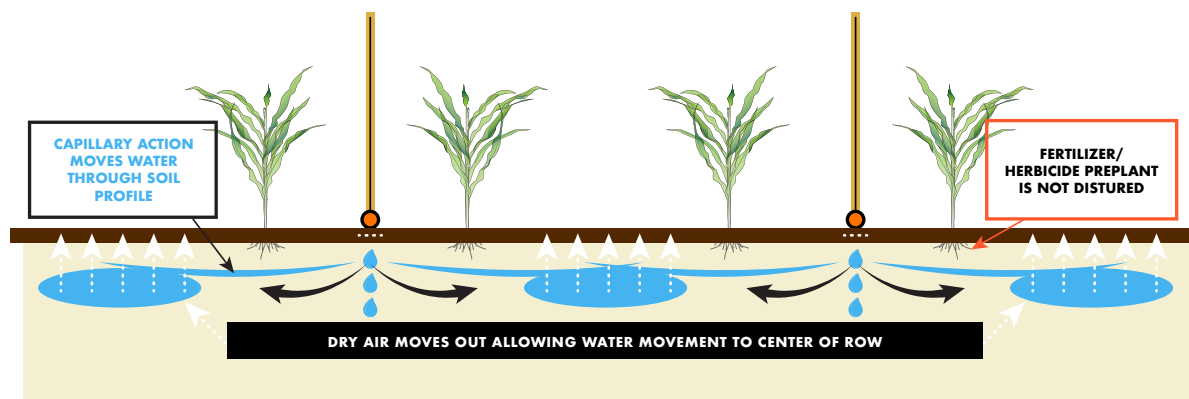
Peterson modestly boasted a 165 bushels per acre corn yield to which the group insisted was a very impressive yield given the drouthy conditions and the fact he was pumping 175 gallons per minute on 62 acres with wheat on the other half of the circle. The 2022 season was also the same year Peterson's sorghum crop, also under MDI, won top honors in the National Sorghum Yield Contest as the Bin Buster Champion with 245.8 bushels per acre.

Capillary Action

One key finding that demonstrates Dragon-Line's water-use efficiency compared to conventional irrigation is the way water is allowed to penetrate the soil and move along the subsurface toward the center of the row, displacing dry air. This is known as capillary action.

In a conventional irrigation system, water melts and separates soil in a 3-5 inch depth of application, trapping dry air into the soil, and, until the air moves out, water will not soak in, resulting in sealing and compaction when water is applied.

▶ DRAGON-LINE'S mobile drip irrigation system leverages soil capillary action, displacing dry air to ensure water efficiently reaches the root systems at the center of each row. This method effectively hydrates plants without disrupting the nutrients already applied to the soil.



"My findings show Dragon-Line is 95% as efficient as subsurface drip," Peterson said. "The capillary action is what makes this work that well."

Subsurface moisture is more uniform on Peterson's fields using Dragon-Line, a notable change from patches that were once dry, hard or underperforming.

"Each agronomist has told me when they go to probe the field in the spring for pre-water, that it's the most uniform field they probe," he said.

Other benefits Peterson sees with Dragon-Line include elimination of wheel line issues, applied nutrients stay with the plant instead of leaching and keeping foliar dry reduces insect and disease pressure.

There are challenges. Peterson said his most common issue is a build up of iron bacteria that is in the water, which can collect in the emitters in the drip line, reducing flow. He manages this issue with a small, slow chlorine pump to kill the bacteria.

"If you try to manage it from the road like you do your sprinklers, you cannot assume your pressure is good and your gallons are right," he said, "because you cannot see it or see that the nozzles are not plugged. It's different."

An Ambassador for the Technology

The success Peterson is experiencing with Dragon-Line has turned him into an ambassador for the technology, recently completing a trip to Egypt where he met with a 26,000-acre irrigated farm to help properly calibrate their technology, report findings from his farm and field questions. Dragon-Line, invented in Ulysses, Kansas, is now being used in more than 22 states and 20 countries.

At the end of June, Peterson was featured on PBS NewsHour, a nightly hour-long television broadcast that shed light on the dwindling Ogallala Aquifer and steps area producers are taking to mitigate its decline. In addition to highlighting efforts to plant less water thirsty crops like sorghum, he also shed light on irrigation efficiency and good stewardship.

At \$250-\$350 per acre, depending on system needs for filtration and other options, and the ability to withstand 10-12 years of wear, the MDI system has been a worthwhile investment for Peterson and his bottom line—and

he has plans for expansion. Peterson also emphasized the importance of thinking about downstream markets and consumer demand.

"How can I capitalize on this?" he asks, highlighting the growing consumer interest in sustainably grown products that reduce water use. By adopting MDI technology, Peterson is not only conserving water and enhancing his farm's productivity but also positioning himself to meet the increasing demand for environmentally friendly agricultural practices—a forward-thinking approach that ensures his farm remains competitive and sustainable for future generations.✍



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Supreme Court's Loper Decision a Mixed Bag for Agriculture... But Mainly Good

By Jeff Harrison, Combest Sell & Associates

Much has been written on the Supreme Court's decision in the Loper case overturning Chevron. Parochially speaking, is Loper good or bad for U.S. agriculture?

The Chevron Doctrine, established by the Court in 1984, held that if a statute was silent or ambiguous on a question, courts must generally defer to agency interpretation of the statute even if the courts would have interpreted things differently. The courts were to undergo a two-step test under Chevron.

In Step 1, the court was to ask whether Congress spoke on the issue. If yes, the agency received no deference. But, if no, then the court moved to Step 2. In Step 2, the court was to ask if the agency chose a permissible interpretation? If yes, the court was required to defer to that interpretation. If no, the agency's interpretation was to be rejected.

In a 6-3 decision in June, with Chief Justice Roberts writing for the majority, the Court ruled Chevron violated the Administrative Procedures Act (APA). Although the majority opinion did not rest on these considerations, the Court also discussed whether Chevron violated Article III and separation of powers under the Constitution and noted Chevron represented a marked departure from precedent prior to 1984.

The Court cited the Framers' of the Constitution's understanding of the role of the courts noting, "interpretation of the laws... [is] the proper and peculiar province of the courts" and also the foundational case of *Marbury v. Madison* to re-enforce that, "[it] is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department [i.e., the courts] to say what the law is."

The Court honed in on the APA, enacted in 1946 as a check on regulations, noting the law requires courts, not government agencies, to decide "all relevant questions of law."

The Court further observed that while precedent prior to Chevron had afforded agencies due respect, and even deference regarding questions of fact, questions of law were reserved for courts.

The Court took issue with Chevron wherein ambiguities were to be filled in by agency experts, declaring, "Perhaps most fundamentally, Chevron's presumption is misguided because agencies have no special competence in resolving statutory ambiguities. Courts do."

The dissent, authored by Justice Kagan, noted Chevron had been relied upon for 40 years in "allocating responsibility for statutory construction between courts and agencies" and "who should give content to a statute when Congress' instructions have run out." Conversely, in his opinion concurring with the majority, Justice Thomas wrote Chevron also violates Article III and the separation of powers.

While supporters of Loper are often those concerned about regulations, Chevron's establishment by the Court was actually in deference to a deregulation implemented by President Reagan's Environmental Protection Agency that the Natural Resources Defense Council challenged in Chevron.

However, as government grew, regulations increased (often made possible by the wide berth afforded under broadly written statutes from the 1960s and 1970s), and the views of many political and career appointees shifted, judicial deference to agencies thought once a safe harbor from excessive regulation became a part of the problem.

We've all heard accounts of agencies deliberately writing regulations to expose them to legal challenges. The agencies eagerly waved the white flag. And the regulations that later emerged under consent decrees entered into by agencies and the groups that challenged the initial regulations then received Chevron deference.

With this backdrop, we return to the question: Is Loper good or bad for U.S. agriculture?

With respect to programs designed to assist producers, there could be legal exposure as a result of Loper, though standing requirements are helpful redoubts against this.

But I submit a few other observations: First, programs to help producers should be written with as much specificity as possible, leaving little to agency discretion and, therefore, little opportunity for opponents to sue. Remember, this whole discussion concerns statutes that lack specificity. But, as Kenny Chesney might put it: no silence, no ambiguity, no problem.

I once debated a career employee (an exemplary one, though he has retired) in which I insisted upon absolute specificity in a statute creating a program, and he was adamant such detail was unnecessary. Specificity won the day and the program works.

More recently, I debated the same thing with some key Hill staff (also exemplary) where I was thanked for my counsel but told it would not be heeded. I don't think they objected to greater specificity but others at the decision table did object. Schedule F comparisons, progressive factors and discriminatory policies under ERP 2022 resulted. I'd hasten to add the progressive factor would likely fall under a post-Chevron challenge.

My comments are not meant as a negative reflection of Hill or USDA staff but a recognition, learned often the hard way over 31 years, that there are a lot of cooks in the kitchen that can poison even the best broth, including supercilious political appointees, lawyers and bean counters.

So, if Loper pushes law-makers toward greater specificity in crafting laws agriculture cares about, that's a good thing, despite any caveats,

including that veiled statutes can avoid the disproportionate attentions of bean counters that can border on obsession.

When it is impracticable to include every jot and tittle in statute, there are other means of insulating a regulation from attack, including report language (which can be incorporated by reference in the statute), statutory or report language affirming the agency has generally been properly carrying out the program as Congress intended, and statutory language expressly leaving matters to the Secretary's discretion when Congress means to give the agency greater leeway.

With respect to other regulations, primarily, but not exclusively outside of USDA's jurisdiction, there are instances where the agency got it right and those good regulations could be challenged (I deliberately don't provide examples), much like the EPA regulation that gave rise to the Chevron Doctrine in the first place.

But, judging by my unscientific comparison of the number of negative regulations versus the number of positive regulations affecting agriculture, Loper generally comes as good news as the raft of bad regulations have now lost their sheen and air of invincibility once afforded by Chevron.

To sum up, where agriculture is vulnerable in a post-Chevron world, it redounds to agriculture's benefit to use greater specificity in the law anyway, not just to avoid legal attacks in the wake of Loper but, even more importantly, to ensure benefits intended by law are actually effectuated by regulation. With respect to regulations that are harmful to agriculture, thanks to Loper, the deck is no longer stacked against agriculture in challenging them in court.✍️

“Loper generally comes as good news as the raft of bad regulations have now lost their sheen and air of invincibility once afforded by Chevron.”

Brazilian Agriculture



A Hulk in the Global Market

By Jennifer Warren

Brazilian agriculture is a giant, and it's growing at a surprising rate. Much like the Hulk, it has transformed from a modest figure into a formidable force, flexing its muscles on the global stage.

Recognizing the significance of this transformation, a delegation from the U.S. sorghum industry recently took a trade mission to Brazil to assess the opportunities and

challenges this agricultural behemoth presents to the U.S. sorghum industry.

The Hulk's Rise

In recent years, Brazil has muscled its way to the top ranks in global agriculture. It now stands as the world's largest producer of soybeans, beef production and coffee,

and it has climbed from the tenth to the fourth-largest producer of sorghum—in the last 10 years.

"Brazil is a serious force that is changing international agriculture on an annual basis," National Sorghum Producers CEO Tim Lust, a leading member of the U.S. delegation to Brazil, said.

Recognizing this shift, NSP and Sorghum Checkoff leadership aimed to gather insights into Brazil's growing sorghum market and its broader agricultural landscape—insights essential for assessing the market dynamics and ensuring U.S. sorghum remains competitively positioned on the global stage.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Brazil went from planting 2.1 million acres of sorghum in 2020/2021 to almost 4 million acres in 2023/2024 with in-country projections for almost 6 million acres in the coming growing seasons. Right now, every bushel is used toward domestic livestock feed and fuel production. Brazilian farmers plant similar varieties to those available in the U.S., and the majority is grown as a double crop behind soybeans.

Research and Development: Harnessing the Hulk's Power

One of the U.S. sorghum delegation's primary goals was to explore research and development opportunities. The group met with key stakeholders, including Embrapa, CropLife Brazil and private seed companies. These discussions underscored the critical role of ongoing investment in sorghum research in both the U.S. and Brazil.

"The same companies that do research and development in the United States are also doing R&D in Brazil," Sorghum Checkoff Chairman Kendall Hodgson, a sorghum farmer from Littler River, Kansas, who traveled with the team to Brazil, noted.

This overlap presents a unique opportunity for collaborative research, potentially leading to innovations that benefit both nations and help maintain the global competitiveness of U.S. sorghum.

Ethanol Production: Fueling the Giant

Brazil's grain ethanol industry, now incorporating

"Brazil is a serious force that is changing international agriculture on an annual basis."

sorghum, is another significant area of interest. This development mirrors the U.S. ethanol industry's growth in the early-2000s.

Brazil's greenhouse gas reduction goals are to reduce emissions by 48% by 2025 and 53% by 2030, making ethanol production a critical component of the energy transition process. Providing clean energy from rural areas to urban centers is contributing to an 85% reduction in greenhouses compared to gasoline, according to UNEM, the Brazil Corn Ethanol Association.

Brazil has 22 operating grain ethanol plants currently, with 20 more planned or approved for construction, and sees opportunity to shift a significant portion of its grain sorghum production to domestic ethanol use going forward to help meet the country's climate goals.

Infrastructure: The Hulk's Weakness

Despite its formidable growth, Brazil's agricultural infrastructure faces significant challenges. Roads, railways, ports and grain storage facilities are lacking and overburdened—and they're currently focused on meeting the increasing export and interstate demands for corn, cotton and soybeans. Unable to handle multiple growing commodities, these infrastructure challenges have necessitated that nearly all of the nation's grain sorghum is used domestically.

"The United States is incredibly blessed with the infrastructure we have," NSP Chairman Craig Meeker, a sorghum farmer from Wellington, Kansas, who also took part in the trade mission, highlighted. "This is not something other countries, including Brazil, have at this point in time. Understanding these limitations can help U.S. producers leverage our logistical strengths."

The U.S. sorghum delegation's trip to Brazil underscored a critical reality: global agriculture is in constant flux, and Brazil is a significant player. The mission yielded valuable insights into the country's growing sorghum industry. While Brazil's growth presents challenges, it also offers opportunities for collaboration and mutual benefit.



▲ U.S. SORGHUM DELEGATES (left to right) Tim Lust, Craig Meeker and Sarah Sexton-Bowser visited with Embrapa, CropLife Brazil and private seed companies in Brazil to discuss elevating sorghum research.



NEWSLETTER

sorghumcheckoff.com | Summer Edition 2024

Sorghum Added to WIC Food Package: USCP Celebrates Improved Nutrition Access for Children

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced the finalized updates to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), reflecting dietary and cultural preferences of its participants. Among the notable additions is sorghum, marking a significant milestone in the nutritional landscape for American children and families.

WIC plays a vital role in providing access to nutritious foods for low-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, as well as infants and children up to the age of five. With sorghum now part of the expanded whole grain options on the national list of approved foods, an estimated 6.6 million participants will benefit from this versatile and nutrient-rich grain.

"This expansion will provide mothers and babies with essential nutrients for their growth and development. Sorghum's versatility allows it to be enjoyed in various ways, accommodating food preferences, developmental stages and dietary patterns of mothers and children," Sorghum Checkoff Director of Nutrition & Food Innovation Lanier Dabruzzi, MS, RD, LD, said in a release following the news. "Its inclusion in the expanded whole grain

offerings for the updated WIC food package underscores its importance as a nutrient-rich grain reflective of global foodways enjoyed in kitchens nationwide." Last year, the Sorghum Checkoff submitted formal comments during the Food and Nutrition Service's revision of the food package. This announcement represents the culmination of efforts to promote sorghum as a versatile and nutrient-rich grain suitable for public nutrition programs.

Sorghum, a naturally gluten-free whole grain, is a robust source of nutrition, offering fiber, plant-based protein, and antioxidants. Its recognition as a whole grain option by the WIC program aligns with the Sorghum Checkoff's mission to promote sorghum's nutritional benefits and support its integration into various food programs and initiatives. For additional information, including farm-to-school curriculum and kid-friendly recipes, please visit SorghumCheckoff.com/educators.



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Sorghum Checkoff Directors Join Partners to Increase U.S. Sorghum Market Share in China

The Sorghum Checkoff and U.S. Grains Council (USGC) embarked on a strategic promotional mission to China in June. This initiative aimed to capitalize on the growing demand for sorghum and to present compelling findings from a university study on the quality of U.S. sorghum to potential importers.

Sorghum is the primary ingredient in baijiu, the world's most popular distilled spirit, and is widely enjoyed in China. To boost U.S. sorghum exports and help meet the substantial demand for baijiu, the USGC commissioned a comprehensive report from Jiangnan University on the effectiveness of U.S. sorghum in baijiu production.

"The encouraging findings of this study will be utilized in Council programs to assure Chinese buyers that U.S. sorghum is a high-quality and abundant resource that will excite producers and consumers alike," USGC China Director Manuel Sanchez said. "China is already U.S. agriculture's largest market, but there is room for even higher sales due to the massive demand for sorghum here."

Sorghum Checkoff representatives on the mission included board director Macy Mueller and Past Chairman and USGC Asia Advisory Team (A-Team) Lead Adam Schindler, in addition to USGC Program Manager Ellie Yan and Cargill Sorghum Line Product Manager Kyle Hedrick.

Throughout the week, the group engaged with U.S. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) staff in Guangzhou and Beijing to coordinate strategies for increasing U.S. market share in China. They also met with several major grain import companies to present the study results and open new channels for future U.S. exports.

The team traveled to the Shandong Province, China's largest compound feed-producing region, for the 4th Annual U.S.-China Agriculture Roundtable on June 7. During this event, the USGC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Shandong Provincial Government, committing to continue building bridges between Chinese importers and U.S. producers through more promotional events. Schindler also presented on U.S. agriculture's commitment to sustainable farming practices during the morning session.



United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) Past Chairman and U.S. Grains Council Asia Advisory Team Lead Adam Schindler participated in a discussion on U.S. agriculture's sustainability practices at the fourth annual U.S.-China Agriculture Roundtable in Shandong, China.

The mission concluded with another series of meetings with corn and sorghum processing companies in Shandong. These discussions aimed to understand their specific needs for U.S. products and how the USGC and Sorghum Checkoff can facilitate future purchases.

"This mission was outstanding because it allowed the Council to engage with a wide range of stakeholders in the export chain, from promotional planning partners at ATO offices to importers and end-users," Sanchez said. "Having representatives from USCP and Cargill with us provided valuable insights on growing and logistical outlooks to buyers. This mission strengthened our understanding of market demands and how U.S. producers can meet them effectively."

The collaboration between the Sorghum Checkoff and USGC during this mission highlights a concerted effort to enhance the global reach of U.S. sorghum, ensuring its place in the competitive and demanding China market.

Sorghum Checkoff Unveils 5-Year Strategic Plan

The Sorghum Checkoff recently unveiled its updated 5-Year Strategic Plan, which received the green light from the Board of Directors at the 2023 December Annual Meeting. The producer-led board embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to drive growth, foster innovation and cultivate leadership within the sorghum industry, positioning it for long-term success. "I am excited to see the culmination of our efforts in the release of the Sorghum Checkoff 5-Year plan," said newly elected Sorghum Checkoff Chairman Kendall Hodgson, a sorghum producer from Littler River, Kansas. "This plan not only charts a course for our organization's growth and development but also underscores our commitment to sustainable agriculture and food security. It's a testament to our collective vision and dedication to fostering innovation and resilience in the sorghum industry."

The Strategic Pillars: Building a Future for Sorghum

The strategic plan is anchored in three core pillars, each targeting critical facets of the sorghum industry's progression and enhancement:

PREMIUM: Streamlining Sorghum Logistics through Direct Market Deployment

The Sorghum Checkoff is committed to advancing the premium quality and accessibility of sorghum by innovating logistics solutions. By deploying direct markets, the program aims to streamline distribution channels, ensuring that sorghum reaches consumers efficiently without compromising its exceptional quality.

PRODUCTION: Technology-Driven Growth for Profitability

Central to the Sorghum Checkoff's vision is the incorporation of cutting-edge technology to stimulate growth and profitability in the sorghum industry. These technology-driven initiatives aim to empower producers with the tools and resources necessary to optimize production processes, increase yield and maximize profitability, thereby equipping sorghum producers to overcome challenges and seize new opportunities in the evolving agricultural landscape.

PERCEPTION: Boosting Awareness and Bridging the Value Chain

The Sorghum Checkoff acknowledges the cru-

cial role of perception in the future of sorghum. To enhance awareness and bridge the value chain, the program is dedicated to initiatives that underscore the inherent value of sorghum. By promoting its diverse applications and nutritional benefits, the Sorghum Checkoff aims to foster greater appreciation for this versatile crop among consumers, policymakers and industry stakeholders. Additionally, by bridging the value chain, the Sorghum Checkoff seeks to strengthen connections between producers, processors and end-users, creating a more cohesive and resilient sorghum industry.

Strategic Objectives: Prioritizing Growth and Sustainability

The development of these three core pillars is instrumental to the 5-Year Strategic Plan, bringing multiple benefits to the Sorghum Checkoff:

Empower Producers for Profitability: Maximize potential profitability for producers by educating them on sustainable practices and solutions to production challenges.

Innovative Sorghum Logistics Solutions: Address transportation and logistical challenges with innovative approaches to improve market infrastructure, benefiting producers and delivering preferred qualities and quantities to customers.

Drive Awareness of Sorghum's Value: Enhance recognition of U.S. sorghum's value among all customers and communicate its role as a vital component in sustainable farming systems.

Technology-Driven Growth: Boost productivity by identifying and promoting new technologies through research, education and shared expertise.

Deploy Direct Markets: Develop mechanisms for U.S. sorghum producers to capture the potential value of direct market sales, providing essential information on market opportunities and risk management tools.

Bridge the Value Chain: Establish and lead an industry-wide structure to facilitate timely and credible communication among value-chain segments, fostering opportunities and building trust.

Learn more about the comprehensive roadmap to the Sorghum Checkoff's 5-Year Strategic Plan at SorghumCheckoff.com.

U.S. Soybeans and Sorghum as Key Partners in Poultry Nutrition Webinar

The Sorghum Checkoff, in partnership with the U.S. Soybean Export Council Americas Team, hosted a webinar on June 19, 2024, titled "U.S. Soybeans and Sorghum as Key Partners in Poultry Nutrition." The event aimed to explore how U.S. sorghum can effectively complement U.S. soy in animal diets, particularly for poultry.

This unique opportunity provided valuable insights from international experts in the poultry industry to a targeted audience of junior-level animal nutritionists, feed formulators, feed mill management, live production operators and veterinarians from 11 countries. The countries included: Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, México, Nigeria, Venezuela and the United States.

Presented in Spanish with live translation to English, the webinar attracted a broad audience, drawing more than 110 live viewers from 11 countries.

"The positive response to this webinar highlights the potential of U.S. sorghum as a sustainable energy source and functional feed ingredient in poultry diets and the importance of fostering international market relationships," Sorghum Checkoff Director of Feed Ingredient Utilization Brent Crafton said. "By collaborating with the U.S. Soybean Export Council Americas Team, we have successfully

demonstrated the benefits of integrating U.S. sorghum and U.S. soy into poultry nutrition programs throughout Latin America."

For those interested in viewing the recorded webinar, it is available at SorghumCheckoff.com or you can scan the QR code.

For more information about the benefits of sorghum in animal nutrition visit, SorghumCheckoff.com/industry/livestock-feed.



SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

August 13 Sorghum U / Wheat U
Wichita, Kansas

September 13 Leadership Sorghum Application Deadline
Close of business (5:00 pm CST)

October 7-9 Export Exchange
Fort Worth, Texas

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

Kansas Sorghum Leaders Seek Sustainable Water Solutions

By Maddy Meier

As Kansas and its communities seek to recover from one of the worst droughts on record for the High Plains in 2022, ongoing challenges to conserve and extend the High Plains Aquifer persist. Sorghum growers in our state are on the leading edge to seek solutions to enable a sustainable water supply throughout the region for generations to come. Our industry rightly believes water is a key component of future sustainability solutions and grower-leaders in Kansas are investing in promising outcomes through innovative research designed to capitalize on sorghum's natural water-saving traits. Many of these solutions have tied into projects the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission has developed this year alone.

A key focus for one of these projects is livestock-centered and aims to add value for sorghum production through ruminant digestive efficiencies in feed rations for grain sorghum and sorghum distiller grain solubles. Earlier this summer, Earl Roemer, President of Pyramid Feeds in Scott City, Kansas, joined me on a special edition deep dive episode of the Sorghum State Podcast to discuss this project funded by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and other partners in greater detail and its important to water conservation in Western Kansas.

"We raise sorghum in these arid regions because it's a risk management tool," Roemer explained. "From a production standpoint, it is tremendously important for us to expand the utilization of grain sorghum in our rotations to reduce the volume of water pumped from the Ogallala Aquifer."

By capitalizing on sorghum's natural drought tolerance and investing in research on its use as livestock feed as just one of many utilizations. While sorghum maintains a smaller footprint nationally compared to other crops, half of all U.S. sorghum production occurs right here in Kansas—the Sorghum State. Kansas growers look to sorghum in their crop rotation systems because crop choice is key to sustaining crop productivity under water stress.

In fact, according to environmental reports from the United Sorghum Checkoff Program in Kansas from 2020-2022, 91 percent of sorghum acres are solely dry-land, which results in 1.8 trillion gallons of irrigation water savings per year. Concurrently with new irrigation technology and voluntary

conservation methods, sorghum performs are key task of pushing water savings further, as detailed by the Commission's Chairman, Brant Peterson, on a recent report from the PBS NewsHour in July. As continued investment into developing high-impact and water-sipping traits in sorghum continues, the future is bright for our crop as a key tool for farmer flexibility and economic vitality for Kansas communities for decades to come.

Kansas sorghum producers made their voices heard at Local Consult Meetings hosted by the Kansas Water Authority. Team Sorghum members actively participated in strategically located sessions throughout the second half of June. The focus of these meetings was the implementation of the state's crucial 2022 Water Plan. Attendees gained a comprehensive understanding of the funding allocation process, with a specific breakdown for key water initiatives. These initiatives include vital measures like conserving the backbone of Kansas agriculture, the High Plains Aquifer, protecting our vital reservoirs, and ensuring the continued improvement of water quality across the state.

These conversation topics are ones we are no strangers to, and find ourselves utilizing the topic throughout our Fellowship program, as conservation through sorghum production is a key message we relay to our Fellows, or interns. Throughout the second half of her Fellowship at Kansas Sorghum, our Collegiate Fellow, Caroline Wingert, assembled a research package detailing the benefits of including sorghum as a livestock feedstuff. Her findings concluded that sorghum remains a high-energy component for dairy cattle, swine, and poultry, while using less water when compared to other grains and is cost-effective.

It's clear to see that sorghum shines bright in the area of water conservation, whether through the crop's use in the feed bunk; a water-saving option in a farmer's crop rotation; or its use as a trial subject as highlighted through the ongoing studies of Pyramid Feeds, leaders in the sorghum industry are harnessing yet another successful diverse application for the crop. While answers in regard to fulfilling the High Plains' needs for more water are still in progress, there is one thing for certain: Sorghum has the potential to be an even more powerful tool for water conservation, ensuring the continued prosperity of rural communities.

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Sorghum Shortcuts

National Sorghum Foundation Names Annual Scholarship Winners

The National Sorghum Foundation is honored to award three exceptional students—Charles Colvin, Andrew Marchetti and Allie Herring—with scholarships totaling \$4,500 to support their educational endeavors in the 2024-2025 academic year.

Charles Colvin, the recipient of the prestigious **Bruce Maunder Scholarship**, is a junior pursuing a bachelor's degree in Plant Sciences at The Pennsylvania State University. Colvin is from Malvem, Pennsylvania, where gardening in his suburban neighborhood led to a desire to better understand the performance of his plant yields and pests and diseases, setting the path for his area of study and future career. Colvin plans to pursue a doctoral degree and hopes to focus more on plant genetics, physiology and biotechnology.

Andrew Marchetti receives the **Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship**. From Reklaw, Texas, Andrew is a senior at Texas A&M University studying plant and environmental soil science. Andrew has actively engaged in advanced research projects focusing on sorghum breeding and genetics, aiming to continue his education with a graduate degree in plant breeding. His work includes significant contributions to understanding the genetic traits of sorghum to improve crop management and resilience.

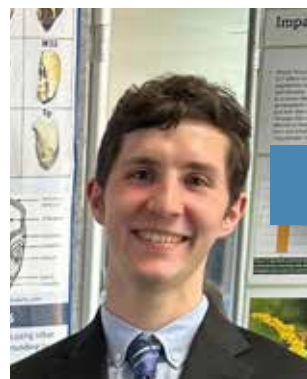
Allie Herring of Franklin, Texas, is this year's recipient of the **Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship** and is a senior at Texas Tech University, double majoring in agribusiness and agricultural communications. Allie combines her academic achievements with a passion for conveying agricultural stories. Her internship experiences, including a significant role with the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture, have poised her to make substantial impacts in agricultural policy or corporate communications, two areas of interest for Herring.

"A part of the National Sorghum Foundation's mission is to foster the growth and leadership potential of passionate university students pursuing agricultural studies with a particular focus on sorghum," Foundation Chairman Jeff Dahlberg, Ph.D., said. "In line with this purpose, we take great pride in granting scholarships to these three exceptionally deserving students and eagerly

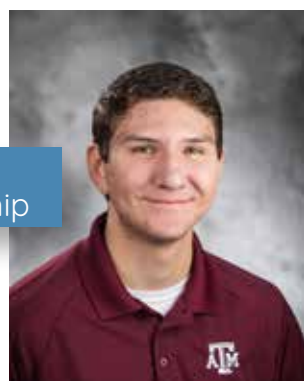
anticipate the remarkable achievements they will make in their respective fields of study."

These scholarships provide each winner \$1,500 to assist with education expenses. The Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship winner, Herring, will also have the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., with National Sorghum Producers as part of the scholarship award to learn more about policies and regulations impacting the U.S. sorghum industry.

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



Charles Colvin
Bruce Maunder Scholarship



Andrew Marchetti
Darrell Rosenow Scholarship



Allie Herring
Bill Kubecka Scholarship

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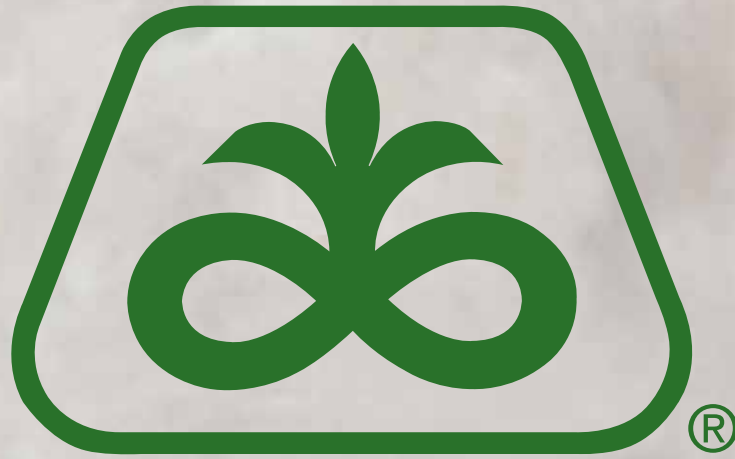
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