

The North Carolina FFA State Convention

The 89th Annual North Carolina FFA State Convention was held June 20-22 in downtown Raleigh at the Convention Center. The annual State Convention is the highlight event of the year for FFA members. It is the culmination of a year's worth of events where FFA members from across the state have the opportunity to celebrate their achievements, be recognized for their individual and community efforts, compete with other members and kick off another exciting year in agricultural education. Whether receiving a state FFA Degree, competing in a career development event, visiting the career show, or attending a session, FFA members are preparing for their future in exciting ways. This year's convention theme was Transform, which focuses on finding your purpose and developing it into action in your FFA chapter, home and community. This year the NC Small Grain Growers Association not only exhibited in the Career Show but also sponsored the Second General Session of the Convention. Executive Director, Dan Weathington, spoke on behalf of the Association during the opening remarks of the Second General Session in front of hundreds of FFA Chapters, encouraging them to continue to pursue a future in North Carolina's #1 Industry, **AGRICULTURE**. To see pictures from the event please visit our photo gallery on our website at: <http://ncwheat.com/media-gallery/>

National Association of Wheat Growers: Weekly Update

NAWG Visits Growers in the Pacific Northwest

NAWG President David Schemm, CEO Chandler Goule, and Director of Communications Caitlin Eannello had an opportunity to meet with several wheat growers in the PNW. The trip was conducted as part of NAWG's effort to become more familiar with the issues growers face throughout different regions across the country. NAWG can now better tailor its messaging to Congress, the Administration, and key Agencies on what policies work best for all wheat producers. A special thanks to NAWG's state associations Washington Association of Wheat Growers, Oregon Wheat Growers League, and the Idaho Grain Producers Association for hosting and introducing us to some amazing wheat farmers! For pictures and more information on the events follow @wheatworld, @NationalWheat, and visit us on Facebook.

NAFTA Renegotiation: What has Happened and Next Steps

The first meeting between Secretary Perdue (U.S.), Minister Lawrence MacAulay (Canada), and Secretary Calzada (Mexico) took place June 19-20, in Savannah, Georgia. The group released a joint statement following the meetings stressing the importance and the mutual benefits of NAFTA. As released in the statement, "We share a commitment to keeping our markets open and transparent so that trade can continue to grow."

Additionally, last week NAWG filed joint comments with U.S. Wheat Associates in response to USTR's Request for Comments on negotiating objectives regarding modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico (82 FR 23699). In the comments, the wheat organizations emphasized the importance of "do no harm" during the renegotiations and discussed several areas where improvements could be made.

The U.S. Biotech Crops Alliance (USBCA), in which NAWG is a member, also submitted comments. In its comments, USBCA states that "modernizing NAFTA is an excellent opportunity to improve domestic and export marketability of U.S. crops." The alliance encourages the "completion of an agreement that provides

for mutual recognition of approvals and common practice for LLP situations.” “Inclusion of these principles in a ‘modernized’ NAFTA also could contribute to their adoption in future trade accords beyond North America,” the Alliance stated.

This week United States Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Lighthizer testified to the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Ways and Means on the Administration’s trade agenda and the FY18 Budget Request for USTR.

Next week, there will be a hearing on the modernization of NAFTA from Tuesday, June 27, 2017, through Thursday, June 29, 2017 at the U.S. International Trade Commission, 500 E Street, SW, Washington, DC 20436. NAWG CEO Chandler Goule and USW’s Director of Policy, Ben Connor, will have an opportunity to testify. The hearing is open to the public, comments are on the record, and press may be in the room during the hearing. Once determined, more details will be sent out prior to NAWG and USW’s hearing date.

Lastly, on July 17, 2017, there will be a public release of the NAFTA negotiating objectives by the Administration. Formal NAFTA negotiations can officially start on August 16, 2017.

Confirmation Hearing for CFTC Chairmen Held

On June 22nd, 2017, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry held a confirmation hearing for Chris Giancarlo to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). NAWG has signed onto a letter with a group of agricultural groups supporting the confirmation of Acting Chairman Giancarlo. Acting Chairman Giancarlo has dedicated a considerable amount of time and effort into understanding the agriculture sector and its use of the derivatives markets. Mr. Giancarlo has visited several farms and facilities over the past few years to learn about the industry first-hand from those who are actual commodity producers and market participants. NAWG is confident Mr. Giancarlo should be confirmed and will balance the need of overseeing CFTC’s regulation of the financial and commodity markets.

House Ag Committee Holds Research Hearing

The House Agriculture Committee held a hearing on Thursday, July 22nd, titled “The Next Farm Bill: University Research”. The focus of the hearing was on addressing opportunities and challenges universities face in order to advance American agriculture and keep it competitive in international markets.

NAWG Submits Comments to USDA APHIS Proposed Revisions to Part 340

On Monday, June 19, 2017, NAWG submitted comments to USDA APHIS on proposed revisions to plant regulatory rule Part 340. NAWG applauds the USDA for undertaking this needed review of its current regulatory processes to keep them up to date with the advances being made in the plant sciences. Since a large percentage (approximately 50%) of wheat produced in the United States is marketed for export on an annual basis, any change contemplated by the USDA APHIS needs to consider the impact to importing countries. This is NAWG’s highest priority concern with the proposed change in the regulation.

USDA is encouraged to develop and execute an international engagement strategy that defines USDA’s rationale on pre-market regulatory approaches, including its approach to oversight of products developed

with genome editing tools. U.S. government agencies should be encouraged to actively engage with our trading partners around these policies as soon as possible to work toward consistent, science-based, policies across countries to avoid trade disruptions. All foreign customers expect the continued oversight by USDA to insure consistent food safety, which is fundamental to their confidence in purchases of U.S. wheat.

NAWG Responds to Senate Finance Hearing Examining the Administration's Top Trade Priorities

On June 21, 2017, the Senate Committee on Finance held a hearing to discuss the Administration's trade agenda and its FY18 Budget Request for the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). Members heard testimony from USTR Robert Lighthizer who spoke on the Administration's top trade priorities and defended the Administration's FY18 Budget Request. NAWG President David Schemm submitted written testimony for the record.

NAWG Applauds the Administration's Choice for Chief Agricultural Negotiator

In a recent release, NAWG expressed support for President Donald Trump's nomination of Gregory Doud to be the chief agricultural negotiator, with the rank of Ambassador, under the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). Gregory Doud, of Kansas, is a former U.S. Wheat Associates staff member and the current President of the Commodity Markets Council.

Perdue Names Leadership in Acting Roles as USDA Reorganization Takes Shape

On June 16, 2017, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue named three individuals who will take on leadership roles as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues the reorganization announced on May 11, 2017. Perdue has named Acting Deputy Under Secretaries to serve the new roles of Under Secretary of Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation, and Under Secretary for National Resources and Environment until the Senate confirms permanent presidentially-nominated appointees.

Jason Hafemeister, who was serving as the Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, will now be Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. He has been involved in agricultural farm and trade policy for more than 25 years, including almost 20 at USDA and with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative where he served as the lead U.S. negotiator on agriculture in the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Doha Round negotiations, the Central America Free Trade Agreement, and China's accession to the WTO.

Dr. Robert Johansson will now serve as Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation. Johansson has worked as an economist at USDA since 2001 and was appointed to senior economist for energy, environment, and agriculture on the President's Council of Economic Advisers in 2011, Deputy Chief Economist at the USDA in 2012, and USDA's Chief Economist in 2015.

Dan Jiron will now serve as Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. Jiron has given more than 29 years of public service and natural resources management. He held several forestry jobs in the west, worked as Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs of the Intermountain Region, and

was an aide to United States Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado prior to being appointed as Associate Chief of the Forest Service in 2016.

Another important appointment, former U.S. Wheat Associates staff member and the current President of the Commodity Markets Council Gregory Doud will now serve as Chief Agricultural Negotiator, with the Rank of Ambassador, for the United States Trade Representative. Doud was also a senior Professional Staff member of the Senate Agriculture Committee for Senator Pat Roberts and Senator Thad Cochran, assisted in drafting the 2012 Senate Farm Bill, and was the Chief Economist for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association for eight years.

NIFA Seeks Research Topics from Commodity Boards for FY 2018 AFRI Program

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is reaching out to eligible national and state commodity boards and marketing orders to propose topics for research under its FY 2018 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grants program. This is the third year that NIFA has implemented the 2014 Farm Bill commodity board provision, which is enhancing collaboration between the agency and commodity groups as well as leveraging additional funds for critical research in areas of common interest. Proposed topics may be chosen for inclusion under a specific program area priority of an AFRI Request for Applications (RFA).

A Federal Register Notice entitled "Solicitation of Commodity Board Topics and Contribution of Funding Under the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program," published May 26, solicits topics from eligible commodity board entities (federal and state-level commodity boards, as defined in the notice). Commodity boards must submit topics that relate to established priority areas of AFRI by 5:00 p.m. EDT on July 25 for consideration in the FY 2018 AFRI program.

Weekly Outlook: Slight Changes to USDA WASDE Report in June

The USDA's June WASDE report of world supply and consumption projections contained a number of changes from the May report...Projected 2017/18 U.S. wheat production has slightly increased by 3.8 million bushels to 1,824 million bushels with higher Hard Red Winter and Soft Red Winter wheat production forecasts more than offsetting a reduced White Winter wheat crop. Ending stocks expected to be raised by 10.8 million bushels to 924.3 million.

A slightly bright spot, season-average farm price is projected at \$3.90 to \$4.70 per bushel, up 5 cents on both ends of the range with the mid-point of this range up \$0.40 from 2016/17. Global wheat supplies for 2017/18 projected to be raised 2.8 million tons with Russian production up 2.0 million tons, Turkey up 0.5 million tons, India down 1.0 million tons (still record yield, up 9.0 million from 16/17), and the EU moderately lower (but still up 4% from last year). 2017/18 foreign exports slightly higher with Argentina and Iran up and the EU slightly down. Imports projected higher in Brazil, Chile, and South Africa, but down for Iran. Global ending stocks are projected at a record 261.2 million tons, up 2.9 million from last month.

Pollinator Week 2017 (June 19-25)

This past week was a buzz of activity around the 10th annual Pollinator Week. Pollinator Partnership (P2), the non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the health, protection, and conservation of all pollinating

animals, administered the week's events which included more than 160 events across North America. These included the Empire State Building, the CN Tower in Toronto, and Niagara Falls being lit up in black and yellow to represent the 4,000 species of bees found in North America, while in Washington, D.C. a congressional briefing, reception, and seminars were held and P2 engaged with policy makers at the Capitol.

Pollinators are responsible for 1/3 of the human diet and in some cases, as with almonds, there would be no crop without them. Honey bees, in particular, because of our ability to maintain and transport them, support more than \$19 billion in food and crop production annually in the U.S. NAWG is a member of the Honey bee Health Coalition which works toward collaborative solution for honey bee health. The Coalition consists of several agriculture and environment members as well as ex officio participation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Canada Bee Health Roundtable.

USDA: 2017 Census of Agriculture: One Week Left!

The census is the only complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. It includes even the smallest plots of land – rural or urban – growing fruits, vegetables, or raising food animals, if \$1,000 or more of such products were raised and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. The information produced by the Census of Agriculture guides Congress, agribusiness, policymakers, researchers, local governments and many others on the creation and funding of agricultural programs and services – decisions that can directly impact your local operations and the future of the agriculture industry for years to come.

Please note that new farmers or existing farmers who have not participated in a prior Census of Agriculture still have time to sign up to be counted through the end of June at <https://www.agcounts.usda.gov/cgi-bin/counts/>. The survey takes less than a minute – and will ensure that you receive a Census form (that you can fill out in paper form or online.) If a farmer/rancher is not on our list frame by June 30th, 2017, the producer will not have an opportunity to participate in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. For more information about the census, please visit www.agcensus.usda.gov, follow NASS on Twitter @usda_nass, or call (800) 727-9540.

NCSGGA Upcoming Events

June 27th / 9:30am
Animal Ag Coalition Mtg.
Farm Bureau Headquarters
Glenwood Avenue
Raleigh, NC

July 12th / 8:30am - 3:00pm
Research & Education Mtg.
NCSGGA Office
3822 Bland Road
Raleigh, NC

July 27th
Northeast Ag Expo Field Day
R&R Farms
106 Riddick Grove Rd.
Belvidere, NC 27919

August 1st / 10:00am – 12:00pm
Touch a Tractor Event
4020 Market At North Hills St.
Raleigh, NC 27609

August 2nd, 2017
Blacklands Farm Managers Tour
Green Valley Farms
7014 NC-94
Columbia, NC 27925

August 10th - 11th
NCSGGA Board Meeting
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
Durham, NC

September 9th / 2:30pm – 5:00pm
CALs Tailgate
PNC Arena
Raleigh, NC

September 15th / 5:00pm – 8:00pm
Family Fun Night
Mt. Vernon School
Raleigh, NC

*Note***If you know of someone that does not have access to a computer/internet and would like to receive printed hard copies of the Wheat Beat please have them call Nikki Johnson at 919-809-8657 to setup a mailing delivery address. *****