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BEE HEALTH

By Bonnie Woodworth,
Beekeeper in North Dakota

If you watch the news, each day you hear of something new we are told we need to worry about. The plight of the honey bees is one crisis that has been in the news for a while.

For good reason, we depend on these little "Angels of Agriculture" for pollination of a wide range of crops. In fact, one-third of the food we eat is produced from plants that need to be pollinated by insects, honey bees do 80 percent of the work. Honey bees are the unsung heroes of agriculture and we should all be worried about their health. And it's not just honey bees, as many wild pollinators are threatened, too.

Many compare the loss of honey bee colonies to the parakeet in the mine. Some say that it is a warning sign that something is amuck. Bee researchers have been trying to solve the puzzle of why honey bees seem to be disappearing, leaving the hive and not returning. In reality, that scenario can be caused by a number of reasons. Sick honey bees intentionally leave the hive to die to protect the colony from the spread of disease.

Most beekeepers agree that Colony Collapse Disorder is not caused by any one thing. It is the combination of many factors--the perfect storm of problems plaguing the bees. Just as in humans, a virus probably won't kill you unless there are some other underlying health issues. Stresses of many kinds can contribute to sickness.

Some of the major issues impacting honeybees are:

- Pesticides which, of course, do kill bees. But now the concern is of low levels of pesticides that don't kill the bees on contact but weaken the immune system of the insects and shortening their life. New classes of pesticides used as seed treatments are systemic. The

concern is it may be present both in the plant and in the pollen the bees collect. Honey bees also collect water to cool the hive, which may be contaminated by a variety of pesticides, herbicides or fungicides.

- Nutrition is just as important in honey bees as it is in humans. Honey bees need not only a good nectar source to produce honey, but also require a variety of pollens collected from plants to satisfy the need for complete proteins in their diet. Some pollen is of high quality, like almond tree pollen, some are poor quality, like corn pollen. It is getting more difficult to find areas with adequate food sources for the bees. Beekeepers are finding that feeding protein substitutes such as soy flour or brewers yeast are of great benefit to the health of the colonies.
- Controlling pests and diseases are a constant battle. Varroa mites, tracheal mites, and various brood diseases can weaken a honey bee's immune system and cause secondary virus infections. Small hive beetles infest colonies and stress the bees.
- Nosema, which is a single cell parasite, but actually closer to a fungus, infects the bee's digestive system and can cause death in seven days. New strains of Nosema are especially worrisome since they are difficult to predict and can reduce the population of a colony in a matter of days.
- Viruses are present everywhere and they may or may not be a problem--we don't know. When a Varroa Mite feeds on the blood of a developing bee in a honeycomb cell the feeding hole is an open wound that can easily be infected with a virus or bacteria.

If honeybees are healthy they can withstand a lot of stresses. Beekeepers are working harder and harder to keep their colonies healthy. As anyone knows who works in agriculture, Mother Nature keeps you on your toes. For more information on the honey industry visit www.honey.com.

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TAMMY'S TOPICS

By Tammy Basel, SD
National President

There is a lot going on this summer—cap and trade legislation, health care reform and the list could go on, but the story of the summer is the devastating loss of our dairies.

The word crisis is used so often I wondered if crisis is a strong enough word to use for what is going on with the dairy farmers. According to the Merriam Webster dictionary the definition of a crisis is: an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending. Dairy farmers are under a true crisis, and something must change soon.

Dairy farmers sell their milk by the hundred-weight. The cost to produce one hundred pounds of milk is about \$18.00 but they sell that milk for about \$9.80. When selling a product for half of what it costs to produce, it does not take long and something will have to give. Many dairies have sold all their milking cows and, worse yet, some folks were so overwhelmed they took their own life. If it takes \$70.00 a month to feed a dairy cow then a family milking 200 head would lose nearly \$170,000.00 this year.

Fresh milk is highly perishable. It must be processed within days of leaving the cow. Milk cannot be put in a bin and wait months for the price to recover. Milk can be made into cheese, butter, ice cream, powder and things like that to be stored but dairy farmers must sell their milk when produced and receive payment on the amount shipped.

The U. S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee is conducting hearings to learn of the dairy problem. It is wonderful that they are having these hearings as action needs to happen quickly. No business can withstand this type of financial loss very long.

Our National Dairy Chairman Dee Reed sold their milking cows last month. The Reed's are hard working people and paid attention to business. They did nothing wrong but after three generations the lights are now turned off in the milking barn.

Our hearts and prayers go out the American Dairy Farmer.

(Editor's note: An area dairyman said he is continuing to milk even though he raises his own feed and is losing money, but cattle sales are very low—even for slaughter.)

RESOLUTIONS

It is time to start thinking about resolutions that you may wish to turn into policy for WIFE. The resolutions should come from your state meetings and will be voted on during the convention. Each national commodity and topic chairman should be reviewing their section in the policy book to see what needs to be changed, updated or deleted. Suggestions for any updates or changes in the procedure manual should be sent to Mary Ellen Cammack by September 27.



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

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



SHOPPER'S SURVEYS

By Mary Ellen Cammack, SD
Beef Chairman

The Integer Group and M/A/R/C Research report, titled "The Check-out", found consumers tuning in more to the country-of-origin labeling (COOL) on their meat purchases. This was a year-long shopper experience study that was based on a national, monthly survey of 1,200 consumers.



They were tracking consumer opinions and behaviors ranging from coupon use to location of store for purchases.

The survey found consumers more frequently choosing American-made products over less expensive foreign-made items. Consumer incentives to purchase American-made goods increased by two percent and those shoppers whose main concern was price (lowest possible) dropped by two percent and both of these are statistically significant.

SupermarketGuru.com conducted a similar consumer poll in March 2009, with the specific goal of better understanding shopper's attitudes towards imported meat and COOL. The number of consumers surveyed is not available, but the following results revealed that consumers place great importance (77 percent) and preference (84 percent) for American-raised, bred, and slaughtered meat. A majority (73 percent) also assumes imported meat to be less safe than it's American counterpart.

Additionally, 81 percent of those consumers reported feeling confused when more than one country is listed on the meat package label. Consequently, 40 percent do not purchase the meat, and 34 percent say they look for meat labeled "product of the U.S.A" to purchase instead.

Most importantly, 64 percent of consumers surveyed indicated they would switch stores in order to buy meat labeled "product of the U.S.A." if it wasn't available at their current grocer or butcher's counter. When asked "Would you expect meat labeled from multiple countries to be _____ compared with USA meat?", the majority filled the blank with one of the following: less safe (38 percent), followed by less expensive (20 percent), less green (15 percent), more expensive (11 percent), less tasty (7 percent), tasty (4 percent), safer (3 percent), and greener (2 percent).

It is important to understand that "M" COOL does not trace cattle, it traces beef. The beef must be tracked through the fabrication process to the store in which it is sold. The demand was for "Born, raised, and processed" and this cannot be achieved through the fabrication process without a valid, enforceable trace-back system.

USDA is now in charge of enforcing this flawed law. Consumers and producers, concerned with country-of-origin still have the option of buying and participating in source-verified branded beef.

BIOGRAPHIES

The September issue of the WIFeline is the traditional time to present biographies of all those who have submitted their endorsements for office for 2010. Please get them to your friendly editor by August 25.

MILK PRICES

By Dianna Reed, KS
Dairy Chairman



Here today — gone tomorrow—that is the scenario of the dairy industry as it is today. With the steady decline in milk prices that are paid to the producer and the rise in the cost to produce, many, many dairy farms have had to close their doors. We milked our cows one morning, loaded them on a semi to go to slaughter and said good-bye to a three-generation farm. Here today, gone tomorrow, just that quick.

Milk is not a commodity that can be stored. You either "sell it or smell it." Dairy men cannot hold out for a better price. So what is the answer? The loss of all the dairies across our great nation does not just affect the producer alone; this affects the local economy as well and the lost dollars that the dairy generates are no longer there. Does it stop there? No, it is a snowballing effect; it even continues on up to the advertising industry that advertises for anything dairy related—trucking companies, tractor industry, dairy construction companies, feed mixers, utilities. I could go on and on.

So why aren't the middlemen, consumers and retailers concerned? We have the lowest price at the dairy and some of the highest prices ever seen at retail. Prices have fallen since last year but nowhere near to those that the dairy men have endured. The processors are making a killing as never before at the expense of over 60,000 families, as well as hundreds of thousands of families connected to the dairy industry. Supply and demand—when the prices are high, the demand goes down; but when the prices go down, the demand is higher. The price to the consumer should be less because the price to the dairyman has gone down; however, the price in the store has not come down so demand has not picked up.

Thousands and thousands of dairy cows have gone to slaughter, dropping the number of cows across the U.S. drastically. This is not a quick turn around situation, it takes about three years to bring a baby heifer calf up to calving and brought into a milking herd. So, where is your milk going to come from in the future with the dairy situation as it is today? China? Mexico? Again I say, here today — gone tomorrow!!

An added note: There are no longer any dairies in my county. The last three exited this year due to the low prices being paid to the dairyman and the high cost of production. They rapidly lost money and equity. A really sad situation!

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

TWITTER GRAIN

Phyllis Howatt, ND

National Cereal Grains Chairman

The Minneapolis Grain Exchange (MGEX) has set a new July record with their electronic trading volume reaching 71,859 contracts. This is a 48 percent increase over July 2008 making it the seventh best electronic volume month in Exchange history.

MGEX has joined the social networking site, Twitter. This site allows for a new outlet to connect and communicate with MGEX. Twitter is a growing social networking and micro-blogging service that enables Internet users to send and read other user's 140-character updates known as "tweets". Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to any simple question.

Updates will be displayed on the MGEX profile page and delivered to other users who have signed up to receive MGEX information. There are currently as many as five million users who are on Twitter. Anyone subscribing to view information MGEX can receive up-to-date information in a timely manner. The page can be accessed at: <http://twitter.com/MGEX1>. MGEX will use Twitter to distribute press releases and share Exchange information and service.

Twitter will help MGEX to stay connected with their members and market participants and give them the opportunity to reach out to a large area in an extremely convenient, cost-effective way.

The North Dakota Wheat Commission (NDWC) celebrated its 50th year of market development and promotion during July 2009. Created by the North Dakota Legislature in 1959, growers were raising 100 million bushels and the U.S. was exporting 500 million bushels per year. Now producers are averaging 300 million bushels each year and the U.S exports 1.3 billion bushels.

The NDWC's customer markets include Asia, Latin America and Europe. They have just attended a South Asian buyer's conference where they established contacts with buyers from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines. The NDWC was able to explain the value of the hard red wheat and what North Dakota's crop prospects are for the year. Since the commission began its work, hard red spring wheat exports have grown by nearly seven times and durum exports have tripled.

The commission also does research to develop newer wheat varieties, which are more disease resistant, better standing and higher yielding. This helps North Dakota farmers raise stronger crops. While market development work can be a slow and long-term process, research can hit producers more immediately.

The North Dakota Wheat Commission begins its second half-century of service with priorities of marketing and research.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

Make plans now to attend the national WIFE convention in Syracuse, New York, on November 12-14. Watch for further information on the hotel, reservations, registration, the agenda, etc.



LIFELINES

By Donna Bolz

Transportation/Communication Chairman

When some of us think of infrastructure projects, we think of them as an economic boost because they put people to work on construction projects. They could also be considered the salvation of North American agriculture's lifelines, such as roads, rails and waterways that keep growers competitive.

Most people agree that North America's transportation infrastructure is long overdue for an overhaul. In the scramble to spend \$150 billion earmarked for infrastructure in the U.S. government's stimulus package and \$12.8 billion (Canadian money) pledged by Ottawa for the Canadian system, now is the time for farmers to keep agriculture oriented improvements on the radar.

Every mode of transportation is important to agriculture. During the journey from farm to market, 85 percent of the U.S. agricultural products travel the roads by truck and about 35 percent will spend time on a train. We export about one-third of our harvest or about 79 percent leave our shores by ship.

Of course this is a two-way street. The same routes that bring products to market bring fertilizer, fuel and other inputs to farms. In 2007, 3.9 million tons of anhydrous ammonia traveled by rail, another four million tons by road and 1.7 million by barge.

The problem is that the two-way street is getting crowded. Rail traffic is expected to increase by 88 percent by 2035. Truck freight is predicted to nearly double by 2020. We are also on our way to a national goal of 16 billion gallons of ethanol per year by 2015, most of which must be moved from heartland refineries to gas stations in cities along the coasts. Cotton, which for years was sent to domestic mills, is increasingly shipped to foreign buyers.

The upper Mississippi River symbolizes the opportunities and challenges facing our infrastructure. A barge can move a ton of grain 576 miles on a gallon of diesel which is the most fuel-efficient way to transport bulk commodities. The problem, according to Paul Rohde, vice president for the Midwest Area of the Waterways Council, is the upper Mississippi's locks and dams are America's largest antiques. "We're working off of 1930's technology which was really for 1890's traffic" Rohde said. When the locks were new, 3.9 million tons of cargo used the system. Today, 126 million tons flow through the same system.

The American Trucking Association is pushing for 97,000-pound limits on six axles to move more farm products across our roads. With dollars and vision, agriculture has a chance to put itself on a new footing.

YAMS

Yams originated in Africa and have been cultivated for over 11,000 years. Yams can grow up to 7 feet in length and weigh over 100 lbs. They can be baked, microwaved, steamed or fried. They contain more natural sugar than sweet potatoes but have less vitamin C, dietary fiber and potassium.



CAP AND TRADE

By Sheila Massey, NM
National Energy Chairman

Cap and Trade, by any other name, is still just another way of imposing a tax on energy. It is a big tax, although some members of Congress would have you believe otherwise. It is a tax that will impact every business in the country, particularly the electric utility industry. Since electric power and energy are fundamental to our economy, it will also impact every single person in the country. This tax is so pervasive that even the most ardent of its supporters admit that it will have a financial impact on the United States. Plainly stated, it is a tax that Americans, a tax that agricultural producers, a tax that no one needs, or should have, imposed on them.



I would like to share with you some information provided from our local rural electric coop manager, Mike Fletcher. Mike has made a concerted effort to break down the 1,000 page document into manageable pieces and explain them to members of the cooperative. I preface the inclusion of Mike's remarks by stating that he is a very down-to-earth, tell-it-like-it-is, person who expresses his opinions in a very tongue-in-cheek way. My editorial comment at this time is "you just have to love a guy like this who is not afraid to speak his mind and tell the ever living truth even though it is not necessarily the 'politically correct' thing to say". With that stated, here is what Mike Fletcher, Manager of New Mexico's Columbus Rural Electric Cooperative has to say:

"Their (Congress) primary arguments in support of its (Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 include: It will free us from dependency on foreign oil. Well, gosh, I'm just as in favor of turning Dubai back into the insufferable sandbox it was always meant to be as the next guy, so that sure sounds good to me. I mean, I'd be able to discontinue my Farsi lessons and everything. But I'm not really sure how taxing electricity is going to do that. The biggest consumer of foreign oil in this country is the beloved 12-mpg beater parted out in your own driveway, plus a hundred million or so more just like it. Are we going to turn all of those into hybrids or electric cars? If electricity costs two-bits or more a kWh, it's my guess probably not a lot of those are going to be flying off the old showroom floor. The fact is oil doesn't generate electricity. Coal does.

Last year, however, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declared coal to be just plain unacceptable as a naturally occurring earthen deposit inasmuch as the combustion of coal produces carbon dioxide which the EPA solidly asserted, is henceforth and forevermore, a pollutant. This presented a very convenient opportunity for a number of interests, including the current administration, the American Wind Power Association, the rest of the industrialized nations of the world, and Al Gore, who has been kind of feeling down since his debunked documentary hit the remainder bin.

The idea of the carbon Cap and Trade Tax Bill is to reduce the carbon emissions of this country by 17 percent by the year 2020. I don't know where they came up with 17 percent, which is kind of an odd number. Maybe it was negotiated by respected and knowledgeable earth scientists. Maybe the

number 17 has some mystical power. Maybe it's Al Gore's hat size. I just don't know.

Anyway, that's the number and if industry can't make it, they pay the government to get around it. And I'll tell you right now that the electric utility industry can't make it. Investor-owned utilities don't much care one way or another because their stockholders won't take the hit; their ratepayers will. Co-operatives, on the other hand, will be killed by it. Tri-State, our wholesale power supplier, has already cancelled coal-fired generation plans and is instead investing in much more expensive solar and wind generation which, by the way, you'll pay for through the hated Fuel and Purchased Power Adjustment Clause on your light bill.

By artificially raising the cost of generation, another stated goal of the Carbon Cap and Trade Tax Bill is achieved. It will make alternative energy sources competitive with coal generations. Will it stop global warming? No, not as long as the rest of the world supplies WalMart. Will it create jobs? Sure it will, lots of them. Overseas. Does Congress care? They better."

I have read and studied many articles about the costs versus the benefits to agriculture from Climate Change Policy. I am only human and in the end I have to look at the bottom line-- what is it going to do to my farming operation. I do feel the adverse affects are either lessened or increased, depending on which part of the country you live in. They depend on whether or not you irrigate or dryland farm.

It is very evident from sources I have read, that climate change legislation will increase energy costs as we will pay more for electricity and diesel. We will also pay more for fertilizer and pesticides. There is the realization that the increased cost will depend on the size of operation one has. I, for one, am for standing up to the powers that be and speaking out for the farmer and rancher, no matter what size operation he has.

Our representatives and senators will be back in the districts during the August recess. We best take advantage of asking the hard questions. The question first and foremost that I feel must be asked is "Why must the so-called environmental well-being of this nation be balanced on the backs of American farmers and ranchers like you and me?" Furthermore, "Why does the answer to so-called global warming rest on the back of the United States of America? The word "global" speaks volumes and so far I haven't seen very much "global" action come into play here.

"Folks it is well past time for us to stand up and say "enough is enough!". Let us lessen the emphasis on saying what is "politically correct" and increase the emphasis on saying what is "morally, ethically and economically correct" for Americans across the country. If we don't, who will?

Calendar of Events:

Deadline for submitting biographies - August 25
Deadline for submitting resolutions - September 27
November 12 - 14 - National Convention, Syracuse, NY

CLIMATE POLICY

By Marlene Kouba

I have researched many sources on this topic after some WIFE members wanted to hear both sides of the topic. This is lengthy but after reading it you can believe what you want. The supporters often use verbs like could, might, may, presume, predicts, etc. so watch for them when you read other material. Here are some of the results.

A federal climate policy has many names—Climate Change, Global Warming, Cap and Trade, etc. One currently in Congress is the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) or H.R. 2454 by Henry Waxman and Betsy Markey (both D-CA).

President Obama has made it clear that a bold cap and trade program is a priority. According to Robert Schroeder in *The Wall Street Journal*, Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma said the cap-and-trade system would amount to the largest tax increase in American history. Sen. Barbara Boxer chairs the committee and said “There are no new taxes.” The bill passed the House (219-212) in June 2009. The Senate has pledged action before the end of the year and the Democrats have a 60-seat majority. The House bill would cap carbon emissions at 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020, gradually lowering the cap to about 83 percent below 2005 levels by 2050. Basically the Democratic party supports the issue and the Republican party opposes it.

What does it mean? “Cap” is a legal limit on the quantity of greenhouse gases that a region can emit each year and “trade” means that companies may swap among themselves or buy permission or permits to emit greenhouse gases.

With the world more than 80 percent dependent on oil, coal and natural gas to fuel vehicles, light and heat homes and drive industry and agriculture, energy is essential for all aspects of human life.

The First National Conference on Carbon Sequestration was held on May 14-17, 2001 in Washington, D.C. During the meeting Roger C. Dahlman, Office of U.S. Department of Energy, said, “Some of the main points for presentations on ecosystems fall into three categories: 1. Estimating the current potentials of sequestration, 2. Development of improved means for measuring, estimating and managing carbon inventories, and 3. Evaluation of strategies and policies.

Decisions at the *Kyoto Protocol negotiations* in 2001 allow the use of certain carbon sequestration activities, and carbon “credits” gained through these activities, to meet industrialized countries’ Kyoto emissions reductions commitments at home and overseas.

The *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* estimates that at least one-third of the world’s remaining forests may be adversely affected by changing climate.

Scientists at the *U.S. Geological Survey*, say carbon sequestration is used to describe both natural and deliberate processes by which CO₂ is either removed from the atmosphere or diverted from emission sources and stored in the ocean, soils and sediments, and geologic formations. Before human-caused CO₂ emissions began, the natural processes that make up the global “carbon cycle” maintained a near balance. Annual carbon emissions from burning fossil fuels in the U.S. are about 1.6 gigatons (billion metric tons),

whereas uptake (called “sinks”) amounts are only about 0.5 gigatons. Carbon naturally moves between the atmosphere and vegetation, soils and oceans over time ranging from years to millennia and longer.

A Brief History on Refuges and Carbon Sequestration in June 2007 says that the early focus in the late 1980s and early 1990s for the National Wildlife Refuge System was to increase habitat for waterfowl. They acquired un-forested land and kept enlarging their acquisitions. As their acreage increased new ecological issues arose. In 1997, their Reforestation Committee was approached by a group known as Utilitree about funding on two refuges. The group understood the need for utility companies to start thinking about carbon off-set as a result of their power plant carbon releases and the impact on global climate. Biologist Ray Aycock went to Washington, D.C. to meet with the Utilitree group and the first carbon sequestration partnership was formed.

Martin Feldstein of *The Washington Post* wrote “Scientists around the world agree CO₂ emissions could lead to rising temperatures but that is not a reason to enact a U.S. system until there is a global agreement on reduction. The proposed legislation would have a trivially small effect on global warming while imposing substantial costs on all American households. Companies would buy permits from each other as long as it is cheaper to do that than make changes in their own company. These costs would be passed along to the consumer in goods and services—gasoline, electricity, etc. Consumers may respond by cutting back on consumption of those products.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the resulting increases in consumer prices would raise the cost of living of a typical household by \$1,600 a year or higher. The U.S. share of global CO₂ production is now less than 25 percent (and projected to decline as China and Japan grow) so it would lower the impact by only four percent! Sales of permits could raise \$80 billion a year in the next decade. The burden on the households would be the same when the permits were sold or given away.” Feldstein feels it is a costly policy that would penalize Americans with little effect on global warming.

An article in *Nature*, an international weekly journal of science, says the *International Energy Agency* predicts that 1,400 gigawatts of new, coal-fired generating capacity will be commissioned worldwide in the next 25 years. The U.S. has proposals for 153 coal-fired plants under consideration that most likely don’t have carbon capture in mind. Every year, China builds coal-powered plants capable of generating a stunning 75 gigawatts, an energy project unprecedented in human history. Carbon capture substantially decreases the efficiency of all existing energy types. It also requires enormous infrastructure to put carbon dioxide back down into the ground through pipes and pumping systems similar to those needed to bring oil and gas out of the ground.

In an ATTRA publication on Agriculture they claim that carbon may be a new crop for farmers and ranchers. The *Natural Resources Conservation Service of USDA* is a promoter of managing carbon to improve soil quality. Voluntary private carbon markets exist in the U.S. and federal markets are expected to be created soon.

How to figure value is the heart of the role agriculture

can play in the system. Methods frequently discussed are carbon taxation, cap-and-trade, government subsidies and emission reductions. A carbon tax would be on every ton of carbon in fossil fuels or every ton of greenhouse gas emitted. Those farms or ranches that emit or use less carbon-intensive fuels would pay a smaller tax. A carbon tax would increase the costs of agricultural production through all the ways petroleum and natural gas are used. The government is already using some programs to encourage conservation, such as Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP), Conservation Stewardship Program, Conservation Reserve Program, and they say a carbon tax would pay for these programs.

Since agriculture uses a small percentage of U.S. fossil fuels, an argument can be made that the burden should not fall on them. But agriculture is heavily dependent on fossil fuels so taxes could be costly. Farmers and ranchers have no way to pass on any taxes as industries can do. A government-sponsored cap-and-trade system would create a new market for the right to emit greenhouse gases.

The World Wildlife Fund claims that greenhouse gases are rising and are now at their highest atmospheric concentrations for more than 400,000 years. (Wonder who kept records during that time?) They say this increase is attributed to human activities and that consumption of fossil energy is driving this trend, accounting for about 80 percent of human-caused CO₂ emissions. Land disturbance (burning, degradation of forests, rangeland and soils) account for the remaining 20 percent. They believe fossil fuel combustion remains the major cause of global warming and any program must focus primarily on clean energy solutions. They will publicize any projects that pose a threat to biodiversity or climate change.

Rep. Ike Skelton (D-MO) wrote to a WIFE member and she wondered if other WIFE members would like to hear both sides about Cap and Trade. Here are excerpts of his letter:

“Greenhouse gas emissions are likely to be required by the federal government whether Congress acts or not. In 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency can regulate these emissions under the Clean Air Act if they are found to endanger the health or welfare of the American public. Earlier this year, the EPA issued an “endangered finding”, which gives the Agency the green light to draft regulations that will require massive cuts to greenhouse gas emissions without Congressional approval.

“As H.R. 2454 was being written, rural Congressmen made important changes that made the bill better for agriculture and rural America. First, we insisted that agriculture and forestry be exempt from a national cap on greenhouse gas emissions. Regulating emissions from farms would be cumbersome and expensive and would yield limited benefits. There would be no taxes on cow emissions or any segment of agriculture or industry. Second, agricultural producers would be able to participate in a voluntary, USDA-run, market-based carbon offset program that would allow them to earn money for farming practices that sequester carbon or that avoid greenhouse gas emissions. An incentives program would encourage farming practices that promote energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, and good conservation

practices. Third, USDA would be put in charge of deciding what agriculture practices best sequester carbon. Fourth, for parts of our country that rely on rural electric cooperatives and small municipal utilities, the representatives corrected a problem which did not provide enough assistance to these electricity providers. Fifth, we were able to include important changes that would help our renewable fuels industry continue to provide clean, renewable, homegrown energy source. Sixth, language was secured to level the playing field for biodiesel plants that were unfairly subject to environmental regulations and would make it easier to use renewable biomass to produce renewable fuels or electricity.” He voted to move it to the Senate. He said the Congressional Budget Office estimated that H.R. 2454 would cost the average American household about \$175 per year or about a postage stamp a day. Lower income families would pay less than this amount and the lowest income households would actually receive \$40 in energy credits to help pay utility bills. (Editor: This is different from the amount quoted in the Washington Post.)

The Iowa Ag Review, written by Bruce A. Babcock for the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, has an article about the climate change policy. Here are excerpts: Whether agriculture will be a net winner or loser from climate change policy will depend on the details contained in any final piece of legislation. The House bill explicitly treats agriculture as an uncapped sector and it is likely that the Senate will follow suit. The possibility of farmers selling their uncapped emission credits explains why there are supporters of climate change policy within agriculture. Natural gas is the primary source of energy used to produce fertilizer. Conservation tillage has been advocated as a way to reduce costs and increase soil health. It is now the rare farmer who does not try to keep tillage operations to a minimum. But adoption of no-till has stagnated.

The *Farm Forum* of South Dakota has several articles about the topic. Here are excerpts from one article: Agriculture relies heavily on energy. USDA relies heavily on calculations and assumptions from the EPA which says carbon capture technology would be readily available by 2014. But experts agree that capturing emissions from power plants would not be economically viable until 2020 or beyond. The EPA assumes nuclear power generation will double by 2033 but that goal seems unlikely as Congressional Democrats are blocking efforts to expand nuclear expansion. A study by the University of Missouri found that the overall average farm costs would increase by over \$11,000 in 2015 and over \$30,000 in 2050.

Another article from *Farm Forum* says the market for carbon credits has shrunk amid the recession and uncertainty about climate legislation. Carbon dioxide credits are fetching about 60 cents a metric ton, down from a high of about \$7.00 a year ago, according to the National Farmers Union which runs the program. The program pools the credits for sale on the Chicago Climate Exchange, a private agency that trades greenhouse gases just as other exchanges trade commodities such as crops and livestock. About 3,900 farmers and ranchers in 40 states are enrolled in the program with about a quarter in North Dakota where it began three

Continued on page 13

ECONOMIC CONCERNS

By Ruth Larabee, NY
Trade Chairman

U. S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk revealed new trade “enforcement” procedures in expectation of preserving jobs and to generate new jobs in the United States. Kirk is seeking to level the playing field and also to establish new markets for American commerce.



In speaking to the Pennsylvania Steelworkers, plans were laid out, which he called steps, to “protect the rights of small business owners and of the American farmer”. Kirk would center his attention on enforcement of our trading partner’s contracts that are now in existence. He is calling for a strong approach to the situation by placing his plan in a two-fold strategy. First, violators that engage in slave labor, protectionism, dishonesty and counterfeiting will face legal action. Second, a new approach will be taken to open the lines of communication with agricultural, commerce and economic ambassadors at the United States embassies. Thus problems could be under control and or solved before they ended up in job losses here.

The USTR put out a three-point fact sheet concentrating on a foundation for success, leveling the playing field and breaking down the trade barrier. Under this plan, the focus is on using the World Trade Organization (WTO) to eliminate unfair practices, improving access for American beef producers, addressing violations of the softwood lumber agreement and enforcing intellectual property rights. The leveling of the playing field action calls for the following: 1) to proactively monitor and identify labor violations and enforce labor provisions of trade agreements, 2) engage with Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners to resolve labor issues and 3) to promote international labor norms. In breaking down trade barriers the object is to find, highlight, and fight barriers in trade, and to engage with global partners and team up across the U.S. government. While the contracts have already been written to take care of such problems, they need to be enforced. The situations of compliance can be fixed and it should bring about ratification (approval and/ or confirmation) of the trade pacts.

Kirk will be addressing the barriers that other countries put into place thereby stopping export products of our U.S. farmers and ranchers into their areas. He spoke of the need to also address the sanitary and phytosanitary barriers and gave the example of the restrictive regulations that some countries placed on the American pork, such as the H1N1 flu scare even though it doesn’t come from pigs. Another huge trade problem is the placing of restrictions by some countries that use technical rules, regulations and standards as barriers against United States manufacturers which export high quality and safe products. Whether a lot of violations are to be found is yet to be seen but it will show that the U.S. is serious in having fair trade. Representative Kirk is putting forth the new efforts and is making it a priority to ensure our agricultural producers see their rights restored abroad and

their businesses saved here at home. Also he stated, “By enforcing the rules on the books we can win our workers and companies the benefits of trading as fully, fairly and freely as our agreements allow.”

South Korea and the European Union (EU) have been working on a bilateral trade deal which is close to being completed. For the past few years, Korea has made the transaction of free trade agreements the core of their foreign and economic policies. It is reported that the agreement between Korea and the EU will remove \$2.2 billion in duties that Korea currently requires every year on European products. Also, duties would be cut and non-tariff barriers on imported European cars would be removed. European businesses could gain access to the world’s thirteenth major economy as they are working on a trade agreement with Brussels. The bilateral trade pact between Korea and the U.S. has been signed but not ratified (confirmed). The sticking point is over auto and beef trade but Korea is not about to change the content of their trade deal at this time. They say the trade pact is “well balanced”.

(Sources: USTR, Wall Street Journal, China View, Investors Business Daily)



Jonah Levine

WIND INTEGRATION IN COLORADO

By Jonah Levine

Reported by Marlene Kouba

Jonah Levine is currently working for the University of Colorado at Boulder as Research Faculty. He spoke to WIFE members in Denver on June 5.

Most of their development is in eastern Colorado. In 1999, there was zero percent wind energy while in 2009 it is now up to nine percent. Wind turbines start to rotate at four meters per second. They shut down at 55 mph. The cost is about \$2 million for each tower. Equipment has to fluctuate with the use. Load use goes up and down. Equipment has trouble meeting load use about 20 times a year so they are custom managed using towers, coal and gas. Windy areas are studied before towers are installed. With cost integration it can have a \$26 difference.

SUGAR IS IMPORTANT

By Klodette Stroh, WY
National Sugar Chairman

Sugar beet crops are looking very good in my hometown of Powell, Wyoming. Park County leads the 23 Wyoming counties in the production of sugar beets, barley, dry edible beans and sixth for oats and corn for grain.



According to Wyoming agricultural statistics, the value of the ag sector output in Wyoming annually exceeds over one billion dollars with cash income historically around \$900 million. There are 34.4 million acres of farms and ranches in Wyoming, which provides over 17,000 jobs. Agriculture plays a vital role in Wyoming's economy. Hay was the leading crop in terms of value of production totaling \$161.6 million in 2005. Sugar beets had the next highest crop value in 2005 at \$33.4 million, followed by barley at \$18.4 million, corn at \$16.8 million, wheat at \$15.4 million and dry beans at \$15.1 million. In terms of cash receipts, hay and sugar beets are usually close contenders for the leading crop followed by barley.

During my visits to Washington D.C. as the WIFE National Sugar Chairman to represent our nation's sugar beet, cane and corn sweetener farmers, I often had the chance to talk about my state to other state's senators and representatives. They were always so surprised with all the agriculture activity in Wyoming. It has been an honor for me to educate many people about the agriculture economic benefits in Wyoming.

Water has played an important role in Wyoming agriculture. Park County is filled with lush green fields of crops because of the water supply in Buffalo Bill Dam reservoir. Buffalo Bill (Shoshone Dam) and Pathfinder Dam were one of the first reclamation dams built in Wyoming around 1910-1911. Buffalo Bill Dam has over 97,000 acres of irrigated land and over 20,000 acres of total 27,000 acres of sugar beets are grown in Park County. Total income from crops included alfalfa, barley, oats, corn grain, dry beans and sugar beets exceed \$100 million annually.

Wyoming sugar beet farmers provide 4,571 jobs in Wyoming and in a larger scale they are a portion of the 146,000 jobs provided nationwide that rely on a strong U.S. sweetener industry. The economic impact of sugar industry is \$10 billion a year for America's economy. Sugar policy operates at no cost to the taxpayers. There is no subsidy check issued for sugar beet and cane farmers in this country. The program gives authority to the Secretary of Agriculture to regulate the import quota.

In this time of worldwide economic commotion we as taxpayers must protect our farming industry. The farm family was the basic unit shaping life in America and agriculture has provided rural strength for over 200 years. Farmers are the backbone of this country and we have to protect our

farming industry. American farmers provide food for America and half of the world.

Without commodities what would we trade, how would we put sanctions on countries like North Korea in order to secure world peace, and how would we be able to feed the hungry of the world or those stricken by natural disasters? Without farmers, who will feed our troops at home and those fighting abroad to protect our precious freedom? Without farmers who will provide the food programs for those who are experiencing tough times, and what will happen to all of the food programs we have in place for our schools, child care centers and senior programs?

Farmers provide so many benefits for all of us. I can't imagine a world without them. The next time you see a farmer, let him know you are supporting his hard work and give him a word of encouragement for working from dawn to dusk to ensure America's superior global position.

CONTINUING SAGA OF IMMIGRATION

By Sheila Massey

Reported by Marlene Kouba

Gangs are migrating north. They started in Columbia but have already crossed the U.S. border with drugs and guns. We shouldn't stand idly by. The President and Congress need to put Americans first. We can not be the savior to every country. The "do-gooders" want our borders open and welcome all newcomers. What do we do with the 12 million already here? Amnesty bills are in Congress. They are not putting America first. Sanctuary cities cannot stop illegals until they commit a crime. We need to tell Congress that enough is enough! Our National Guard is on the border but are unarmed. Drug lords are gathering vulnerable children with bread or lead—either work for us and we will pay you or we will shoot you. The poverty and the criminal element are driving forces. The U.S. cannot economically support all of the illegals. New Mexico has granted them drivers' licenses now do not think it was a good idea.



There is a documentary available for \$19.95 that shows what is happening along our southern border. Contact Sheila Massey at masseyfarm@vtc.net if interested in purchasing a copy.

www.WIFeline.com



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HEALTH CARE COSTS

By Cynthia Thomsen, NE
Rural Health Chairman

Health care reform must meet two objectives: 1) must be secure for all Americans and, 2) must be dramatically lower in cost.

Safeway designed a program that used a market-based solution. The key to achieving these savings is to reward healthy behavior. The program was designed in 2005 and improvements have been made ever since. This includes a plan where employee and employer share in the plan. Most American companies' health benefit costs have increased 38 percent over this time.

Two insights are dealt with: 1) 70 percent of all health-care costs are direct result of behavior and, 2) 74 percent of the costs are confined to four chronic conditions (cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity). Furthermore, 80 percent of cardiovascular and diabetes conditions are preventable, 60 percent of cancers are preventable and 90 percent of obesity is preventable.

Borrowing from a well-tested automobile insurance model, personal responsibility is rewarded. This healthy behavior plan is a good plan for companies.

Rural people are faced with many of the same health care issues and challenges that face the rest of the nation. The rural economy is unique in its composition, being mostly made up of self-employers and small businesses. Uninsurance and underinsurance are big issues in this area. People are responsible for their own insurance. Since the significant decline in the 1990s, manufacturing jobs saw a rise in service sector employment. These people are responsible for over 22 percent more for health care costs than their urban neighbors. Health care legislation is needed to provide comprehensive, affordable and continuous coverage in ways comparable to larger group coverage. This should have stability and cost controls.

Rural areas are served by small hospitals, clinics and nursing homes. It is estimated that Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates remain generally below actual costs of services provided which stresses providers.

Another issue is the health care provider and workforce in rural areas. Only nine percent of the nation's professionals practice in rural areas. This means, doctors, dentists, pharmacists and registered nurses are not coming to the areas to practice. This is the area that needs help as this is where 15 percent of the nation's people 65 and older live and work. That percentage is expected to increase in the next 20 years. While most seniors qualify for Medicare, there is a need for health services to remain in their communities. Currently federal law prevents discrimination based on health status in group plans, but not with individual plans like rural folks usually buy. Legislation is needed to promote health and provide credit for positive work in preventive care.

Coverage should include mental health services. This can be a part of the clinic support for rural areas.

Technology should be a part of the rural health program. Telehealth is now part of 80 percent of hospitals and clinics and needs to be part of the program. Workers will be needed who have the knowledge to use this technology.

For more information go to:
<http://files.cfra.org/pdf/Ten-Rural-Issues-for-Health-Care-Reform>
(Source: Jon Baily of Center for Rural Affairs)



HEALTH CARE SPENDING

By Cynthia Thomsen
National Rural Health Chairman

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, created by Congress in 1997, has recommended in the last year alone, more than \$200 billion in cost cuts that the Congressmen have ignored. Mr. Orszag, the White House budget director, wants to reconstitute the commission as an independent agency whose recommendations would automatically take effect, unless Congress stops them.

Hospital and doctor groups are already lobbying against this proposal. Some at the Department of Health and Human Services are worried about losing power to the new agency. Mr. Orszag also wants to change federal spending on health care. He wants doctors to focus on better care not more care.

Mr. Orszag sent a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that he wants this new agency with power to cut spending and put changes in Medicare. The single more important thing to do is control health-care spending. He feels the reason we have such disjointed and skewed incentives is that the issue is excessively political.

One idea is to build a culture of wellness. Today 75 percent of our \$2.2 trillion health care bill is spent on treatment of chronic lifestyle and obesity-related diseases, most of which could be prevented or managed more responsibly. Today our system is paid to cut, fix or prescribe. Focus needs to be patient centered rather than system-centered.

Tax credits are pricey, but could easily be made deficit-neutral by capping the employer-sponsored exclusion. Literally every serious health economist or expert in the country recommends doing it.

The current tax exclusion could be replaced with more individual control over the purchase of medical services.

WIFE supports an accessible and affordable health care plan, offered by private insurers that will guarantee basic health care to everyone; this basic plan to include hospitalization, outpatient services, long-term care, preventative health care services, mental health and substance abuse and home health care. It should utilize all levels of health care providers with equitable reimbursement for services rendered regardless of population density.

WIFE opposes a mandated national health insurance.
(Source: *Wall Street Journal* July 24, 2009, *National WIFE policy*)

www.WIFeline.com

VARIETY OF CHEESES

By Gwen Cassel, NY
Sheep and Goats Chairman



Most people enjoy some type of cheese several times a week. Cheese in a sandwich or with an apple or some good wine, cheese sprinkled on spaghetti, crumbled in a salad or on your taco, cheese topping on a pizza, or as finger food. Most of the delicious cheeses we eat here in the United States are produced from cow's milk. But there are cheeses we eat, or should try to taste, from other sources - sheep milk cheese and goat cheese.

Cheeses from sheep milk and goat milk are prepared in various forms. There are aged hard cheeses, some of which have been aged in specially constructed cheese caves. Also produced are soft delicate cheeses that can be spread on homemade crackers or breads. As explained on the Willow Hill Farm website: "Cheese has been made for thousands of years from sheep's milk. Some well-known cheeses made from ewes' milk are: Roquefort, Pecorino Romano, Feta (genuine Greek, Bulgarian, etc.), and Ricotta (industry now makes it from cows' milk in the U.S.). Due to the composition of sheep's milk, it takes very little milk compared to other species to make one pound of cheese. In the beginning of lactation period, yields can average five pounds of milk per one pound of cheese - at the end of a lactation it can then be around two pounds of milk per one pound of cheese. That's a lot of cheese!"

Goat cheese is an ancient creation and has mainly been found in Middle Eastern areas through much of history. However, its worldwide popularity is increasing due to its beneficial health aspects and unique flavors. The most common types of goat cheese are the Greek feta and the French chevre. Like sheep milk cheeses, goat cheese is produced in both soft and moderately hard varieties. Served with delicate breads or fruits, goat cheese is well known throughout the world, with France having developed a majority of these cheeses.

In its most simple form, goat cheese is made by warming goat milk, mixing it with rennet to curdle, and then draining and pressing the curds. Soft goat cheeses are made in kitchens all over the world with cooks hanging bundles of cheesecloth filled with curds up in the warm kitchen for several days to drain and cure. If the cheese is to be aged, it is often brined so that it will form a rind, and then stored in a cool cheese cave for several months to cure.

For the calorie conscious, sheep and goat milk cheeses typically contain considerably less fat than cow milk varieties, and often can be consumed by some individuals sensitive to lactose or allergic to cow's milk (check with your doctor). Throughout the United States there are small producers located in farming communities who make sheep and goat cheeses and yogurts.

You may have someone in your neighborhood or at a local farmers' market near you offering these wonderful prod-

ucts for sale, or here are several sources of these delicacies who will ship direct to your door:

Redwood Hill Goat Farm, California:

www.redwoodhill.com;

Capriol Farmstead Goat Cheese, Indiana:

www.capriolegoatcheese.com;

LoveTree Farmstead Sheep Cheeses, Wisconsin:

www.lovetreefarmstead.com;

Old Chatham Shepherding Company, NY:

www.blacksheepcheese.com;

(Sources: <http://www.sheepcheese.com/milkandcheese.htm>)
<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-goat-cheese.htm>)

SORGHUM MOLD

By Lisa Goodheart, KS
Feed Grains Chairman



Sorghum grain mold is a complex disease. The methods of controlling grain mold include avoidance, chemical control, resistance and timely harvest.

Avoidance is one of the most important control strategies in seed production. This can be accomplished by either delaying the planting dates or by growing medium-to-late maturing types of sorghum so that the grain-filling and maturity stages occur after the traditional rainy season. Planting date adjustments may require irrigation, which is not always available to the producer.

Timely harvest is the next best grain mold control option. Reduction in mold damage is possible if the crop is harvested when moisture levels range from 15 to 18 percent. However, sorghum needs to be dried to 10 to 12 percent moisture to avoid molding during storage and further processing.

If grain mold does occur, despite all efforts to avoid it, then one market for moldy sorghum is liquor manufacturing. Liquor manufacturers making grain-based products may use moldy and germinating sorghum by using externally added enzymes. Mold infection during germination will cause slightly higher α -amylase activity compared to healthy grain, which makes moldy grain better suited for malting.

Finally, when it comes to whether or not to feed moldy sorghum, the safest recommendation is to not use mycotoxin-contaminated or moldy feed and hay. Grains and hay may be tested for contaminants, but unknown or uncharacterized mycotoxins could still be present and not detected.

POTATO CHIPS

Old Dutch Foods, Inc., was started as a snack food business in 1934 by one man who peeled, sliced and fried potato chips in his home, packaged them by hand and took them to stores in his own car. Today they use 44,000 lbs. of potatoes each day to make potato chips. The company distributes over 150 snack foods across the Midwest and Canada. They employ 500 in the U.S., and 900 in Canada. It was the first snack food company to produce a sour cream and onion flavored chip and was one of the first to use sunflower oil. They are the second largest tortilla chip seller in North America.

USES OF FLAX

By Vernice Balsdon, ND
National Oilseeds Chairman

Flax grows in the northern plains of the United States and also in southern Canada. It has light blue flowers and the seeds are small, shiny and slippery. All of the plant has many uses.

Linen is made from the stems of flax plants. Linen is the oldest known material used for clothing. Mummies were wrapped in sheets of linen. The Shroud of Turin is linen. Fine writing paper is made with it and even our currency is 20 percent linen.

The oil is called linseed oil and is used to thin oil paints and to give it a glossy look. Linseed oil can also be used to treat wood floors and furniture to protect them from the weather. The oil is also used in soaps, cosmetics, and linoleums.

However, the seeds and oil of the flax plant contain substances which also promote good health. Flaxseed and flaxseed oil are rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), an essential fatty acid that appears to be beneficial for heart disease. ALA belongs to a group of substances called omega-3 fatty acids. It has been suggested that every day you should consume small portions of flaxseed or flaxseed oil. Flaxseed itself (ground or whole) also contains lignans, which may have antioxidant actions and may help protect against certain cancers, though not everyone agrees on this issue.

Flaxseeds and flaxseed oil may also help to:

- Lower cholesterol may help control high blood pressure. Several studies indicate that flaxseed oil, as well as ground flaxseeds, can lower cholesterol, thereby significantly reducing the risk of heart disease. They may also have a protective effect against angina (chest pain) and inhibit inflammatory reactions that cause poor circulation and artery-hardening plaque.

- Counter inflammation associated with lupus and gout by reducing inflammation in the joints, kidneys and skin. Taking flaxseed oil for gout may lessen the often sudden and severe joint pain or swelling that is a symptom of this condition.

- Control constipation, hemorrhoids and diverticular disorders. Because they are high in soluble fiber, ground flaxseeds can help ease the passage of stools.

- Reduce cancer risk. The lignans in flaxseed appear to play a role in protecting against breast, colon, prostate, and perhaps skin cancer.

If you prefer to use ground flaxseeds, just add one or two tablespoons of to an eight-ounce glass of water and mix. It is best to grind the seeds (or buy ground flaxseed) because whole seeds simply pass through the body. Grinding the seeds just before using them best preserves flavor and nutrition, but pre-ground seeds are more convenient. Keep them refrigerated. There are no nutritional differences between brown and yellow seeds. Flaxseeds have a pleasant, nutty flavor and taste good sprinkled on salads, cooked vegetables, or cereals.



Liquid flaxseed oil is the easiest form to use, although it must be kept refrigerated. It is available either in liquid form or in capsules. For best absorption, take flaxseed oil with food. It is easily mixed into juices and other drinks, and its nutty, buttery flavor complements cottage cheese, yogurt and many other foods. You can also use it instead of olive oil in a salad dressing. Don't cook with it, however, as this will deplete the oil's nutrient content. Buy flaxseed oil in an opaque plastic bottle. This will prevent light from spoiling it. Also check the expiration date on the label, as the oil spoils quickly. Keep it refrigerated for freshness. Should the oil develop a powerful odor, discard it.

2009

JUNE PRICES vs. PARITY

Commodity	Price	Parity
Barley-bu	\$ 4.85	9.29
Beans-cwt	30.50	66.50
Canola -cwt	25.40	37.40
Corn-bu	5.28	8.50
Oats-bu	3.56	5.62
Potatoes-cwt	7.90	19.50
Soybeans-bu	12.30	20.70
Sunflower-cwt	27.80	42.40
All wheat-bu	10.50	13.80
All beef cattle	66.60	243.00
All hogs-cwt	51.00	133.00
Lambs-cwt	115.00	274.00

WHAT IS PARITY?

In commodities, you can think of parity price as the purchasing power of a particular commodity relative to a farmer's expenses such as wages, interest on debt, equipment, taxes and so forth. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 states that the parity price formula is "average prices received by farmers for agricultural commodities during the last ten years and is designed to gradually adjust relative parity prices of specific commodities". If the parity price for a commodity is not sufficient enough for a farm operator to support his or her family and operate their business then the government could step in and support prices through direct purchases, or the issuance of non-recourse loans to farmers.

NOMINATIONS

Anyone interested in running for a national office is encouraged to give it some consideration. Numerous positions are still open but competition is always good in case you choose to run for one that already has someone who has applied. If considering one, be sure to get your chapter and state endorsement to Gwen Cassel prior to the election during the national convention. Nominations can be made from the floor as long as the candidate has the required endorsements.

There are numerous Commodity and Topic Chairmanships open so look them over and give one a shot. You never know, you just might be lucky and get it! New people in a position always give a new perspective and outlook. You are needed, so do say yes!

Climate Change Continued from page 7...

in 2006 and 2007 or about the amount produced by 320,000 cars per year.

There are agricultural organizations on both sides of the issue. The National Farmers Union, the National Association of Wheat Growers believe that farmers have the right to make money selling credits and that agricultural offsets can reduce the cost of any climate change legislation by 150 percent or more. The president of the American Federation of Farm Bureau, Bob Stallman, says "Without the adoption of similar actions by other countries, the U.S. will be embarking on a fool's errand. Unilateral cap-and-trade legislation will have little or no impact on the climate because greenhouse gas emissions require a global response. A ton of gases emitted in Virginia is the same as a ton emitted in China. Regulating one without the other will have little or no effect on the environment." A provision in the bill that would require tariffs on goods imported from countries that don't cut their carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 could be the opening salvo in a trade war as retaliatory duties could be slapped on U.S. products. Rep. Adrian Smith (R-NE) says "Federal policy should reward, not punish, our producers who are responsible stewards of the land and shouldn't tax Americans for flipping a light switch. We should continue to focus on incentives, innovation and research and not on mandates and legislation resulting in higher taxes, saddling producers with even more regulations.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) says he is skeptical about the direct land-use impacts on climate change as EPA claims corn ethanol would account for five percent more greenhouse gases than gasoline.

PEANUT MAN

Jacquelyn R. Sistrunk,
Peanuts Chairman

"When I was young, I said to God, 'God, tell me the mystery of the Universe.' But God answered, 'That knowledge is reserved for me alone.' So I said, 'God, tell me the mystery of the peanut.' Then God said, 'Well, George, that's more nearly your size.' And he told me." George Washington Carver (1864-1943) made this statement. He was the scientist who unlocked the secrets of the peanut. He was a professor at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama, and discovered uses for peanuts in soaps, foods, and many other interests.

Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Alabama farmers grow peanuts for distribution during the Atlanta Braves games, the Screen on the Green (movies shown in Centennial Olympic Park), and the National Restaurant Association's annual meeting in Chicago. Buddy McNutty, the National Peanut Butter Mascot, distributes new, quick and easy recipe cards.

The total United States crop acreage for peanuts is down 1.2 percent from last year. This represents the lowest



national planted acreage since 1915.

Maybe we need another "Peanut Man".

ICE CREAM BARS

In 1920, a confectioner named Harry Burt found a neater way to sell his chocolate-coated ice cream—on a stick. He named his patented creation the Good Humor Bar and began producing the treats from a confectionary in Youngstown, Ohio. Soon, he took them directly to the streets in a dozen frosty trucks driven by men in white suits. There are many varieties today.

MARKET NEWS INFORMATION

by Jodie Pitcock

Reported by Marlene Kouba

Jodie Pitcock currently serves as the Market Reporting Supervisor for the Greeley, Colorado, Livestock and Grain Market News Branch. He spoke to WIFE members in Colorado, on June 5.

He said his job made him realize how important accurate information is for farmers and ranchers especially in regards to fruits, vegetables, grain, livestock, eggs, etc.

The Shepherd Amendment was enacted on August 11, 1916, and started records on strawberries.

The St. Joseph Stockyards is still open but the one in Sioux Falls is closed. The main function of feedlots is to sell feed—they are glorified elevators.

It is hard to sell a product on the phone. It takes time and trust. They keep all information confidential. "We have to work together as a team. The livestock industry has changed," he said.

The Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999 brought a change in marketing. U.S. lost many hog producers when pork was \$4.00 a hog. The Law states that all boxed beef, lamb, cattle, lamb as well as hog packers had to report live purchases in storage. Boxed pork was not listed. They are getting data on boxed beef, dates, and grades. All records now come electronically. Mandatory identification and country of origin labeling will have an effect. They report on pet foods, too.

Their primary function is to compile and disseminate information. They have 24 federal locations with 70 reporters and 11 state locations with 150 state reporters who cover local livestock auctions and grain sales. Reports have a standard format. The first report was in 1915.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has their own reporting system but use some of their data, too.

You can check for market data on www.ams.usda.gov. Sites there will give you information on fruits, vegetables and poultry, too.



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