



SUMMER 2026

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4201 North Interstate 27
Lubbock, Texas 79403
806-749-3478 (office)

www.SorghumGrowers.com

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FROM THE EDITOR

Standing Together for What's Next



As our nation marks 250 years, this issue offers a reminder that America's agricultural story has never stood still. Neither has sorghum.

That idea is at the heart of National Sorghum Producers' new Stand with Sorghum campaign. The phrase is more than a membership message. It is a statement about what growers and partners choose to stand for: stronger markets, sound policy, practical innovation, rural communities and the next generation. The red, white and blue design throughout these pages honors that history, but the work inside them is aimed squarely at what comes next.

Across this issue, that work takes many forms. On Capitol Hill, NSP is pressing for year-round E15, a stronger farm safety net and science-based regulation. Abroad, decades of work keep U.S. sorghum moving to customers in China and beyond. Through Food for Peace, a recent Kansas shipment shows how American-grown sorghum can create demand at home while delivering hope overseas. John Duff examines the systems growers will need to capture value from low-carbon fuel markets, while Dr. Ethan Triplett opens a new window into the research and market development that help separate durable opportunity from passing enthusiasm.

These stories stretch from Washington to research labs, export markets, ethanol plants and farm fields, but they share one foundation: producers should not have to build the future alone. Progress happens when growers, researchers, customers, policymakers and industry partners move with purpose, and when sorghum has a strong voice bringing them together.

America's first 250 years were built in no small part by people who planted, adapted and kept going. As the next chapter begins, we are proud to stand with the growers doing the same today.

Thanks for reading, and for standing with sorghum.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Washington".

Eric Washington,
NSP Communications Director
Sorghum Grower Editor



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SORGHUM *Grower*

SUMMER 2026



Advocacy in Action: Advancing Sorghum's Priorities in Washington

By Elissa Gilliam

As Congress works through a busy legislative agenda, National Sorghum Producers (NSP) continues to ensure sorghum producers have a seat at the table. From advocating for stronger farm programs and expanded biofuel opportunities to engaging with federal agencies and celebrating the leaders shaping agriculture's future, NSP has remained focused on the policies that strengthen rural America and create new opportunities for producers.

Honoring 250 Years of Women in Agriculture

This summer, NSP partnered with Growth Energy to host the Celebrating 250 Years of Women in Agriculture luncheon in Washington, D.C. The event brought together women leaders from agriculture, biofuels and government to recognize the generations of women whose leadership has helped shape American agriculture.

NSP Chair Amy France joined Ambassador Julie Callahan, Sen. Tammy Duckworth and Sen. Deb Fischer, along with women representing organizations from across the agricultural community, for a bipartisan discussion focused on leadership, public service and the future of agriculture.

As America approached its 250th anniversary, the luncheon served as a reminder that the future of agriculture depends on continued collaboration, innovation and leadership from every corner of the industry.

Research Driving the Future

NSP also participated in the NASA Acres Annual Meeting at the University of Maryland, joining researchers, producers and industry partners exploring how satellite technology, artificial intelligence and precision agriculture can improve farming.

As a NASA Acres partner, NSP continues supporting research that provides practical tools for producers while advancing

sustainability and efficiency across U.S. agriculture. These partnerships ensure sorghum producers remain part of the conversation as emerging technologies continue to transform modern farming.

House Passes Nationwide E15 Legislation

One of the most significant policy victories this summer came as the U.S. House of Representatives approved legislation to permanently authorize nationwide, year-round sales of E15.

For sorghum producers, year-round E15 represents more than an energy policy; it is a long-term investment in domestic demand. Expanding consumer access to higher ethanol blends supports America's biofuel industry while creating stronger markets for grain producers.



▲ NSP staff and Chair Amy France join former Chair Kody Carson in Washington, D.C.



▲ NSP Chair Amy France attends the 250 Years of Women in Agriculture event, proudly co-hosted by National Sorghum Producers.

NSP has advocated for permanent, year-round E15 recognizing that expanded ethanol demand strengthens rural economies, increases market opportunities for farmers and supports American energy independence.

The legislation now awaits consideration in the Senate, where NSP continues working with lawmakers to advance this long-standing priority.

White House Proposes Agricultural Assistance

In June, alongside efforts to expand year-round E15, the White House submitted a supplemental funding request that includes more than \$11 billion in agricultural assistance for producers. The proposal includes \$10 billion in temporary economic assistance for row and specialty crop producers facing continued economic challenges, along with an additional \$1.1 billion in disaster assistance for agricultural producers affected by severe weather events.

For sorghum producers navigating tight margins, rising input costs and ongoing market uncertainty, these assistance programs represent an important short-term tool to help maintain financial stability while producers continue supplying food, feed and fuel around the world.

NSP supports providing meaningful assistance to producers while continuing to advocate for long-term solutions that strengthen agriculture through expanded markets, sound farm policy and increased demand for U.S. commodities.

Farm Bill Remains a Top Priority

Although work on the next Farm Bill continues, NSP remains engaged with congressional leaders to ensure sorghum producers' priorities remain front and center.

The organization continues advocating for a stronger farm safety net, improved crop insurance programs, investments in agricultural research, expanded export promotion and conservation programs that provide producers with flexibility while supporting responsible stewardship.

A modern Farm Bill is essential to providing producers with the certainty needed to manage risk in an increasingly unpredictable agricultural economy. NSP will continue working closely with lawmakers as negotiations progress to ensure sorghum producers have access to programs that reflect today's production challenges.

Engaging with EPA on Regulatory Priorities

Protecting producers' access to effective crop protection tools remains another key priority for NSP.

Recently, NSP board member Jim Sipes met with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin to discuss regulatory policies affecting American agriculture, including the importance of science-based decision-making for crop protection products.

The conversation highlighted the critical role effective chemistries play in helping producers manage weeds and pests while maintaining productive, sustainable farming operations.

As EPA continues evaluating agricultural regulations, NSP remains committed to ensuring sorghum producers' perspectives are represented throughout the regulatory process and that policy decisions are grounded in sound science.

Looking Ahead

Whether advocating for stronger farm policy, expanding domestic biofuel markets, supporting agricultural research or strengthening relationships with federal agencies, National Sorghum Producers continues working to ensure sorghum growers have a strong voice in Washington.

Every meeting, every conversation and every policy discussion shares a common goal: creating more opportunities for producers while protecting the long-term success of American agriculture.

As Congress continues to work on the Farm Bill, supplemental agricultural assistance and year-round E15, NSP will remain engaged every step of the way, advocating for policies that strengthen markets, support rural communities and position sorghum producers for continued success. 🌾

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YEAR-ROUND E-15

We pushed year-round E-15 through the House to grow new demand for sorghum.



MARKET ACCESS

We are opening doors and expanding opportunities for sorghum around the world.



FARM BILL PRIORITIES

We're fighting for policies that protect your farm and strengthen rural communities.



FOOD FOR PEACE

We are creating demand for U.S. sorghum while supporting food assistance efforts around the world.



45Z & BIOFUELS ADVOCACY

We're advancing biofuels policy that builds markets and supports growth.



INPUT & RISK ADVOCACY

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NSP Builds Momentum Across Membership, Advocacy and Outreach

By Kelly Oswalt

As summer continues, National Sorghum Producers remain focused on advocating for growers, strengthening the organization and building momentum for the future of the sorghum industry. From launching new outreach efforts to engaging with policymakers and preparing for upcoming events, the NSP team has been hard at work on behalf of sorghum producers across the country.

organization's work to advocate for policies that support sorghum producers.

The campaign is already generating momentum, with NSP membership growth of over 40% year to date. This growth reflects the commitment of producers and industry partners who recognize the importance of a strong, united voice for sorghum.

Each new and renewed membership strengthens



Stand with Sorghum Campaign

When you stand with sorghum, you support the industry behind the crop. The Stand with Sorghum campaign is a new membership initiative encouraging producers, industry representatives and supporters to join NSP and strengthen sorghum's voice in Washington, D.C.

The campaign highlights that when you stand with sorghum, you stand for stronger markets, American agriculture, rural communities, innovation, research and the next generation of producers. Through social media, NSP is highlighting the value of membership and the



▲ CEO Tim Lust addresses Team Sorghum at the beginning of the Spring Staff Meeting.



▲ Conservation Implementation Director Brad Younker meets with NRCS Chief Colton Buckley to discuss conservation priorities and opportunities for sorghum producers.

NSP's ability to advocate for policies that expand market opportunities, protect crop production tools, support conservation programs and advance research on behalf of sorghum producers. As the campaign continues, current members are encouraged to share the Proud to Stand with Sorghum message and invite fellow producers to join NSP.

Thank you to all of our members for standing with sorghum and supporting the work that protects and advances our industry.

Sorghum PAC Golf Tournament

We are proud to celebrate the continued success and support of Sorghum PAC's annual golf tournament. Held at Mariah Hills Golf Course on April 25 in Dodge City, Kansas, the event brought together 25 teams of growers, industry partners and friends of the sorghum industry for a day of great golf, meaningful conversations and a shared commitment to supporting the future of agriculture.

"The success of this event would not have been possible without the generous support of our Premier Sponsors: American Implement,

Lewis Automotive, T&O Farms, JB and Carol Stewart, Warner Seed, Bakers Acres and LDI," said Jamaca Battin, Industry Relations Director. "Their commitment strengthens Sorghum PAC's advocacy efforts and helps ensure the voice of sorghum producers are represented and heard."

This event reflects the continued dedication and collaboration of our growers, partners and supporters who make Sorghum PAC's work possible. Thank you to everyone who participated, sponsored and contributed to another successful tournament. We look forward to continuing this tradition and welcoming everyone back on April 24, 2027.

Conservation Update from Washington, D.C.

Conservation Implementation Director Brad Younker recently traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in meetings with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), continuing NSP's efforts to ensure the conservation needs of sorghum producers across the Sorghum Belt are represented.

During the National Conservation Practice Standards review, more than 50 national conservation standards were evaluated. These meetings provide conservation organizations, commodity groups and other stakeholders the opportunity to provide input on the national standards that guide state-level conservation practices and program implementation.



▲ A beautiful day on the course brings supporters together for the Sorghum PAC Series Golf Tournament.

Industry Partner of the Year



National Sorghum Producers introduced the inaugural Industry Partner of the Year Award at this year's Yield Contest Gala, recognizing the vital role that industry partners play in strengthening the sorghum industry and supporting the success of producers across the country. **Tom Willis**, CEO of Conestoga Energy, was honored as the first-ever recipient in recognition of his outstanding leadership, longstanding partnership and unwavering commitment to advancing the sorghum industry. Throughout his career, Willis has been a trusted advocate and collaborator, helping promote innovation, strengthen relationships across the agricultural value chain and create opportunities that benefit sorghum farmers. Through his leadership at Conestoga Energy, Willis has helped demonstrate the value of strong partnerships between agriculture and industry. The award reflects NSP's appreciation for the organizations and individuals whose dedication, expertise and support help drive progress and ensure a strong future for the sorghum industry.



▲ NSP Communications Director Eric Washington with the USCP Communications team at the Agricultural Media Summit (AMS)

Brad also participated in the NRCS Commodity Stakeholder Meeting, where discussions focused on current staffing challenges, implementation of conservation programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and NRCS's future direction under the agency's new leadership and priorities.

These quarterly meetings, established by the current administration, provide an important opportunity for commodity organizations like NSP to share producer perspectives directly with national NRCS leadership and help shape future conservation policy and program delivery.

Ag Media Summit

National Sorghum Producers Communications Director Eric Washington and the United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) Communications Director Clint White and Communications Manager Kady Figge recently attended the Agricultural Media Summit (AMS), the largest annual gathering of agricultural communicators in the United States. AMS brings together writers, editors, photographers, publishers and strategic communicators from across the agricultural industry for professional development, networking and recognition of excellence in agricultural communications.

During the summit, the Sorghum Checkoff communications team was recognized with a first-place award in the collateral materials category for the Puppy Petting Patch at Commodity Classic showcasing a creative way to connect consumers with sorghum and agriculture.

The recognition reflects the team's commitment to developing innovative communications strategies that tell sorghum's story, connect with key audiences and promote the value of sorghum across the industry.🌾

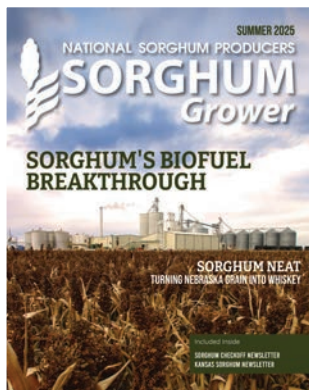
Ready for What's Next

By John Duff, Serō Ag Strategies

Last summer, this magazine devoted an entire issue to what we called sorghum's biofuel breakthrough. The takeaway was that decades of work on ethanol policy and lifecycle modeling had finally brought several opportunities together. Sorghum had earned recognition as a lower-carbon feedstock, and ethanol plants had invested in reducing their emissions in parallel. The Section 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit was also poised to reward improvements all the way back to the farm by incentivizing ethanol plants to reduce emissions via the tax code. We described it as sorghum's biofuel moment, and I believe that moment continues today.

A year later, the opportunity looks even broader, but it also looks more complicated. 45Z has received most of the attention because it could be more lucrative than any of the many low-carbon fuel programs ethanol plants are selling their product into. We're still waiting for the IRS to publish a final rule, so this is no time to promise exact premiums or tell farmers that a particular practice will produce a certain payment, and farmers should be wary of those who do. What we can say is that 45Z may create enough value to change how ethanol plants and farmers collect and verify production data and ultimately put it to use.

But 45Z is only one part of a much larger market. California has spent nearly 20 years building what most observers consider the world's leading low-carbon fuel program. Oregon and Washington followed with their own programs, and like California, both are ramping up their targets. New Mexico is joining that group, putting another low-carbon fuel market directly in the Sorghum Belt for the first time. Across the northern border, the Canadian Clean Fuel Regulations and British Columbia's provincial standard are creating additional demand for ethanol in our backyard, and both have been ready receivers of sorghum ethanol to this point. Half a world



away, Europe's Renewable Energy Directive is driving significant demand for the kind of low-carbon intensity ethanol Sorghum Belt ethanol plants are known for, and EU member countries are actively looking for renewable fuel produced with crops like sorghum that don't burden food or environmental resources.

Every program measures lifecycle carbon differently and comes with different compliance rules. Some place more weight on the ethanol producer, while others pay closer attention to the source of the feedstock and the records that follow it through the supply chain. The differences can frustrate anyone who has tried to compare the programs, but the direction is clear. Low-carbon fuel markets increasingly want reliable records showing where a feedstock came from and how it was produced. The implication is that those records have to survive an audit.

45Z and the California program offer the clearest example of where this is headed. The coming IRS final rule and the soon-to-be-implemented requirements in the Golden State move squarely in the direction of field boundaries, producer attestations and farm practice documentation following grain through the supply chain. Europe has long relied on certification and independent auditing, and its Union Database is intended to improve traceability across renewable fuel transactions. Canada also requires declarations and material balancing for eligible feedstocks. Even when a program doesn't ask a farmer directly for production records, the ethanol producer or certification body may need information that began on the farm. We've talked for many years about the value of farm data and publicly wondered how producers would be compensated for it; now we have our answer, and the value is likely much more significant than we ever expected.

There is, however, a basic economic problem with that approach. Collecting field-level information takes time (a lot of time), and building a system that can withstand verification costs money. Farmers also have understandable questions about who owns the data and how it might be used later. Those concerns grow when the value created by a low-carbon fuel program stays several steps downstream or isn't significant enough for all involved to benefit. A farmer may be asked to map fields and document



▲ Sorghum plays a growing role in ethanol production, supporting cleaner fuel and new market opportunities for growers.

inputs without knowing whether a meaningful portion of the resulting added value will return to the farm.

The state, provincial and international programs have created real opportunities for sorghum ethanol, but most have not produced a strong enough signal to make farm-level data collection a standard practice across the Sorghum Belt. By the time transportation, certification and verification costs are paid, and the remaining value is divided to reflect the risk shouldered by the ethanol plant, not much is left for the grower in many cases. For an individual farmer, the possible return has often been too uncertain to justify making wholesale recordkeeping systems changes or accepting another layer of verification. These markets remain highly important, but their economics help explain why detailed carbon tracking has spread more slowly than policymakers envisioned when building the programs.

This is where 45Z may finally make the math work. The credit is tied to the carbon intensity of fuel produced in the U.S. with feedstocks produced in North America, and its value is large enough to get the attention of ethanol producers. A plant that lowers its score will create substantially more value than it could through many existing low-carbon fuel markets. If the final rules allow that value to move effectively through the grain supply chain, farmers will have reason to provide the records needed to calculate and verify feedstock emissions starting with the 2027 crop year.

Done well, 45Z could become a paid proving ground for farm-level carbon tracking, with the credit justifying the work as farmers and ethanol plants build the routines required by other markets. A field boundary collected for one system shouldn't have to be redrawn for each new

program, and fertilizer records and yield information should be captured in a form that supports more than one calculation. Similarly, verification should be structured in a way that either eliminates the need for multiple audits of the same information or at least streamlines the process so that twice the number of audits as necessary doesn't mean twice the pain.

Reaching that point will require coordination. Ethanol plants can't solve the problem with a spreadsheet emailed to farmers before a reporting deadline. Technology companies can't build a useful platform without understanding how grain moves through elevators and how records are kept on farms in a given region. Growers will need clear terms governing privacy and payment, and most importantly, they'll need a personal touch from a friendly face standing ready to help them chase this complicated but potentially very lucrative opportunity. That may be the biggest thing missing from the current public dialog about this program. Fortunately, the sorghum industry has spent years working through these questions, trialing data management platforms and building an army of people to walk the farmer into the next generation of biofuel feedstock production.

Sorghum also enters this market with several advantages. Many growers already use less nitrogen because excessive rates don't make economic sense in much of our production region. Reduced tillage and water-conserving practices are common across much of the Sorghum Belt, although the benefits will vary by field and year. Sorghum also has a long relationship with ethanol plants that understand the crop and have invested heavily in lower-carbon production. Those advantages do not eliminate the need for documentation, but they do give us a strong



▲ The path from field to fuel begins with sorghum.

foundation once the market begins rewarding credible farm-level performance.

We should still keep the opportunity in perspective. Low-carbon fuel programs won't replace sound agronomy or turn every conservation practice into an immediate premium. Final 45Z rules will determine which information matters and how much flexibility farmers

and plants have, and commercial agreements will determine how value is divided. Producers should be cautious of anyone offering guaranteed payments before those questions are settled, especially when the offer requires broad rights to farm data or the monetization thereof.

Last summer's biofuel issue made the case that sorghum had reached an important moment. The work since then has shown what the next phase will require. California, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, Canada, British Columbia and Europe are creating markets for lower-carbon fuels, but access increasingly depends on traceable information from the farm through the fuel plant. Until now, the farmer incentive has often been too small or too distant to support that effort at scale.

45Z could provide the missing catalyst. A strong federal incentive could pay for systems that allow growers to participate in several markets rather than one program at a time. If those systems are built around farmer value, reasonable verification and clear data protections, the benefits could last well beyond the current tax credit.

Sorghum's biofuel moment has already arrived. The opportunity now is to make sure The Resource Conserving Crop® has the infrastructure needed to compete wherever low-carbon fuel markets grow. 🌾

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▲ A visit to Bijou Distillery highlighted the diverse uses of grain and the importance of strong global partnerships.

Beyond the Headlines: Why Relationships Matter in International Trade

By Carly Spaeth

When National Sorghum Producers Legislative Director Elissa Gilliam stepped off the plane in China, she wasn't just representing an organization, she was representing thousands of American sorghum farmers whose livelihoods depend on strong export markets.

The trade mission, organized by the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council in partnership with the Texas Grain Sorghum Association came at a pivotal moment. Just days earlier, U.S. and Chinese leaders had met to discuss trade, creating an opportunity for agricultural leaders to continue those conversations on the ground.

Gilliam joined Texas Sorghum Executive Director Wayne Cleveland, NSP board member David Drinnon and two South Texas cooperative leaders to meet directly with grain buyers and feed manufacturers. While producers discussed grain quality and logistics, Gilliam's role was to explain the latest developments in Washington D.C. and provide insight into U.S. trade policy.

But what she found went far beyond policy. "I think a lot of times we only read the headlines," Gilliam said. "Being there, meeting the people who make purchasing decisions every day, was eye-opening. It put a face with a name. You realize these are the people buying sorghum grown by farmers in Texas, Kansas and across the sorghum belt."

Trade is often discussed in terms of tariffs, agreements and export numbers, but Gilliam says those metrics only tell part of the story.

Behind every shipment of U.S. sorghum is a relationship that has been built over decades.

The timing of the visit was especially meaningful. Chinese customers were eager to know whether American producers still valued the partnership despite ongoing trade uncertainty.

"They were asking us, 'You still value us, right? You still care about us?'" Gilliam recalled. "Just by showing up,

we answered that question. Being there in person reassured them that we value the relationship, and that meant a great deal."

That sentiment was echoed throughout the trip.

"Every customer we met told us, 'We want your product. We want your crop as soon as we can get it,'" she said. "For both sides, it was reassuring to see how much we value one another."

For NSP board member David Drinnon, those conversations reinforced something he has long believed: successful trade begins with trust.

"There are always politics involved," Drinnon said. "But at the end of the day, we met with more than 20 grain buyers in Shanghai, and seeing the level of interest they have in U.S. sorghum really drove home how important these relationships are."

One message remained consistent throughout nearly every meeting: quality.

Whether speaking with private grain companies or government buyers, Chinese customers repeatedly emphasized why they continue to choose U.S. sorghum.

"They told us over and over again: quality, quality, quality," Gilliam said. "They value the consistency of our crop. They appreciate the dependable quality and the characteristics our sorghum provides."

That reputation didn't happen overnight.

Over the years, many international customers have visited farms throughout the United States, walking fields, meeting growers and learning firsthand how American sorghum is produced. Those exchanges have created confidence not only in the crop itself but also in the people growing it.

"They know us," Gilliam said. "They know they can trust us, and they know they're going to receive a quality product."

Drinnon saw that same appreciation during meetings with buyers.

"The interest from the people who came to those discussions really stood out," he said. "Whether they were purchasing sorghum for the baijiu industry or to feed hundreds of millions of hogs, they understand the value of U.S. grown sorghum."

For many producers, international trade can feel distant from everyday life on the farm. Few growers will ever visit China or sit across the table from overseas grain buyers.

That's exactly why organizations like National Sorghum Producers, United Sorghum Checkoff Program and Texas Grain Sorghum Association invest in trade missions.

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"At the end of the day, decades of relationship-building have an equal impact at the farm gate," Gilliam said.

She points to the remarkable evolution of global demand for U.S. sorghum over the last decade.

"There was a time when China wasn't even part of the conversation," she explained. "Before China became our largest customer, Mexico was our biggest export market. Some people questioned why we were investing time in Asia."

Today, the value of those efforts is clear. Strong international demand for U.S. sorghum supports grain movement, strengthens prices and creates economic opportunities across rural America.

"We've seen how their business affects our farmers, our prices and our rural communities," Gilliam said. "Maintaining those relationships gives producers the best opportunity possible in the global marketplace."

While trade was the purpose of the trip, Gilliam says the most meaningful takeaway wasn't found in conference rooms or market reports.

It was a reminder that agriculture connects people across cultures.

"At the end of the day, both countries are trying to feed their people," she said. "Sometimes we focus so much on politics that we forget agriculture is built on people."

That perspective left a lasting impression on Drinnon as well.

"We sometimes think once a trade agreement is signed, the work is finished," he said. "But that's not the case. Those relationships have to be maintained. People want to know who they're doing business with."

For Gilliam, that human connection may be the greatest value of international engagement.

"We didn't travel halfway around the world just to talk about grain," she said. "We went to learn about the people, understand what they need and show that we care about the relationship first. Business follows trust."

As global demand for food and feed continues to grow, maintaining strong export relationships will remain critical for the U.S. sorghum industry.

Those efforts may begin in Washington, D.C., continue through international trade missions and conclude in meetings with customers thousands of miles away, but their impact is ultimately felt where every crop begins, on the farm.

For producers, every conversation overseas represents another opportunity to strengthen markets at home.

And while trade policies may change, one lesson from the trip remains constant.

Relationships matter.

Because behind every shipment of U.S. sorghum is more than a commodity. It's the trust built between farmers and customers, strengthened through years of partnership and carried forward one conversation at a time. 🌾



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▲ A community receives sorghum through the Food for Peace program, providing vital nutrients and support to families in need.

A Harvest of Hope

By Carly Spaeth

For more than 70 years, American agriculture has played a leading role in fighting hunger around the world through U.S. food aid programs. U.S. food aid refers to the collection of programs that provide food assistance to countries facing hunger, conflict, natural disasters and food insecurity. These efforts include emergency food assistance, school feeding initiatives and commodity based aid programs that deliver American grown food to those in need.

Among these programs, Food for Peace stands as the flagship U.S. food aid initiative and the one most closely connected to American farmers. Established in 1954 through Public Law 480 and signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Food for Peace was created during a time when U.S. agricultural productivity was growing rapidly while many nations around the world struggled with food shortages.

Over the decades, Food for Peace evolved into one of the world's most successful food assistance programs. American grown sorghum, wheat, rice, corn and vege-

table oil have been shipped to countries facing famine, conflict and natural disasters. The program has become a symbol of U.S. farmers' generosity while supporting American agriculture.

Sorghum's Role in Feeding the World

Sorghum's versatility, nutritional value and adaptability make it well suited for food assistance programs. Sorghum is already a widely recognized staple and a vital part of regional nutrition across much of Africa. As a result, U.S. sorghum has frequently been included in food aid shipments destined for countries throughout Africa and other food-insecure regions.

Historically, food aid programs have accounted for approximately 300,000 to 500,000 metric tons of annual sorghum demand. For producers, that volume represents a significant market opportunity. At a time when export markets can fluctuate and domestic demand can face uncertainty, Food for Peace provides an additional outlet for American-grown sorghum.

The program also demonstrates the unique value proposition of U.S. agriculture. Every shipment represents farmers producing a safe, reliable and affordable food source that can travel across oceans and arrive where it is needed most.

That impact was on display recently when 400,000 bushels of U.S. sorghum were loaded at Skyland Grain in western Kansas for shipment to Africa through Food for Peace. The shipment marked the first Food for Peace sorghum movement since USDA assumed administration of the program and highlighted the continued role sorghum producers play in addressing global food insecurity.

New Chapter for Food for Peace

For much of its history, Food for Peace was administered through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2026, an interagency agreement allowed USDA to temporarily operate the program, a move strongly supported by National Sorghum Producers and many agricultural organizations.

NSP welcomed the transition and continues advocating for Congress to make USDA's administration of the program permanent.

According to NSP Chair Amy France, placing Food for Peace under USDA strengthens transparency, improves accountability and reinforces the connection between American farmers and global food assistance efforts.

The shift also reflects the reality that food aid begins on American farms. Producers grow the commodities, grain handlers move them through the supply chain, exporters coordinate logistics and aid organizations distribute food to those in need. USDA's direct involvement helps ensure those connections remain strong.



▲ A woman receives her next meal through the Food for Peace program, demonstrating the life-changing impact of agricultural assistance around the world.

Why It Matters Today

Food for Peace has always been about more than moving grain. It reflects a uniquely American approach to humanitarian assistance—one that leverages the productivity of U.S. agriculture to address hunger while supporting rural communities at home.

For sorghum farmers, the benefits are clear. The program creates demand, helps move grain through the marketing system and supports prices by providing another outlet for production. At the same time, it allows producers to contribute to a mission much larger than themselves.

When a shipment of sorghum leaves a Kansas elevator bound for Africa, it represents more than bushels on a vessel. It represents American farmers helping families recover from drought, conflict and food shortages. It represents decades of agricultural innovation and productivity. And it demonstrates how U.S. agriculture can simultaneously strengthen rural economies and improve lives around the world.

As policymakers consider the future of Food for Peace, NSP remains committed to ensuring American-grown commodities remain at the center of global food assistance efforts. The program's history proves that humanitarian leadership and strong agricultural markets are not competing priorities, they go hand in hand.

For more than seven decades, Food for Peace has connected American farmers to a global mission. For sorghum producers, it remains one of the clearest examples of how agriculture can create value at home while making a difference abroad. 🌾



▲ NSP Chair Amy France observes the first USDA led shipment of U.S. sorghum being loaded for Food for Peace out of Kansas.

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A Message to Mojo Seed Customers and Sorghum Producers

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production capabilities and decades of sorghum experience. Because that same facility has also produced Mojo seed, Nufarm already understands the products, the quality standards and the producers they serve.

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Staying Ahead of the Market Without Leaving Producers Behind

By Ethan Triplett, Ph.D.

Every year, producers are asked to make decisions with higher stakes and less certainty. Water is tighter. Input costs remain volatile. End-use markets continue to evolve. New technologies, sustainability programs, and specialty markets promise opportunity, but separating lasting value from passing enthusiasm is challenging.

Someone has to absorb that risk before producers do.

Proving a new production system, trait, or market opportunity takes years of research, extensive on-farm validation, and the confidence of downstream buyers. No single producer, company, or research project can generate that evidence alone. Without coordinated investment, many promising ideas never reach commercial adoption, while others reach the market before they are ready.

That is where National Sorghum Producers creates value.

NSP works to identify emerging market opportunities before they become mainstream, then tests whether those opportunities withstand the realities of commercial production across the Sorghum Belt. The objective is not to chase every new trend. It is to determine which innovations improve producer profitability, strengthen resilience, and create durable demand for sorghum.

The process works in both directions. Markets influence crop improvement priorities, but producers remain the final measure of success. A technology that performs well in theory but fails under real production conditions is not innovation. Likewise, a market opportunity

that cannot be implemented economically on the farm is not a market worth pursuing.

Maintaining that balance requires more than individual grants or short-term projects. It requires aligned institutions capable of coordinating research, validating performance, and carrying lessons from one generation of innovation to the next. NSP and the United Sorghum Checkoff Program are building long-term capacity, giving producers access to opportunities that are scientifically credible and commercially meaningful.

Markets reward those who move first. Producers should benefit from that advantage without bearing the full cost of discovering what works. 🌾



▲ Research in the field today is driving the breakthroughs that will strengthen sorghum production for generations to come.

A New Voice for Lab to Cab



Research matters when it moves beyond the lab and creates value on the farm. That is the idea behind Lab to Cab, and I'm pleased to welcome Dr. Ethan Triplett not as a new voice in sorghum, but as a new standing contributor to Sorghum Grower.

Ethan directs Crop Improvement & Efficiency for National Sorghum Producers and the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. A Canyon, Texas, native, he holds a Ph.D. in crop physiology from Texas Tech University and bachelor's and master's degrees in plant science from West Texas A&M University. His background spans plant breeding, entomology, physiology and sorghum trait discovery.

In this and future columns, Ethan will take readers inside the research shaping sorghum's future and explain what it means for growers. His first contribution explores how coordinated research and market development can test ideas early, reduce risk and move producer-ready opportunities from the lab to the cab.

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Claims regarding yield increases and reduced crop damage from See & Spray™ Ultimate are based on research sponsored by John Deere and conducted by third-party organizations across seven states. Findings indicated an average yield increase of +131 kg/ha (+2.0 bu/A) in soybeans with targeted herbicide applications compared to traditional broadcast methods, along with reduced crop injury and improved health metrics. Results may vary based on specific conditions, including local practices and environmental factors. Economic examples are illustrative and may not apply universally. For detailed findings, refer to the complete study, including additional research from Beck's Hybrids (Beck's 2024 – www.beckshybrids.com/resources/pfr-studies/2024-multi-location-soybean-sprayer-application-study-see-and-spraytm).



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Sorghum Update

Brought to you by the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission

Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow: Meet Delaney Galaviz-Chavez

By Mindy Wells, KGSC Communications Fellow

For the Galaviz-Chavez family, agriculture has never been just an industry; it has always been family. Raised on her family's fourth-generation farm in Scott City, Delaney grew up surrounded by the daily rhythms of production agriculture. Today, she works alongside her parents and older brother as part of a diversified family operation that produces sorghum, wheat, corn, and Angus cattle.

"Our story in agriculture goes all the way back to my great grandpa," Delaney said. "He worked for a farmer outside of the family. Through hard work, he had the opportunity to start renting land and building something of their own."

That legacy of perseverance eventually brought together two farming families, creating the operation that exists today — France Family Farms.

"Now we get to carry both the legacies, and I am proud to be the fourth generation," Delaney said. "Faith, family and farming are truly the foundation of everything we do and live by."

One crop that carries that legacy into the future is sorghum.

"Sorghum plays a really important role in helping us protect both our land and our water resources," she explained. Farming in western Kansas means water conservation is not simply a goal; it is a necessity. With unpredictable rainfall, Delaney says choosing which crops to grow is one of the most important decisions a farmer can make. Sorghum is often called the "water-sipping crop" for good reason: It requires less water than other crops.

Her family farms above the Ogallala Aquifer, where declining water levels have become an important concern for many farmers across the region. "Being mindful of our water use is a huge priority for us," she said.

Delaney recalls hearing stories from her grandfather about the farm economy of the 1980s and how sorghum helped keep their family operation afloat. "My grandpa always said sorghum was the only crop he could afford to plant and trust to yield," she said.

Today, with rising farming costs and uncertainty surrounding exports, these lessons still carry weight. But for Delaney, the sorghum story extends beyond economics. "It is not just something we grow; it is something that can genuinely benefit people," she said.

As consumer interest grows around nutrition, gluten-free products and food sourced directly from farms, Delaney believes sorghum is an important part of the story of agriculture. She is helping connect that story directly with consumers through social media.

Over the past few years, she has built an audience by sharing "day in the life" harvest videos, sunrise starts, equipment breakdowns, late nights in the fields and the teamwork that helps keep a family operation moving. For her, telling agriculture's story is about authenticity.

"My harvest videos consistently get more views and engagement than anything else I post," she said. "That tells me people really do want to know where their food comes from. I want people to see the real side of farming the good, the bad and the messy parts."

As she looks toward the future, Delaney hopes to continue building both her family's operation and the connection with consumers.

"I want my future kids to grow up the same way I did riding in combines, being in trucks, being in the field and understanding the value of hard work," she said.

For Delaney, returning to the farm as a young grower was never simply about preserving the past; it was about honoring a legacy while building something strong enough to carry into the future. And on the Kansas plains, where faith, family and farming continue to guide each new season, that future looks bright for this fourth-generation farmer.



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SORGHUM
CHECKOFF

New Sorghum Assurances Protocol Strengthens Global Market Opportunities

Every bushel of sorghum tells a story.

It begins with producers who carefully manage their land, conserve natural resources and grow one of the world's most sustainable crops. Increasingly, global customers want documentation that U.S. sorghum meets the environmental standards and verifies those practices were employed.

To help meet that demand, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council developed the Sorghum Assurances Protocol, a voluntary, industry-led framework that documents how U.S. sorghum is produced. The recent issuance of the first Sustainable Sorghum Exports records of sustainability marks an important milestone, moving the program from development into real-world commercial use.

The protocol doesn't change how producers farm. Instead, it documents the strong legal, regulatory and production systems already in place across the United States. It provides international buyers with verified information on production prac-

tices and the land on which U.S. sorghum is grown, giving them greater confidence when sourcing U.S. sorghum.

Around the world, food, feed and renewable fuel companies continue to increase regenerative reporting requirements. Many customers now seek documentation that demonstrates responsible sourcing as part of their purchasing decisions. The Sorghum Assurances Protocol helps the U.S. sorghum industry meet those expectations while reinforcing the value of American-grown sorghum in competitive global markets.

The protocol evaluates 13 impact categories, including water stewardship, soil conservation, biodiversity, greenhouse gas management, labor practices and supply chain governance. Rather than creating new regulations, it compiles existing federal and state laws, industry standards and best management practices into a single, internationally recognized framework that buyers can trust.

Through the Sustainable Sorghum Exports (SSE) platform, international buyers can also receive shipment-specific

documentation that links their sorghum purchases to records of sustainably produced U.S. sorghum verified under the Sorghum Assurances Protocol. This creates a transparent chain of documentation while simplifying the process for companies participating in global supply chains.

For producers, the value extends well beyond paperwork.

The protocol helps strengthen customer confidence, protect existing export relationships and create opportunities in emerging markets where documentation continues to grow in importance. As more countries and multinational companies adopt responsible sourcing policies, having an industrywide assurance system positions U.S. sorghum to compete for new business without placing additional reporting burdens on growers.

Sorghum already stands apart for its drought tolerance, efficient water use and ability to thrive under challenging growing conditions. The Sorghum Assurances Protocol gives the industry another tool to communicate those strengths with credible, verified documentation that today's customers increasingly expect.

As global demand evolves, the Sorghum Assurances Protocol helps ensure U.S. sorghum remains recognized not only for its quality and versatility, but also for the transparency and trust that support long-term market growth for America's sorghum producers.

To learn more about the Sorghum Assurances Protocol and how it strengthens buyer confidence in U.S. sorghum, watch the overview video and visit SustainableSorghumExports.org.

What Producers Should Know

- Voluntary: The protocol does not require changes to current farming practices.
- Market-driven: It helps satisfy regenerative and sourcing requirements from global buyers.
- Grower-focused: Stronger buyer confidence supports long-term demand for U.S. sorghum.



Scan to learn more.

USDA Appoints Five to Sorghum Checkoff Board

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently appointed five sorghum producers to the United Sorghum Checkoff Program Board of Directors, filling seats representing Kansas and Texas, as well as at-large positions. Four members will serve three-year terms through December 2028, while one member will complete a one-year term through December 2026.

The newly appointed board members are:

- Patrick J. Curl, Wellington, Kansas
- Scott Anthony Irlbeck, Lubbock, Texas
- Jeremiah Nicholson, Dodge City, Kansas
- Amy Jo Peterson, Johnson, Kansas
- Lindy McMillen, Dighton, Kansas

The 13-member Sorghum Checkoff Board is

composed of producers representing the nation's largest sorghum-producing states, along with at-large representatives from across the country. Board members oversee producer-funded investments in research, promotion and education that strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. sorghum and create opportunities for growers.

The board provides strategic direction for checkoff programs that support crop improvement, market development, consumer and industry education, international trade, and new market opportunities. Directors serve as representatives of sorghum producers, helping guide investments that deliver value across the sorghum value chain.

The Sorghum Checkoff Board operates under the oversight of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. More information about the board and its programs is available at the Sorghum Checkoff website and the USDA Agricultural Marketing

Service. To learn about how to become a director on our board visit sorghumcheckoff.com/about-us/board-of-directors/.



Patrick Curl,
Wellington, KS



Scott Irlbeck,
Lubbock, TX



Jeremiah Nicholson,
Dodge City, KS



Amy Peterson,
Johnson, KS



Lindy McMillen,
Dighton, KS

Leadership Sorghum Class VIII Selected

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program has selected 15 participants for Leadership Sorghum Class VIII, a premier leadership development program designed to cultivate the next generation of leaders in the sorghum industry.

"As agriculture continues to evolve, developing informed and forward-thinking leaders is essential to the long-term success of the sorghum industry," said Kim Baldwin, USCP chair. "Leadership Sorghum gives participants a broader view of the industry and equips them with the knowledge, relationships and experiences needed to help advance sorghum's future as they grow into leaders at every level."

Leadership Sorghum Class VIII members:

- Brock Billings, Braymer, Missouri
- Todd Borland, Levelland, Texas
- Ana Copeland, Raymondville, Texas
- Morgan Crabtree, Dalhart, Texas
- Chris Jewett, Amarillo, Texas
- Raphael Jolliffe, Seibert, Colorado
- Colin Kirchhoff, Prairie View, Kansas
- Matthew McMillen, Dighton, Kansas
- Mark Nall, Lubbock, Texas
- Cole Novak, Canyon, Texas
- Job Rendel, Miami, Oklahoma
- Tobin Randolph, Perryton, Texas
- Lisa Schemm, Sharon Springs, Kansas
- Michael Taylor, Weatherby, Missouri
- Creason Young, Riviera, Texas

"Each class of Leadership Sorghum represents the future voice of our industry," said Shelee Padgett, USCP director of emerging markets and grower leader development. "These producers and industry professionals bring valuable perspectives from across the sorghum-growing region, and this program helps them build the skills and connections needed to strengthen both their

"Each class of Leadership Sorghum represents the future voice of our industry."

operations and the broader industry."

During the 14-month program, participants will take part in educational seminars, industry tours and professional development opportunities. Through hands-on learning and direct engagement with leaders across the value chain, class members gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities shaping the sorghum industry today.

Class VIII begins in September during the Global Sorghum Conference in Lubbock, Texas, where participants will connect with producers, researchers and industry leaders from around the world.

To learn more about Leadership Sorghum, visit LeadSorghum.com.

Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Announces Retirement

United Sorghum Checkoff Program Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson will retire at the end of 2026, concluding a career marked by service to agriculture, organizational leadership and community engagement.

Johnson became the Sorghum Checkoff's third executive director in January 2021. She previously served as executive vice president of the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce and as communications director for National Sorghum Producers.

During her tenure, Johnson helped expand market opportunities for U.S. sorghum, strengthen domestic and international partnerships, increase consumer awareness and advance research investments across food, feed and agricultural innovation.

"Serving sorghum farmers in this role has been one of the greatest privileges of my career," Johnson said. "I am proud of what we've accomplished together and grateful for the producers, board members, staff and industry partners who have made this work so rewarding."

Johnson will continue leading the national organization through the end of the year and will help ensure a smooth leadership transition.

The Sorghum Checkoff has begun its search for an experienced professional to serve as its next executive director. Based in Lubbock,

Texas, the executive director manages day-to-day operations, leads staff and works with the CEO and Board of Directors to guide investments in research, market development, innovation and producer engagement while maintaining compliance with USDA Agricultural Marketing Service requirements.

Applicants should hold a bachelor's degree and have at least five years of business experience or training.

Submit a cover letter and resume to edcandidate@sorghumgrowers.com by Aug. 18, 2026. See the full job posting at sorghumcheckoff.com/news/position-announcement/.



Sorghum Industry Events

September 14-18 Global Sorghum Conference
Lubbock, TX

October 13 Sunbelt Ag Expo
Moultrie, GA

October 15-17 Export Exchange
Seattle, WA

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/news-and-events/



CONTACT US

Clint White

Director of Communications
(806) 687-8727
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USCP Mission

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



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Sorghum Shortcuts

Scholarship Winners

Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship



William Robinson, a second-year law student at Texas A&M University School of Law, is the recipient of this year's Bill Kubecka Memorial Scholarship. He is focusing his studies on agricultural law, property law and public policy after earning degrees in agricultural journalism from the University of Missouri and agricultural studies from The Ohio State University. Raised on his family's livestock operation in east-central Missouri, he remains actively involved in agriculture while helping revive the Agricultural Law Club at Texas A&M. Through internships with the U.S.

Senate Committee on Agriculture, a Texas litigation firm and the Texas Legislature, he is building a career dedicated to advancing agricultural policy.

Bruce Maunder Memorial Scholarship



Seth Cope, a senior at Texas Tech University, is the recipient of this year's Bruce Maunder Memorial Scholarship. He is majoring in Plant and Soil Science with a focus in Crop Science, where his studies and research centers on sorghum improvement, drought tolerance and crop physiology. His passion for agriculture was shaped through experiences with his agricultural family and time spent learning from producers and crop consultants in West Texas. As a member of the Texas Tech Crop and Forage Systems Lab, he has contributed to research focused on sor-

ghum root architecture, heat stress and sustainable production systems, including the development of a 3D imaging platform for root phenotyping.

Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship



Samantha Guzzetta, a rising senior at Texas A&M University, is the recipient of this year's Darrell Rosenow Memorial Scholarship. She is majoring in Plant and Environmental Soil Science with an emphasis in Soil and Water and is actively involved as Legacy Affairs Chair for Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority, a Soil and Crop Sciences Ambassador and a member of Texas A&M's prestigious College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Council. Raised showing livestock through FFA, Guzzetta developed a passion for agriculture that continues to shape

her education and career goals. Following a summer internship with Georgia-Pacific as an environmental engineering intern, she plans to pursue a career in environmental health and safety while advocating for the importance of agriculture in everyday life.

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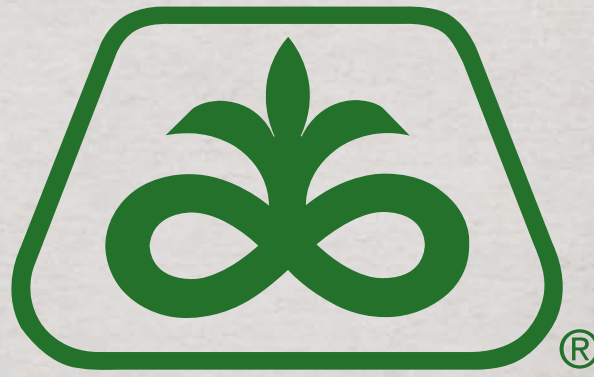
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