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TEXAS SORGHUM INSIDER

October 20, 2009

www.texassorghum.org

"PAC Off! It's My Land!" - A newly formed political action committee to support the passage of Proposition 11 (limits to eminent domain in Texas) takes property rights seriously. The PAC, which has several co-treasurers that include Commissioner of Ag Todd Staples and other noted political figures, will tout the seriousness of Prop 11's wording that is concerned about the abusive taking of private property by government eminent domain. The legislation, which was authored by Senator Duncan and Representative Corte, was born after the Trans Texas Corridor right of way language would have enabled condemned land to be used for private economic development, such as a convenience store being opened on unused condemned land instead of the land being offered back to the original owner. This is one of 11 Constitutional amendments that will be offered on the November ballot.

\$300,000 Secured For Biofuel Research At Baylor - The 2010 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill that's on its way to the president's desk includes \$300,000 for biofuel research at Baylor University, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, announced. The money will fund collaboration between Baylor and Texas A&M University researchers and industry leaders in alternative fuels to investigate the use of sorghum in biofuel production. Sorghum, Hutchison said, is an inexpensive alternative to corn, whose use in biofuel production has had unintended effects on supply and prices. "As we work toward energy independence, we must transition into the next generation of biofuels which do not use food for fuel," Hutchison said.

Sorghum's Hand in Feed Demand - Livestock feed in Texas accounts for about one-half of the feed grain quota used in Texas alone. Texas produced approximately 412.35 million bushels of grain (including grain sorghum and corn for grain) in 2008 and about 181.07 million bushels of that attributed to feed the state's dairy cows, feeder cattle, pigs and chickens. To put into perspective just how much grain each of these species eats in approximately one year, refer to the table below. This table shows the total number of species in Texas in 2008 and approximately how many bushels of grain that species ate in Texas during that year.

	Total # of Species in TX	Amount of Bushels of Grain Consumed in One Year	Amount of Bushels of Grain Consumed Per Lifetime
Dairy Cows	418,000	21,795,714	52.14 (per year)
Feeder Cattle	5,695,000	145,222,500	25.5

Poultry	18,545,000	2,483,703	.134
Swine	1,120,000	11,565,000	10.0
All Livestock	25,778,000	181,066,917	----

This data was found using the following statistics: Dairy cows eat 10 pounds of feed per day at an 80% grain ration; therefore, eating eight pounds of grain per head per day or 52.14 maximum bushels of grain per head, per year. Feeder cattle enter a feedlot at 500-600 pounds and gain approximately 500 pounds at a 5.5 feed efficiency, a 65% inclusion rate and an 80% grain ration; therefore, eating 25.5 bushels of grain per head from feedlot entry to slaughter. Poultry are marketed at 5-6 pounds, will eat approximately 10 pounds of feed before going to market, have a feed conversion of 2 and a 75% grain ration; therefore, eating 7.5 pounds of grain or .134 bushels of grain before going to market. Pigs have a birth weight of 3 pounds, are marketed at 360 pounds and have a 75% grain ration; therefore, eating 10 bushels of grain per head until going to market. So if we look at Texas livestock numbers in comparison to Texas grain sorghum production, and if the number of Texas pigs were fed only Texas produced grain sorghum, it would account for approximately 11.7% of Texas' market. Keep in mind this data only represents marketed livestock. For example, a sow eats 2,000 pounds or 35.71 bushels of grain per year, and this number is not represented in the data above. Through funds collected through the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, sorghum can better understand its customers and provide new and innovating marketing programs coupled with research that will find valuable properties of grain sorghum, and can posture sorghum to better fit the needs of its customers, thereby increasing markets. ***Special thanks to Florentino Lopez, United Sorghum Checkoff Program, Director of Marketing. Other Resources: www.nass.usda.gov.*

D.C. Update - This past week, several staff members of the National Sorghum Producers (NSP), took the issues of the organizations' RFS2 talking points, their update on Risk Management Agency's farm bill language, the importance of the Biomass Conversion Assistance Programs (BCAP) and the Bioenergy Program for Advance Biofuels to the Hill. Their RFS2 talking points focused on including a separate pathway for grain sorghum as an advanced biofuel and including sweet sorghum and forage sorghums as a feedstock for cellulosic processing facilities. They noted that RMA should announce price election new-rates in mid-November, and are expecting that to provide significantly more coverage for sorghum. They also focused on reminding USDA that sorghum will be a feedstock for cellulosic conversion facilities and that many ethanol plants use sorghum to produce an Advance Biofuel for the two Farm Bill Energy Title programs USDA is implementing. Also this past week, Chairman Colin Peterson (D-MN) announced the House Agriculture Committee will markup derivative legislation on October 21st. Agriculture legislation was also busy during the week of October 9th, while USDA announced a new research agency. The 2008 Farm Bill created USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) by reorganizing how agriculture research is funded. For the past few decades, the growth in the research budget of USDA has lagged behind that of other national science agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Finally, the Senate passed the FY 10 Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report by a 76-22 vote. It contains \$22.3 billion in discretionary spending. It would authorize a total of \$120 billion when mandatory spending programs are taken into account. It allows for a major spending boost for farm bill conservation programs and provides additional funds for energy programs. Among the sorghum priorities, \$1 million was included for the Great Plains Sorghum Initiative and funds were restored for nutrition work at Little Rock, Arkansas. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission would also see a 14% budget increase under the bill.

***Per Mark Rokala, NSP Weekly Board Report, October 9th and 16th, 2009.*

College Station Grain Sorghum Results Posted – Results from the 2009 College Station Grain Sorghum Performance Test have been released. The test was conducted under a limited irrigation scenario. The test block received two irrigations in June, which contributed to the final yields. If you have any questions regarding the test results, please contact Dennis Pietsch at croptest@tamu.edu. Please click on the link to view the test results online:

<http://varietytesting.tamu.edu/corn&grainsorghum/resources.htm>.

Upcoming Dates

TGFA Mycotoxin Short Course – Austin, Texas	October 21-22
Texas Ag Expo – Stephenville, Texas	October 22
South Texas Farm and Ranch Show – Victoria, Texas	October 28-29

Compiled by Texas Grain Sorghum Producers Staff:

Wayne Cleveland – Executive Director

Kristin Heinemann – Director of Producer Relations

Morgan Newsom – Producer Relations Coordinator, Southwest Plains

**Please direct all inquiries to kristin@texassorghum.org

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