



WIFE in DC



WIFE Officers

Back Row: Ruth Larabee, Alice Fairfax, Marlene Kouba. Front Row: Pam Potthoff, Deb Dressler, Tammy Basel, Shana Baisch, Melinda Sorem.

www.WIFeline.com

WIFeline
Marlene Kouba
6160 105th Ave SW
Regent, ND 58650

Non--Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 1
Regent, ND 58650

Change Service Requested



Volume 32

March 2009

No. 3

CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER



The Capitol Visitor Center is 580,000 square feet on three levels. For purposes of comparison, the Capitol itself encompasses 775,000 square feet. The Visitor Center is about three quarters the size of the historic Capitol or equal to three football fields and is 60 feet under the Capitol. The Visitor Center also includes 170,000 square feet of new building space for the House and Senate. Six skylights (including two that measure 30 by 70 feet) provide direct, natural light, and connect visitors visually to the picturesque Capitol dome.

Approximately 4,000 people can comfortably fit in the Capitol Visitor Center at one time. There is a 530-seat restaurant, two gift shops, an Exhibition Hall and 26 restrooms.

The mission of the Capitol Visitor Center is to provide an environment for visitors to learn about the House and the Senate and the legislative process, as well as the history and development of the architecture and art of the U.S. Capitol. Ongoing lectures, programs, special events and changing exhibits will give visitor a unique experience each time they visit.

In 1874, 240,000 cubic yards of material from the East Capitol Grounds were removed in order to lay a more fertile bed of soil. The research showed that the Capitol Grounds were occupied to some extent by sub-tribes of the Algonquin Indians during colonial days but most of the tribal activities occurred closer to the Potomac River. In 1958-59, much of the area near the Capitol was excavated and the East Front of the Capitol was extended 32.5 feet. Nothing of any significant historical nature was discovered during excavation.

On June 20, 2000, members of the Capitol Preservation

Commission, ceremonially broke ground to signal the beginning of the project. Actual construction work began in 2002 following the events of September 11. Excavation of the East Front Plaza began in August, 2002. In the fall of 2003, excavation was essentially complete and build-up of the Visitor Center structure began. In July 2008, the Architect of the Capitol's Fire Marshal allowed personnel to begin occupying the facility. The Center was officially opened for visitors on December 2, 2008.

The overall project cost was \$621 million. The duration of construction was about six years--from August 2002 through November 2008. Some areas are still under construction and landscaping is not complete.

The Joint Committee on the Library approved moving 24 statues from various locations in the Capitol to the Visitor Center, which was designed as an extension of the Capitol, not a separate facility. The goal was to make these sculptures more accessible to the visiting public and help alleviate overcrowding which has been an issue in Statuary Hall since the 1930s. Congress determined in 1933 that only one statue from each state should be placed in Statuary Hall. The others would be given prominent locations in designated areas and corridors of the Capitol. With the addition of the Capitol Visitor Center, it was decided that the statues would be rearranged again in order to further highlight and feature this unique collection which represents the 50 United States and its citizens. The statues selected to be moved are those that were most recently donated to the collection and represent the diversity of our country.

2009 NATIONAL OFFICERS

President

Tammy Basel
16079 Minnehaha Pl
Union Center, SD 47787
605-985-5205 MST
605-985-5205 FAX
dbasel@gwtc.net

First Vice-President

Deb Dressler
8463-20th St SW
Richardton, ND 58652
701-938-4246 MST
deb_dressler@yahoo.com

Second Vice-President

Shana Baisch
323 Road 300
Glendive, MT 59330
406-365-4133
jsbaich@wb.midrivers.com

Secretary

Mary Ann Murray
HC 69 Jordan, MT 59337
406-557-2400 MST
406-557-2402 FAX
ige@wb.midrivers.com

Treasurer

Melinda Sorem
26561 NW 208 Rd
Jetmore, KS 67854
620-357-6346 MST
620-357-6117 FAX
msorem@ucom.net

Area Directors:

1. Marlene Kouba
6160 105th Ave SW
Regent, ND 58650
701-563-4560 MST
701-563-4560 FAX
mmkouba@ndsupernet.com

2. Alice Fairfax
27248 Goodwill Chapel Road
Sedalia, MO 65301
660-826-0220 CST
660-826-8648 FAX
afairfax@iland.net

3. Ruth Larabee
7639 East Road
Lowville, NY 13367
315-376-2644 EST
315-376-2644 FAX
griarabee@hotmail.com

Past President

Pam Potthoff
35807 Drive 714
Trenton, NE 69044
308-276-2548 CST
308-276-2424 FAX
coyotepp@gpcom.net

Parliamentarian

Whitney Wankel
Bozeman, MT
406-557-2484

EFFECTIVENESS

By Tammy Basel, SD
National WIFE President

SUCCESSFUL is how I would describe last month's Legislative Conference in Washington DC. The cooperative effort started at our annual meeting. The membership set priorities for the year by giving us direction for the messages we were to carry to Washington, DC, and work on throughout the year. Agriculture, Economy, Homeland Security and Healthcare, were the directed priorities we shared with our Sunday speakers, USDA, Congressional delegations, and even friendly ears in the elevator. I am so proud of the natural way our members have at starting conversation and telling the positive agriculture story.

What makes WIFE members so effective in Washington, DC? First, we have an important message to share--whether it is on the streets of our hometowns, our state capitols or in our nation's capitol. We are business owners of various sizes. We are mothers, grandmothers, sisters and wives. We are community leaders. We raise food and fiber for the nation and the world. We represent the first generation farmer and the farms and ranches that have been on the land for many generations. Our vested interest in farming and ranching is not our career-- it is our lives.

Before leaving for Washington, DC, we made appointments with our respective congressional offices and many of our members met with the Member themselves. While we were in DC in February the stimulus debates were going strong yet some of the senators and representatives still took time to keep their appointments with us. It is humbling to sit on the couch next to high paid lobbyists, who are called in to visit with a staffer, and the WIFE members meet with the Congressman. It was nice that the staffer greeted us like a friend from home and values our knowledge on issues. The congressmen and their staffers know we are there to talk about our livelihood.

A few of the executive committee members stayed a few more days after all of our meetings were done to visit with our friends from the corporate world. We had the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern. Some of the offices that were visited were DuPont, Monsanto, North Bridge Communications, Florida—Texas-Hawaii Sugar Cane Growers, Renewable Fuels Association, American Council of Life Insurers, U.S. Beet Sugar Association, American Bankers Association, CropLife America, Farm Credit System, Bayer Crop Science, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, U.S. Cattlemen's Association, National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Pork Producers, and the National Barley Council.

It was interesting to note that as we visited the various livestock affiliated groups we could find more things that we were like-minded on than we differed on. We agreed there is a problem with unwanted horses, because of the lack of horse slaughter, and farmers and ranchers must do a better job telling our positive story of how we take care of our environment while producing a very safe and stable food supply.



WIFE SUPPORTING MEMBERS CONTRIBUTOR LEVELS

VIP Membership

Bayer CropScience
Renewable Fuels Association

Executive Membership

American's for Secure Retirement
DuPont
Edison Electric Institute
Farm Credit Council
Monsanto
New Holland
North America, Inc.

Associate Membership

American Council of Life Insurers
CropLife America
Florida, Texas & Hawaii Sugar Cane Growers
North Bridge Communications
U.S. Beet Sugar Association

Contributor Membership

Agriculture Council of America
American Bankers Association
American Sugarbeet Grower's Association
Miller/Coors Brewing Company
Mitchell Oilfield

In-Kind Contributors

Kimmitt, Senter,
Coates & Weinfurter
High Plains Journal
Rauner & Associates



FOREIGN AG SERVICE HORSE SLAUGHTER

By Marlene Kouba

Robert Riemenschneider grew up on a Maryland dairy farm and now works for the Foreign Ag Service—the export arm of USDA. They work with market development of ag products and USDA trade deficit of inter-agencies. An office of a trade representative has only about 8-10 people. We had the Tokyo Round in the 70s, the Uruguay Round in the 80s and the last was the DOHA Round—the treaties are named for the area where it was passed. It seems like each one takes twice as long as the previous one.



Robert Riemenschneider

Ag trade got involved in the Uruguay Round. Ag issues couldn't be addressed without considering border issues. Now we have the various boxes (Blue Box, Green Box, Amber Box) regarding trade distortion. Some production was limited in the Blue Box. Non-market access issues are involved.

Rising economies are playing a much larger role than in the past. They are getting to be big players and have to be part of the process of trade. An elimination of tariffs will be underway by 2013. A new program has 70 pages. Export credit guarantees may be controlled. Countries moving food-aid end up replacing commercial exports. Countries will apply a certain percent in a tariff schedule. The next plan is to schedule, then review and review again. The Trade Promotion Authority expired more than a year ago. The Export Enhancement program is mandatory in the new farm bill. It has been there but it depended on world and national food prices. Tariffs vs. fees is a big issue on both sides.

FARMER'S SHARE

By Marlene Kouba



Sara Gallo

Sara Gallo, representing National Farmers Union (NFU), stated that implementing the Farm Bill is an ongoing process. A huge priority is climate change. With the president supporting it, a bill could make it happen. Senator Boxer introduced a bill on climate change and the need for a cap it is quite general. Agriculture does much to counteract climate change. Carbon credit policy is something they started. They buy and sell carbon from 4 million acres and have paid more than \$6 million to producers. It is listed on the Chicago Stock Exchange.

She discussed the Grocer's Manufacturing Association and their campaign to blame corn and ethanol for their increase in food prices. NFU has taken their case to Congress. They present a sheet of selected foods and the "Farmer's Share of the Retail Dollar" and copies were distributed to members present. It is also on their website at www.nfu.org.

Labels are still confusing. Currently under the 60-day period, if beef is inspected on Day 1, then the next 59 days could be all Mexican beef but would be labeled U.S. Beef.

By Marlene Kouba

Mary Heller from the office of Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-MT) spoke on horse slaughter. She said the bill will come up again but has not yet been introduced. No agriculture is mentioned in it. It will be sent to the Judicial Committee. WIFE should contact them. Handwritten letters are the best. Write to Judicial Committee, 2138 Rayburn Building, Washington, DC 20515, phone is 202-225-3951.



Mary Heller

Buffalo and elk have wasting disease. Elk is most likely culprit. They are working with veterinarians in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. They are looking at appropriations for \$12 to \$15 per head for testing. This is for producers and new vaccines but also affects trading states. The rules are 130 pages and took years to write. It is a short-term plan to help counties around Yellowstone Park. If cattle were tested in 2008, they are not required to repeat again in 2009. Cattle must be tested 30 days before being moved. Aborted fetuses must be tested.

FARM BILL

By Marlene Kouba



Mark Halvorson & Christy Seyfert

Mark Halvorson represented Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Christy Seyfert represented Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) in a discussion of the Farm Bill. Regarding its implementation, the spousal rule comment period was extended. There are new rules to declare women as farmers in regard to payment limitations and eligibility for 2009. Women do have to apply.

The farm economy was good last year but 2009 will be much different. There are spillovers to all of this. USDA asked for a stepped up process to purchase more dairy products.

The food stamp program has a new name—the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP). Child nutrition programs will be upgraded.

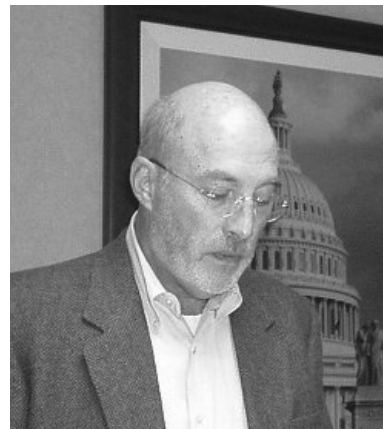
There is some speculation on the commodity markets. On COOL, they agreed that there should be more accurate labeling. Rules regarding the labels are not definite yet.

Disaster rules have not yet been written. Food safety is important.

Money is needed for new equipment for Farm Service Agency offices.

AG WORKERS

By Marlene Kouba



Paul Schegel

Paul Schegel, representing the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), said total ag employment is about three million and hired labor is about one million or a third of the total labor force. An undetermined amount of those who are hired, some estimate as high as 75 percent, work in the United States without authorization but getting the federal minimum wage

and some may have forged papers. Under Federal law, an employer may not question the documents of prospective employees if those documents appear genuine. If they don't appear legal, you cannot ask for other documentation. Within the hired agricultural workforce, there are about 75,000 workers hired through the H2-A program. This program allows an employer to bring workers temporarily to the United States to work in seasonal or temporary agricultural jobs. This is usually for a maximum period of 10 months, provided the employer can demonstrate that there are no willing and able U.S. workers to do the job. Under the H2-A program, an employer must provide free housing and transportation for the worker and pay the highest of three wages--the Federal minimum wage, the prevailing wage, or the adverse effect wage rate. The agricultural sector is uniquely dependent on immigrants or guest workers.

There is a bill in Congress that would delete the word 'navigable' regarding bodies of water in the Clean Water Act. He stated that AFBF does not want the word deleted from the regulations.

AFBF has not endorsed the cap and trade system.

CROP INSURANCE

By Marlene Kouba



Hayward Baker & Janie Simms

Hayward Baker and Janie Simms represented the Risk Management Agency.

Baker said that dates were moved from October 1 to August 15 for starting the 2012 crop year as a budget-saving move. It will affect most crops. Even if you have a claim pending, you still have to

pay the premium. Check with your agent as to what crops are affected but it is mostly row crops and range. Claims are compared to area yields. New technology is helping with the claims. They trust you but have to verify reviews. Policy holders should have ongoing records in case of a claim. This can also happen with claims over \$100,000. Records up to three years may be needed. Keep records for each unit, each farm. They get a lot of hurricane and drought claims. Reviews should be handled within weeks—not months or a year. In case of destroyed records, they deal with each case separately. Bad agents can be disqualified. Education is a tool for growers.

Simms works with all specialists in land grant insurance. Minnesota released a survey in risk management assessment. Crop insurance agents responded to the survey. Ag lenders were the first responders. Don't panic but be prepared. It is all about records and proving up.

They are trying to get more women involved in agriculture through the "Annie's Project".



WIFE is an independent grassroots organization.

WHEAT

Phyllis Howatt

Cereal Grains Chairman

Severe drought has hit Argentina's most agriculturally productive region and is expected to cause a sharp decline in grain output. In many areas the drought is considered to be the worst in 100 years. Some provinces will have about half the production as last year because the amount of wheat planted is smaller and yields are down due to lack of rainfall. Rural associations estimate that grain production will drop 39 percent.

eWheat is a new information-packed e-newspaper from Corn & Soybean Digest and Farm Press. A wealth of up-to-the-minute news on wheat production, research, marketing trends and government policy will be featured in every issue.

Harvesting wheat, taking it to the elevators, and shipping it to the mills for processing are steps that are necessary to send flour all over the country to be made into many products.

High-quality bread begins with high quality flour. Knowing which flour to use can be a little confusing with all of the types of flour available in grocery stores.

Bread flour has higher protein content and greater gluten strength than all-purpose flour. Gluten provides the protein framework for the bread. Kneading the dough long enough to sufficiently develop the gluten is necessary when using this flour.

All-purpose flour has lower protein content than bread flour. It can be used to make baked products ranging from cakes, quick breads, cookies and noodles. Yeast breads, including buns and rolls can also be made from all-purpose flour but these products may have a somewhat different texture.

Whole wheat flour or graham flour is coarser in texture and contains all parts of the wheat kernel--endosperm, germ and bran. It has a shorter shelf life because it contains some fat from the germ. The fat in whole-wheat flour may oxidize during storage, resulting in off-flavor or odors. Store whole wheat flour in your refrigerator or freezer to help prevent changes in the fat.

Whole wheat flour has more fiber than all-purpose flour, plus it contains vitamins and minerals from the bran. You can use half whole wheat flour and half white flour in bread recipes. We should try to make half of our grain food choices as whole grain. Look for the whole grain health claim on the food package with "whole wheat" or "oatmeal" as the first ingredient on the label.

Cake flour and pastry flour are milled from soft wheat flour. They are specialized products that require less gluten development.

You will find family and friends gathered around waiting to sample the finished products when baking with any of these flours.

STROH'S WIN AWARD

Each year the University of Wyoming National Agriculture Honor Society Gamma Sigma Delta selects an individual(s) to receive the Outstanding Agriculturist Award. Rick and Klodette Stroh, farmers in Wyoming, were selected for 2009. They were presented with the award on February 28, 2009. Klodette is the National WIFE Sugar Chairman.



WIFE MEETS IN DC

By Marlene Kouba

The temps were chilly but with the Capitol in view, the outlook of WIFE members visiting Washington was warm and uplifting. The Legislative Seminar was held in the Holiday Inn Capitol on February 8-10.

All members who wished to attend went to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for church or as a site to visit on Sunday morning. Business was confined to the rest of that day.

New President Tammy Basel kept the group moving on time with a heavy schedule of speakers.

Education chairman Pat Torgerson presented an idea to promote tacos in schools as a healthy food. She also presented a logo for FAED that could be used on promotional material. Some fundraising suggestions were discussed but more suggestions are welcome. The 2009 convention will be in New York in November.

On Monday, many speakers were heard in the Department of Agriculture with briefings from staffers of the House and Senate. Kathryn Hill of USDA was a great asset in getting the appointments. Members met in the new Capitol Visitors Center under the Capitol and some toured the Capitol in between their visits to their elected officials.

Hungry staffers kept coming and coming for the Pizza Party on Monday night. They said they could smell the pizza for several stories in the building. Twenty-five pizzas had been ordered but that had to be increased to 50 and 48 were consumed by the end of the evening. The various flavored pizzas were rectangle and cut into 24 pieces which means about 1152 pieces were eaten! We are sure there were at least 150 people present. Name tags showed they were from California to New York from Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, and many more. It was a great time for sharing our interest in agriculture and views of WIFE.

Tuesday was the day for visits on the Hill. Red folders containing the 2009 policies of WIFE, a new brochure and policy book were presented with visits in each member's Congressional office.

A Taste of WIFE was the final event of the week. Each state had brought along finger foods that represented a product from their state. Some of the foods were beef jerky, beef sticks and sausage, elk sticks, bread, butter, wheat crackers, Goldfish crackers, granola bars, several kinds of cheese, cinnamon popcorn, Poppy Cock popcorn, chocolates, maple sugar candy, huckleberry taffy, white chocolate-covered pecans and wine.

The group was small but all became well informed on a variety of topics and felt it worthwhile to attend. Many good contacts and new friends were made.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE MONTH

March is National Agriculture Month and National Ag Day is March 20. It is a good time to promote a commodity of your choice in schools, stores, fairs, etc. There are many ways you can promote agriculture during the month, such as advertising, lunches, giving away farmer's share of retail dollar for certain products, putting up posters, and much more. Be creative.



Pizza Party

NEW LEGISLATION

By Jenifer Felzien, CO
Legislation Chairman

Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) made numerous visits on Capitol Hill during early February. We heard from many offices that the major emphasis was working on the stimulus package and getting the bill passed.



The intent of the stimulus package is: Making supplemental appropriations for job preservation and creation, infrastructure investment, energy efficiency and science, assistance to the unemployed, state and local fiscal stabilization for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, this Act may be cited as the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009". (The act is 407 pages long and you may go to Recovery.gov to read the full document.)

The purpose of this Act includes:

1. To preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery.
2. To assist those most impacted by the recession
3. To provide investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances in science and health
4. To invest in transportation, environmental protection and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.
5. To stabilize state and local government budgets in order to minimize and avoid reductions in essential services and counterproductive state and local tax increases.

General principles concerning use of funds are: The President and heads of the federal departments and agencies shall manage and expend the funds made available in this Act so as to achieve the purposes specified in subsection (a) including commencing expenditures and activities as quickly as possible consistent with prudent management.

Emergency Designations: In general each amount in this Act is designated as an emergency requirement and necessary to meet emergency need pursuant to section 204 (a) of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress) and section 301 (b) (2) of S. Con Res. 70 (110th Congress), and concurrent resolutions on the budget for fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

Pay as you Go: All applicable provisions in this Act are designated as an emergency for the purpose of pay—as-you-go principles.

I will mention a few of the appropriations that Agriculture will be receiving and will try to find out more as the next months go by.

The Department of Agriculture will receive an additional \$24,000,000 for Agriculture Buildings, Facilities and Rental Payments, for necessary construction, repair, and improvement activities.

The Office of the Inspector General will receive an additional \$22,500,000 to remain available through September

30, 2013, for oversight and audit of programs, grants, and activities funded by this Act and administered by the Department of Agriculture.

The Agriculture Research Service (ARS) will receive an additional \$176,000,000 for deferred maintenance at ARS facilities. Priority in the use of such funds shall be given to critical deferred maintenance, to projects that can be completed, and to activities that can commence promptly following enactment of this Act.

The Farm Service Agency, Salaries and Expenses, will get \$50,000,000 for maintaining and modernizing the informational technology system.

Other bills that have been introduced are: S. 337, the Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Act of 2009, sponsored by Senator Michael Enzi and Senator Tim Johnson, would prohibit the importation of ruminants and swine, and fresh and frozen meats and products of ruminants and swine, from Argentina until the Secretary of Agriculture certifies to Congress that every region of Argentina is free of foot and mouth disease (FMD) without vaccination. The bill will not disrupt the status quo. We currently import dried, cured or cooked product from FMD-infected countries. This bill will not prohibit the importation of that product; it would only prohibit product that poses a risk for disease transmission, including live animals.

H.R. 814 was introduced by Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) to amend the Federal Food and Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act to improve the safety of food, meat, and the poultry products through enhanced traceability, and for other purposes.

PEANUT PRODUCTS

By Jacquelyn Sistrunk, AL
Peanut Chairman

Will 2009 be a good year to drop peanut acreage across the country?

A Georgia peanut company, Peanut Corporation of America (PCA), knowingly sold peanut products contaminated with salmonella. Congress launched an investigation of both the company and the FDA. Although Peanut Corporation of America is a small manufacturer, consumers are now frightened of peanut products and the ripple effect is being felt throughout the peanut industry. PCA recently recalled peanut products linked to more than 500 illnesses and maybe eight deaths. It is unconceivable that the plant tested positive for salmonella numerous times, but nothing was done by FDA to ensure the product did not go to market.

The salmonella scare immediately slowed peanut sales which put further pressure on a market already in an overstock situation. United States peanut farmers produced 2.58 million tons in 2008—a record crop that created twice as much surplus as needed.

Peanut growers need \$425 for a farmer-stock ton for the crop to be economically competitive with other commodities. Nathan Smith, a Georgia Extension ag economist, suggested that growers are better off signing a contract for \$355 a ton than putting peanuts in the loan program. At least a contract for \$355 pays storage and handling.

BEEES HELP FARMERS

By Kay Zeosky



Thomas Van Arsdall

Tom Van Arsdall represented the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (C-FAR) whose members believe that public funding should be enhanced for research, extension and education. They submit comments to the appropriations and budget committees during the fiscal year to achieve that goal. They are trying to get enough money for extension and research but there is less each year. They are way under-funded. He said that he can work with us but not for us.

Their "Lunch-N-Learn" seminar educational series for Hill staffers drew over 500 participants in 2008 and featured top researchers discussing leading-edge research. Each luncheon lasts about 25-30 minutes and costs only \$6 to attend. They also draw members from many universities as well as food and agricultural organizations. Dollars invested in agricultural research, extension and education have provided our nation with high quality and affordable food and fiber. Research leads to many areas—energy, commodities, health, etc. They take no position on projects—just research. Crucial to that process are the honeybees that pollinate our food products. Bees are believed to have come to this country during the 1600's with the Europeans. There are now over 4000 species. In the past few years, "colony collapse" has been devastating to our pollinators. The disease is suspected to have come into the country from Australia, and with bees being very social creatures, has spread quickly. Example: Almond trees must have bees for pollination. Bees are transported back and forth between states to be used on different crops. Bees from the different areas intermingle.

About 80 percent of the world depends on plants and over 70 percent of our plants need pollination. A study by French and German scientists found that we depend on pollinators for nine percent of all food production and one-third of our fruits and vegetables worth \$250 billion per year, with a value to the U.S. alone of \$71 billion in 2007. Due to our current problems, the food and fiber industries are going to need a vast amount of help from this new administration.

Habitat helps bees as food supplies for them are important to maintain healthy hives for future pollination. Insect monitoring provides a key measure of success. Bees need water and it should be shallow and sloping so they can get a drink. Butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, birds, bats and the wind are also pollinators. Pollinators are often forgotten or ignored. We can help at the grassroots level.



First Timers to DC - Barbara Broberg, Doreen Gillespie, Whitney Wankle, Shana Baisch, not pictured Carole Kupelian.

ALABAMA WIFE held their first meeting of the year in the home of State President Mary Ann Sheppard on February 7. The meeting was opened with Louise Huskey giving the invocation and Jeanette Torbert led the Pledge to the Flag. Commodity reports were given by each member which is always very educational.

Goals were set for the year. They are: 1. Visit our Congressmen when they come home from D.C. and are in our areas. 2. Ag Day program in March. We plan to go into a store in our area town and have posters by certain foods to show how much the farmer receives and where the other cost is in that product. We will also pass out fact cards to the people in the store. 3. Plans for fundraisers for the year will be to sell Rada Cutlery, hold a rummage sale in May, and have a Camp stew sale in October. At each monthly meeting the host serves a meal, however it was decided that if we went to a cafe to eat we would pay several dollars for that meal so now each member in attendance will give the treasurer \$5.00 each month.

We plan to get an application from Wal-Mart for a scholarship for our Ag Day program. They usually give \$500 to \$1000. Each state should try for a scholarship from their local Wal-Mart. We plan to visit Production Credit and the Federal Land Bank and ask for a donation.

The past two years our group has taken a field trip for our convention. This year we plan to go to the state 4-H Center which is about seventy miles away. One of our members is a Regional Extension Agent and she will make plans for the day.

Information on FAED was passed out and members were asked to send in their membership to help with scholarships.

The meeting adjourned with a meal of soup, corn bread and cake.

HOSPITALS

By Marlene Kouba



Kristin Welsh

Kristin Welsh represented the American Hospital Association. She stated that they are in business to protect the patient and support the hospital. Medicare and Medicaid pay a high percentage of the costs. Hospitals have more numbers of free care with no chance of being repaid for about \$2 billion. Those with 25 beds or less are now called "critical access hospitals" and paid at a higher rate than

others. Hospitals will be accessing technology with medical records at a cost of at least \$1 million. Some money could be from grants. In the stimulus bill if Medicaid money goes to states it should be for Medicaid or hospitals. Small hospitals need equal access to that money. "Tweeners" hospitals are those between 25 and 50 beds and are caught in the middle. There are some plans to get graduate medical students to stay in small hospitals. The stimulus bill has some aspects of health reform.

The cigarette tax will pay for the sCHIPS health bill for children.

GRAIN SORGHUM

By Lisa Goodheart, KS
Feed Grains Sorghum

Grain sorghum, in this case milo, is emerging as a preferred energy source for today's pork producers. In the past, only beef and poultry producers used grain sorghum in their rations, but sorghum is becoming a complement to, or a replacement for, corn in many areas.

Grain sorghum offers a 97 percent feed value compared to corn and is used in formulated rations for swine. These rations may include a variety of grains such as corn, soybean meal, barley, field peas, wheat, and oats.

One producer of premium pork products depends on sorghum as an essential feed ingredient. On average, out of the 800,000 bushels of feed grains used per week, 300,000 bushels are grain sorghum.

Another farrow-to-finish operation uses approximately five million bushels of grain sorghum a year and produces pork products that meet export market expectations. They consider grain sorghum to be a key ingredient in the production of quality pork and increase the grain sorghum rations as the pigs mature. Every animal produced consumes approximately ten bushels of corn or grain sorghum during the growth cycle.

The average daily gain of a pig on a milo ration will be similar to one on a corn ration. One disadvantage of milo is that the kernel is smaller and harder than a corn kernel and fine grinding or rolling is suggested for best utilization.



ANIMAL ID

By Marlene Kouba

Dr. John Gifford is a delegate for the International des Epizooties (OIE), a world animal health organization, and the group will meet in May. OIE sets a movement of trade around the world. Each country has one vote. Much is done by consensus rather than by vote. OIE gives recommendations—not rules. They use scientific data. He believes traceability is necessary, such as for tuberculosis since it also affects people. Brand laws are different in each state but could provide traceability. Animal ID is still voluntary. About 35 percent of the premises or about 15,000 a week are completed. There are eight tags, six radio frequency ID (RFID) tags plus injectibles that could be used. When an animal is discovered, they go back, at the back end approach. A 48-hour traceability is their long time goal. The initial focus is on beef cattle as 80 percent of swine are registered, 95 percent of sheep and 60 percent of goats. The standard for national animal identification system (NAIS) is to be a basic standard number. Formerly it was a herd number or a person's number but all were premises ID. Veterinarians will use a premises ID. The U.S. number is 840 and is a solution for country of origin labeling (COOL).

The Kansas location was named as a substitute for the Plum Island Laboratory for animal infectious diseases testing. We must enlarge the capabilities of studying animal-human diseases. Plum Island could be continued but there are multiple labs that would be suitable. It is all about security. Being on an island you must maintain boats and in case of bad weather, you are crippled. The infrastructure is now critical.

Some states now have bills to open a horse slaughter plant. Horsemeat was served in zoos in the United States so there is now a shortage of meat for those animals since the plants were closed down two years ago.



Dr. John Clifford

STATISTICS

By Marlene Kouba, Editor

Philip Hayes is a member of North Bridge Communications—a public relations agricultural firm.

He gave some statistics from 1980—President Ronald Reagan, Bill Gates was given \$50,000 to build a computer for IBM and Chrysler got a bailout.

Prices for sugar are down 13 percent. Since 1985, fuel is up 157 percent. Cane sugar has been flattened by hurricanes for the past several years. Mexico has complete access to the U.S. market and is shipping sugar to the U.S. The farm bill continues a sugar policy and includes the first price loan increase in years. Sucrose ethanol can be made from excess sugar. Thus far, President Obama supports sugar. Some Mexican officials estimate that they will send in enough sugar to fill one-tenth of the US market.

The commodity title is not changed in the farm bill. One of the hardest fights of the farm bill was to keep agriculture in it as production agriculture groups all seemed to fight for different parts rather than working together.

Farm Policy Facts is a blog at farmpolicyfacts.org. He asked for our support of sugar in our visits on the Hill.



Philip Hayes

BOTTLED WATER

By Stephanie Trask
Natural Resources/Water
Chairman

As the stewards of our animals and property, we are caretakers, we are naturalists, and we are environmentalists. I would be preaching to the choir if I launched into an article on green living or stewardship of the planet. However, there may be one convenience that we have over-looked in our adherence to ecological principle--the consumption of bottled water.

Extensive advertising campaigns, which market bottled water as "pure", "still", "spring" and "fresh", have helped to elevate it to a level of consumer confidence--higher than that of publicly available water supplies. About 40 percent of bottled water is taken from the tap for free, put through filtration processes, and sold back to the public with a mark-up of up to 1,000 times.

A study conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council, which tested over 1,000 bottles of 103 brands of bottled water, stated that "there is no assurance that bottled water is any safer than tap water."

Tap water is under much stricter regulatory standards than bottled water. This is because bottled water is defined as a "food" under federal regulations, and under the authority of the Food and Drug Administration, while tap water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For instance, the EPA mandates that local water treatment plants provide city residents with a detailed report of the source of tap water and any testing results, including contaminant level violations. There are no such obligations for bottled water companies. Nevertheless, Americans spend billions on bottled water every year at an average cost of more than one dollar per bottle.

Aside from the rationality of paying for something that is essentially free, there is the question of who owns the water in the first place and whose it is to control. Rural communities around the country have fought water-bottling corporations, such as Nestle, that take millions of gallons of water out of community watersheds at no cost, and often without so much as a permit or study on environmental consequence.

There are 17 million barrels of oil per year that go into the production of the plastic water bottles. There is the additional cost and environmental impact of transporting the bottles to distribution points for marketing. Nine out of ten of these plastic water bottles wind up as garbage, or litter, at a rate of 30 million per year, according to Pat Franklin, executive director of Container Recycling Institute.

Finally, there is the growing concern about the safety of storing food or beverages in plastic containers. A Kansas Department of Health and Environment test of 80 samples of bottled water from retail stores, found that well over half of them contained some form of the carcinogen, phthalate or PET, found in plastics. Twelve of the samples exceeded federal safety levels for the chemical.



(Source: nrdc.org; "The Bottled Water Backlash" by Michael Blanding; AlterNet.org; environmentalgraffiti.com; allaboutwater.org;"Message In a Bottle"; emagazine.com.)

BROADBAND SERVICE

By Donna Bolz, NE
Communications Chairman

Help is on its way to bring wireless broadband service to rural America. Soon it will be easier for people living in rural communities to have broadband Internet access-- thanks to low-interest loans available from the USDA. People living in 518 communities spread over seventeen states will have access to Wi-Max broadband when the system is installed by Open Range Communications of Centennial, CO. The installation of the broadband access will allow access to about six million people who currently do not have access to other broadband services. "Broadband is as important today as providing rural telephone service was 75 years ago and we're proud of our role in fostering public-private partnerships to bring broadband services to rural America," said Thomas C. Dorr, former under secretary for Rural Development in a press release.

A \$267 million loan to install the broadband is part of the USDA's Rural Development Utility Program (RDUP). The loan to Open Range is one of the largest public-private partnerships for universal broadband Internet service ever given by the federal government. The Open Range project is the program's first investment to support Wi-Max technology. In the past the USDA has helped fund the installation of coaxial and fiber optic systems into rural areas.

Open Range's plan is to make broadband access available only in communities where it does not exist and to be the first provider of service within targeted communities. The service will not be installed in communities that already have access to broadband service via existing cable or DSL providers. Open Range will also offer satellite services to provide rural residents with portable connections almost nationwide. The plan calls for equipment installation to serve 447,000 affected households over the next five years.

Open Range originally announced its plan to expand its service area in October 2007. The company has raised \$100 million in private capital to fund the project. Terms of the USDA loan require repayment of the loan over a 12-year period.

"This is an exciting day for our company and our country," stated Bill Beans, Jr., Chairman, CEO and Founder of Open Range. "We appreciate the confidence the RDUP and our new investors have shown and look forward to working with each of our partners to bring high-quality, high-speed wireless communications products and services to markets which have been ignored for too long."

The states where Open Range will be installing their system include: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Wisconsin.



SENATE		HOUSE	
Jan. 6	Convened	Jan. 6	Convened
Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day recess	Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day recess
Jan. 20	Presidential Inauguration	Jan. 20	Presidential Inauguration
Feb. 16-20	Presidents Day recess	Feb. 16-20	Presidents Day recess
April 6-17	Spring recess	April 6-17	Spring recess
May 25-29	Memorial Day recess	May 25-29	Memorial Day recess
June 29-July 3	Independence Day recess	June 29-July 3	Independence Day recess
Aug. 10-Sept. 7	August/Labor Day recess	Aug. 3-Sept. 4	August/Labor Day recess
TBD	Target Adjournment	Oct. 30	Target Adjournment

PROTECTIONISM

By Ruth Larabee, NY
Trade Chairman



The words "Buy American" in the stimulus package have brought global wide responses. The word "protectionism" is used in most of the responses. What is protectionism? The dictionary defines it as the economic system or theory of protectionism in which high tariffs on imported goods give domestic producers encouragement and advantage. Even though the language "Buy American" was eased a bit, most articles are showing a deep concern about what will happen in the United States and with our trading partners. There is a fine line as to how to keep import and export markets open and still help the people in each country in these times of a troubling economy. Many governments fear that unfairly obstructing imports and exports, trade retaliation and the departure of international investments in equity will cause the economy to deteriorate more than it has now. In all of this, each country now has the difficult job of local financial protection in a global world.

Several articles are pointing to what "damage protectionism" can do as in the 1930's with the enactment of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act (SHTA). The SHTA was put forth by Rep. Willis C. Hawley and Sen. Reed Smoot, thereby the name. With the Act in place, the United States promoted "buy American goods" and raised tariffs making imports more costly. Other countries retaliated and U.S. unemployment reached 25 percent in 1933 while trade lessened over 50 percent by 1934. Some are saying with the SHTA in place it caused the Depression and others are reporting the tightening of credit due to procedure mistakes by the Federal Reserve right after the crash of Wall Street and bank failures caused the Depression.

From these problems the World Bank and other organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) materialized. The WTO has a current membership of 153 countries. They are increasing their observation of protectionist trade policies. This also is a fine line as some countries have opted to place a type of protectionism of which the WTO disapproves but apparently is not saying it's prohibited. For example, the European Union put export subsidies in this year's budget for dairy products. The WTO doesn't like the EU's subsidy decision but they are not calling them on it. There are several different protectionism options for countries of which some are officially authorized and others are walking that fine line again. An example of options includes anti-dumping in which countries can place higher tariffs on goods being dumped

in their markets that are imported below market value. Another is that if subsidies give an imbalanced benefit to exports, they can be disputed under WTO rules. Even though the WTO wants to abolish agriculture goods and limit other farm subsidies if a country has the resources they can subsidize farm output and exports. Some others are industry and financial bailouts, permitted tariff raises and non-tariff barriers.

Gordon Brown the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom talks of free trade but supports "British jobs for British workers" at home. In February the British workers went on strike because of many hired foreign contractors. South Africa (SA) is supporting "buy SA" and endorses acquiring local laws but are complaining about the policies of the U.S. and the European Union.

How the language in the stimulus package will be interpreted by our new administration is yet to be seen. Several leaders of organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers were against the "Buy America" stipulation but felt the end wording was okay. It was not what they wanted, but they gave their support to the stimulus package.

It's reported the final language in the stimulus will have an impact on Brazil, Russia, Turkey, China and India as they do not participate nor do they have existing trade deals for projects in public works with the United States. Mexico, Canada, Australia, Japan, and European countries are trading partners so will be safe. The President did visit with Canada to talk with Prime Minister Stephen Harper. It is reported that the trade between the U.S. and Canada amounts to approximately \$600 billion.

There is a renewed thrust for protection on specific products known as Geographic Indicators (GIs). The European Union and the Swiss officials continue to seek restrictions on global GIs. If this is made into law, states like Wisconsin, New York and Vermont will not be able to use the name "Cheddar" such as "Wisconsin Cheddar". California could not use the name "Swiss" for their "California Swiss". It could cause fewer dollars for our dairy producers and cheese makers as these products would be imported. It could take awhile for the U.S. to come up with other names for the cheese types as well as new labels which could cause consumer confusion where products are made and sold.

WIFE supports fair trade for our agriculture producers and consumers. (Sources: Reuters, USTR, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, International Herald Tribune, Investors Business Daily, Business Day SA, Susan Finston, Barcodes)

Calendar of Events:

March 25 - Reports are due
June - BOD Meeting, Denver, CO
November - National Convention, NY

SUGAR POLICY

By Klodette Stroh, WY
Sugar Chairman



According to the American Sugar Alliance, the new farm bill will play a strong part to support the sugar producers. For the first time since 1973, sugar was included in the nation's farm bill. This bill provides sugar producers a small share of a loan increase to help them with the high cost of production. It also addresses unwanted Mexican sugar and keeps the USDA from making premature import decisions in the future.

Our new Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has pledged to work with Congress in order to have policies that will help assist U.S. sugar producers.

Sugar farmers have received good news for the future but, at this point, the sugar produced in the year 2008 has a very bearish market. Compared to other commodity prices, sugar has stayed very low. Unlike corn, wheat, beans, and other commodities, sugar producers didn't see a price spike in 2008 to help them to offset record high fuel and fertilizer costs. The situation has gotten worse as USDA increased the sugar surplus to 567,000 tons on January 1. The recent ratio is showing that the surplus has increased to 10 percent from 4.6 percent last month.

What does this mean for many sugar farmers, especially the producers in the Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc. in Texas? It means the prices that sugar farmers will receive will be 13 percent lower than prices last summer and carry heavier financial losses. Other souring issues, such as bad weather and unneeded sugar entering our market under NAFTA, continues adding up to the financial problems of sugar growers in Texas.

Looking at future promises from President Obama and cooperation promises from Secretary Vilsack to support the sugar industry, they are shining a bright light on current problems.

Texas farmers are worrying that if promises are not carried to the full extent, if weakened sugar policy and needless trade concessions continue, the end will draw near for the sugarcane production in the Rio Ground valley.

About \$740,900,000 of economic activity is generated in the state of Texas each year by the U.S. sweetener industry. Texas holds the distinction of being the only state that grows, processes and refines sugar beets, sugar cane and corn into sugar and sweeteners. As part of the national sweetener industry, Texas is one of the 42 states that help to create \$21.1 billion in economic activity.



WIFeline

A publication of
Women Involved in Farm Economics
Marlene Kouba, Editor
6160 105th Ave. SW
Regent, ND 58650
Ph: 701-563-4560
FAX: 701-563-4560
email: mmkouba@ndsupernet.com
Published monthly except June & November

VITAMINS

By Cynthia Thomsen, NE
Rural Health Chairman



With a few exceptions, vitamin supplements may be a waste of your money. Good nutrition is high on any checklist for maintaining a robust body and mind but popping vitamins may not be necessary or safe to fend off chronic and age-related diseases.

For the most part, Americans are well fed and nourished. Most of our food is fortified and with a few exceptions for pregnant women or the elderly, most people do not need supplements. However the diets of many Americans are short of many essential nutrients and could use a boost in some cases.

Many people take a multivitamin every day with little evidence that they do any good. The U. S. Preventive Services Task Force neither recommends nor advises against multivitamins or other supplements for preventing cancer or cardiovascular diseases. If you do take one, buy the inexpensive basic brands as they have the same power as those that are more expensive. The editor of *Harvard Men's Health Watch* says that extra folate on top of fortified foods could spur prostate cancer. Researchers now say that vitamin E does not prevent prostate cancer but may increase the chance of getting it.

Extra calcium to protect bone and teeth health is safe and often prescribed for women who get too little in their daily diet. Teens should get 1300 mg a day and adults should have 1200 mg a day. Vitamin D is now being promoted to help boost calcium. About 15 minutes of sunlight a day or eating fatty fish, which is the only major food source for vitamin D, will help. The Institute of Medicine is considering increasing the daily recommended allowance (RDA) of vitamin D, now at 200 to 600 international units (IU). Experts put the high end anywhere from 800 IU to 2,000 IU a day. Adding 1,000 IU of vitamin D a day isn't likely to hurt you but could help those who don't get much sun.

The American Heart Association recommends 1,000 mg of fish oil supplements or eating fatty fish like tuna or salmon twice a week for those at high risk of a heart attack.

Antioxidants are still in question. Most studies suggest that eating fruits and vegetables with antioxidants may lower the risks of some forms of heart disease, cancer or dementia but clinical trials do not support this idea.

A balanced daily diet is still the best source of nutrients. Good health comes with physical activity and a diet heavy on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, good fats, and fish along with red meat for protein. Go light on bad fats and processed foods that are heavy on calories. Ask your doctor about vitamins before buying them over the counter. When you do, look at the labels—you may be taking much more than your suggested daily requirements. Save your money and let nature help your body take care of itself.

LAMBING

By Gwen Cassel, NY
Sheep and Goats Chairman

A status of the sheep industry, published in *Sheep Industry News*, is titled, "New Year and New Challenges." It claims that the United States is in a recession and that pricier meats lost value as the economy slowed while chicken prospered. A report from Packaged Facts explained that meat is one of the most dynamic commodities in the United States today. "This is primarily due to the trend of adding value to livestock through organic, grass-fed, free-range and other farm practices, as well as the growing trend to brand customer-ready meat," it said. The Sheep Industry News goes on to explain that, "Lamb sales have been historically very seasonal. Increasingly, however, the number of lambs harvested for the holidays is muted, relative to the rest of the year. This might be a tribute to the industry in its effort to promote lamb as an everyday choice as well as the popularity of lamb among the growing ethnic population. To successfully promote lamb in the United States, there must be a consistent, quality supply throughout the year."

This helps to explain why some farmers are in cold barns right now in the process of overseeing ewes having lambs, making sure that there is good air flow in the barn but no drafts, and providing good feed to ewes and lambs, along with a supply of clean non-frozen water. Winter born lambs will be sold in the Easter Market (auctions) which occurs most years in late-March or early-April. Lambing in the winter is often harder on the shepherd than it is on the ewe or the lambs. Well-fed mothers that provide good milk have lambs that, once dried after birth, can withstand quite cold temperatures but do not do well in windy situations or in barns that are so closed that ammonia stays in the air.

In March and April many large flocks in the West will be having their lambs and producers will spend several weeks to a couple of months with them. They will then be weaned, providing for the lambs to be fed for good growth and marketed later in the year. Their mothers will be taken to summer grazing, sometimes quite a distance from the home ranch. The ewes are overseen twenty-four hours a day by sheep herders who keep them from danger, move them for better grazing as necessary and live a solitary life that is pastoral yet challenging.

During May into June many of us here in northeast U.S. will have put our ewes out on green grass in time to have late spring lambs born right on the grass with little artificial help to pair them up or keep them together. The gentle calls of ewes and lambs let us know that instinct is taking care of the nurturing. Lambs will suckle grass-rich milk from their moms and will graze this grass along with their moms until being weaned later in the summer. After weaning, the lambs are given the most choice grass while moms, who do not need the best nutrition at the stage of the year, will be grazed to clean up the areas where the lambs have picked the best grass. Later in the fall these lambs will have grown and be ready to be harvested.



In September ewes that were developed to have their lambs out-of-season, or those bred in about May, will have those lambs right out on grass in areas where there is fall re-growth of grass, or closer to the barn where fall grasses are not available. When grass is no longer available, these lambs will be fed grain and will be available for those seeking lamb for Ramadan or Christmas along with late fall-born lambs for specialty markets such as the Italian young lamb market. Some of these lambs will be finished on grain and become excellent lamb available in the middle of the winter.

Being able to provide a good, healthy lamb product to customers throughout the year is one way to assist in the viability of lamb as a continuing food product. Often lamb is thought of as a "specialty meat," but it can become something you can enjoy often during the year, thanks to dedicated shepherds who are willing to adjust their schedules and shepherd their sheep in all situations and types of weather.

OILSEED USES

By Vernice Balsdon, ND
Oilseeds Chairman

Whole flaxseed keeps for several years in clean, dry storage at below zero to 80 degrees. Flax seeds must be ground for people to derive their full health benefits. Ground flaxseed can be mixed with orange or other juices, into any smoothies, sprinkled on your cereal or added to just about any baked item. A daily dose of ground flaxseed is about 35 grams or three heaping tablespoons, depending on fineness of grind.



Supertein is a new canola protein, being developed by a company in Canada, which can be added to highly acidic beverages like sodas, sports drinks, and fruit juices to add protein. They say consumers are willing to pay more for a drink they think is healthy. They are also developing another canola protein called Puratein which would make it ideal for gelling and binding various food products. It could be a replacement for ingredients like milk and eggs, making it especially attractive to vegan and vegetarian markets. After these protein isolates are extracted, the meal can still be used for livestock feed. Canola oil is now being used in tires produced by Finland-based Nokian Tires. They say canola oil enhanced the grip on snowy and icy roads in both studded and non-studded tires for cars and SUV's.

Sprinkling soybean oil in swine finishing barns reduces dust emissions from the units. Research has shown that sprinkling vegetable oil on the floor and other pen surfaces in swine barns can significantly reduce airborne particulate matter (dust) concentrations. Results from a study in a northern Missouri swine finishing barn showed that soybean oil reduced dust, by as much as 70 percent compared to a control barn with no oil. This dust in barns can affect both workers and animals.

WIFE promotes all agricultural commodities.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS



Clete Boykin & Claudia Kroph

Claudia Kroph presented some tips for WIFE members to use when they make important visits anywhere.

Our clothes should not detract from our message. This includes wearing small jewelry—no oversize pins, necklaces or long earrings. Pants are accepted today. If wearing nylons, carry a spare pair with you. Carry a safety pin inside your jacket, waistband or hem for emergencies. Be sure you are wearing your outfit and your outfit is not wearing you. Dress to meet your client. Wear comfortable shoes if you are doing a lot of walking. Carry your purse with the end of the zipper in front and your cell phone clipped inside. When putting your purse on the floor, keep it behind your feet or beside them but keep your foot touching it. Cross your legs at the ankles—not your knees. Just dab perfume—don't overload with it. Turn off your cell phone or put it on vibrate. Carry a small comb. Don't have bad breath—carry Snaps or Tic Tacs. When meeting a client, give a firm handshake. When traveling, fold your clothes with tissue paper. Remember--it is better to be better dressed than tacky!

PUTTING YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD.

Clete Boykin gave suggestions for successful lobbying when WIFE members meet clients on the Hill.

Make an appointment and be on time. Turn off your cell phone or put it on vibrate. Be prepared to meet in all kinds of places as your meeting may end up in a hallway or in a busy office. The staffers are used to the noises in an office and won't be distracted. Know your issues and anticipate questions. If you go in as a group, have a spokesperson. Do not all speak at once. Designate speakers for different topics. Address your member with respect and call him by his/her title. If you know the member, you may call him/her by first name. Call staffers by first names. Keep your message short and 20 to 30 minutes is average. Allow time for them to ask questions. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know, but I will get back to you." When you get home, check out the answer and get back to them. Tell them what you want them to do as they represent you. When done, hand them a one-page paper with a title on the top for each issue. Your recommendation should be on the bottom. When done, thank all who are present.

When you get home, follow up with a thank you and a reminder of what you discussed. You can email with your key issue. Send thanks to the staffer and/or the elected member with whom you met. Send email carbon copies to staffers you met. Handwritten notes are better than email but do both. Send snail mail to district offices so it gets to them faster. If you don't have a one-pager, send one later as a follow-up. If you have a personal connection, use it. It is preferred that people stand when an elected official comes into the room of a luncheon. Women have a choice of standing or staying seated.



USDA Katherine Hill visiting with WIFE members

COOL

By Marlene Kouba

Claiborne Crain represented the Agriculture Committee for Rep. Collin Peterson, (D-MN)

Most issues affect both parties. The mix label was added to Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) to handle the left-overs and mixed meat. They want Animal ID to preserve the integrity of our food supply. The price will be borne by the producer but there will be confidentiality. Our herds could be destroyed but we may not be the source of the problems. States have a better control than the federal government regarding traceability.

The Extension has forced children to sign for a premises ID in some areas.

Milk prices have dropped in half in past few months. Plum Island is expensive to manage and upkeep.

The USDA no longer raises a big alarm when Canada has a BSE cow.

You can spend a lot of money on things that won't happen. Some CRP money is keeping farmers on the land and it keeps down a surplus of grains.

There is a shortage of large-animal vets. At times the world view is considered when looking at our nation.

Certain times of the year will show more changes than others.

Membership Information:

____ Yes, send me information about becoming a member of WIFE. I am interested in the grassroots organization.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Send above form to the
National Membership Chairman
Alice Fairfax - 27248 Goodwill Chapel Rd.
Sedalia, MO 65301

CANADIAN COOL

By Mary Ellen Cammack, SD
Beef Chairman



The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) met with Canadian government officials on February 24 to discuss the voluntary new guidelines, introduced by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, along with the mandatory Country of Origin labeling (mCOOL) which takes effect March 16, 2009. The CCA and the Canadian government believe, that upon implementation, these changes will further disrupt cattle and beef trade between their country and the United States. CCA is calling for an early resumption of a World Trade Organization (WTO) challenge against, what they view as, United States trade-restrictive actions.

Secretary Vilsack is expecting adoption of his suggested voluntary guidelines of the final rule that was published in January 2009. Vilsack also indicated that if the proposed changes are not adopted, he will amend the rule and enforce the changes.

CCA President Brad Wilderman suggested that the proposed guidelines would greatly change the intent of mCOOL's final rule. "In our view, the guidelines, as written, will be worse than the interim final rule that the Government of Canada was challenging through the WTO. The implications for the industry on both sides of the border are significant. If the Secretary's suggestions are adopted, either "voluntarily" or through subsequent rulemaking, the rule will become even more onerous, costly and impractical than it is now, and extremely trade disruptive. The threat of forcing "voluntary" compliance is tantamount to creating a de facto rule that's very damaging to Canada's red meat industries, as the U.S. industry will likely ease their compliance burden by avoiding purchase of imported animals and beef," he said.

Secretary Vilsack's letter of February 10 to the United States industry indicates that USDA plans to measure compliance of the voluntary guidelines by auditing companies. Upon audit completion, USDA could re-open the mCOOL legislation and enforce the now suggested guidelines.

The guidelines change: Multiple country labels to specifically state the country where each production step took place. For example, if born and raised in Country X, and slaughtered in Country Y; or born in Country X, but raised in slaughtered in Country Y, then labels should clearly reflect this. Processed meats label include all cooked, cured, and smoked products, not comminuted, e.g. canned ham, etc. Inventory window on ground beef— to adopt a 10-day window, rather than 60-day.

Wildeman added, "This latest action by the USDA increases the already obvious U.S. violation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and WTO trade rules. When the final rule was passed by the Bush administration in January, we felt a pause in Canada's trade challenge was in order to evaluate the market response. But this latest protectionist action makes it very clear that Canada must use every tool to challenge actions and policies that will harm the

Canadian industry. It's obvious that the U.S. has no intention of creating a workable solution for the industry. When the interim final rule was released in September 2008, many U.S. packers decided that the easiest way to comply was to no longer process cattle finished in Canada. We had hoped that this would turn around with the final rule. Not only is this U.S. action harming Canada's red meat industry, but it will ultimately impair the global competitiveness of the majority of our U.S. counterparts, who wanted to avoid the significantly increasing expense of handling cattle imported from foreign markets."

The Canadian government originally launched a WTO trade challenge against the U.S. and mCOOL in December 2008. With the release of the final rule, Canada suspended its WTO challenge to assess its impact, since the added flexibility of the final rule appeared to make an effort to create a more workable trade environment. (Source: www.cattle.ca.)

BORDER CONTROL

By Marlene Kouba



Cindy Bartel & Sunalei Stewart

Sunalei Stewart from the office of Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Cindy Bartel from the office of Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) spoke on border control.

Stewart said border control is improving in New Mexico. About one million immigrants came across the border in 2007. There is a 50 percent decrease and much is due to mandatory prosecution. Once they get in, many stay as undocumented—about 12 million. The border fence is nearly completed. Security is one factor but the other is the economy.

The status of quest workers or ag jobs needs to be reformed. Some areas of Mexico are dependent on American income. Drug cartels have killed many Mexican officials which puts stress on both sides. Semi-trucks that have ramps are now being used to help immigrants drive over the barriers. About 90 percent of all weapons in Mexico are made in the U.S. He said his name is Cherokee and means "Morning Sun".

Bartel said Senator Johnson introduced the "Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Act of 2009". Some products from countries with the disease are allowed in to the U.S. such as dried, cured and cooked products from Argentina. Plum Island's new locations need to be re-looked at.

Animal ID was discussed and WIFE members gave their opinions. WIFE should write a position paper that represents our views. Producers are against the intrusion of government in their lives, so they are against animal identification. Congress provided funding to USDA which writes the rules and regulations.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

By Frances Rohla, NE
Pork Chairman

Dr. Steve McDonald, DVM (Doctor of Veterinarian Medicine) of Henrietta, Texas, feels that the "Vegetarian Wolf" is at your door. The doctor has enjoyed his practice of animal agriculture as the heart and soul of veterinary medicine. He believes vegetarianism should be a personal choice but some vegetarians want to destroy all livestock production. They portray all animals as being raised on factory farms. Farm Bureau says that 90 percent of all farms are family-owned and antibiotics are used only when necessary.

Dr. McDonald believes that agricultural producers must police themselves. Animal abuse must not be tolerated. All employees must be trained in proper handling techniques.

Some animal concentration creates environmental issues which must be solved. Disposal of waste and water runoff is the main issue. Proposition 2 in California was passed in 2008. They have banned modern housing systems for veal calves and gestating sows by 2015. Caged laying hens will move out of California. An Arizona measure banned sow stalls in 2006 and since then Smithfield Foods announced the phase out of crates. Burger King was pressured to have suppliers raise their animal welfare standards. Farm groups need to tell the American public how we farm and raise all animals.

Animal rights activists may push Congress to enact federal standards like California's which may be backed by the Humane Society. They would then set standards for meat, milk, and eggs purchased for schools and military. Should producers of food be worried? Yes, but only when the government gets involved.

The pork check-off is promoting global ethnic fusion cuisine. Common Threads is a non-profit organization that fosters an appreciation for cultural diversity through cooking. Pork is the world's most widely consumed protein. Pork pairs well with nearly any flavor profile and is easy to prepare.

Mexico and Canada have filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization (WTO) opposing America's country of origin labeling (COOL) for fresh beef and pork. After consultation between the Mexico and the United States, Mexico can ask the WTO to set up an investigative panel. Trade disputes can take years of litigation. Under COOL, foreign cattle and pigs must be segregated in U.S. feedlots and packing plants. Some firms may deal with only livestock from the United States.



Taste of WIFE

CATTLE EMISSIONS

By Dianna Reed, KS
Dairy Chairman

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published the final rule on cattle emissions on December 18, 2008. There is no doubt that cows burp, belch and, to put it nicely, "pass wind." No big deal you might say. Think again, if the government decides differently. The new ruling seems to have caught producers and farmers off guard. Under the Emergency Planning Community Right to know Act (EPCRA), an emissions report is required from Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, with more than seven hundred or more mature dairy cows, milked or dry, that emit one hundred pounds or more of ammonia or hydrogen sulfide during a twenty four hour period. The amount of paperwork involved in a report of this type is mind boggling, not to mention the puzzle of trying to capture the information. Short of tying a balloon to either end of a cow, no one has figured out just how are we going to get the data for such a report?? A report was due on January 20, which could have been done by phone, but a follow up written report was due on February 19. Dairies that are required to report, and do not, are subject to a \$25,000 per-day penalty or criminal liability charges for knowingly failing to report.

Not to worry, the EPA will supply you with a work sheet but will not offer any explanation as to what the data will be used for. Cattle emissions is a fact of life and it is the suspicion of producers that, by reporting it, the government will in turn find a way to place some form of permit fee or tax. Recently farmers were alarmed when there was widespread talk of a "cow tax". EPA has since emphasized that it was merely a rumor that came about from its Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) under the Clean Air Act that was seeking public comments regarding Greenhouse Gas (GHG) regulations.

The proposal under the Clean Air Act should not be confused with the EPCRA report. The EPCRA requirement for producers to file air emission reports has also drawn fire from the National Pork Producers Council that recently filed suit against EPA challenging these requirements. NPPC contends the new rule is unworkable and does not provide guidance on how farmers are to comply nor has developed an adequate system to take care of the many reports to be filed.

CHANGES

You will see some changes beginning with this issue of the WIFeline. A new heading has been given to each report. The chairmen who write them will now have only their name, state and position under a new title. If you want to contact them, look for their addresses in your policy book or direct your letters or calls to the editor or one of the officers listed in column one on page two of the WIFeline each month. The Executive Board decided that this would be better to help prevent identity theft and protect their privacy. Look for a report from a new chairman, too.—Editor

