

Grain Sorghum Field Day

A Grain Sorghum Field Day was held at the Upper Coastal Plains Research Station in Rocky Mount on Wednesday, August 30th with 50 people in attendance. Scott Tilley, NC Cooperative Extension Assistant Area Grain Crops Agent, directed the meeting with opening comments on the planted acres of 20,000 this year down from about 34,000 acres last year. The primary drop in acres was due to heavy infestation of Sugarcane Aphid. Grain Sorghum is no different from other crops they all need management and supervision from planting through harvest. Dr. Angela Post, NCSU Small Grain Specialist, discussed Standard vs. Intense management for a successful crop. Ryan Heiniger, OVT Director, NCSU, overviewed the OVT test he has conducted this past year. Dr. Wesley Everman, NCSU, Weed Specialist discussed the opportunities of keeping the crop clean and free of weed competition. It is important if you plant Grain Sorghum that you have a market to sell your crop and manage as to produce a profitable yield. To see pictures from the event please visit our photo gallery on our website at: <http://ncwheat.com/media-gallery/>

Wheat Farmers Call for Strong Farm Bill Amid Falling Prices, Disasters

Source: Farm Policy Facts

<https://www.farmpolicyfacts.org/farmbill/>

It's been a hard year for our nation's wheat farmers. Drought in the South and Midwest. Wildfires. A late spring blizzard across the Great Plains. And it all comes at a time of falling prices and the lowest number of wheat acres under cultivation in U.S. history.

Against this backdrop, wheat farmers have been making the rounds in Washington to stress the importance of a strong farm safety net in the upcoming 2018 Farm Bill.

Farm Policy Facts talked to the five officers of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) to get their take on how the bill could help farm communities across the nation, this is the first part of the series:

Farm Bill Needs Tweaks, Not Wholesale Change

Gordon Stoner started harvesting 6,000 acres of durum wheat on his farm during the worst drought on record in northeastern Montana.

He broke an inch of rain for the year in late July, a time he would normally have more than a foot.

"It underscores why wheat farmers see crop insurance as a top priority," he said. "It doesn't cover all of your expenses, but it takes enough of the risk out of it that you can put the crop in the next year. Without crop insurance, I would not be farming."

The Farm Bill, along with a special contract between crop insurers and the USDA, spell out the rules for crop insurance, including the level at which the government will offer premium discounts. The proposed federal budget has called for a decrease in those discounts, and it is anticipated that proposed amendments to the Farm Bill could also call for program caps.

That's a bad idea, Stoner says.

"Without it, it would be too costly for us to afford."

In addition to crop insurance, other components of the Farm Bill that are important to wheat farmers include the price loss coverage (PLC) and agriculture risk coverage (ARC) programs, he said.

A wheat farmer has 30-50 percent deductible on crop insurance. That means they take a major financial hit during a disaster, even with insurance, and the PLC and ARC can help, Stoner explained.

PLC kicks in when a crop's national average market price is below the reference, or target, price.

ARC helps when the actual county crop revenue of a covered commodity falls below a floor for the covered commodity.

The Farm Bill doesn't need major changes, Stoner said. But it does need some tweaks to make it more efficient and flexible.

"Many in Congress are very supportive of the Farm Bill," he said.

The Farm Bill also includes funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which Stoner says gives it more political clout.

"Without our urban brethren, we would not pass the farm title," he said. "That's kind of like insurance for our urban neighbors when they are down their luck."

NC Corn Growers Association - Job Opening Announced

The North Carolina Corn Growers Association is announcing an opening for Executive Secretary of the association to be located in Raleigh, NC. The applicant should be available on or about December 1st, 2017. Resume should be sent to Dennis Waller, Search Committee Chairman, 879 Waller Road, Mt. Olive, NC 28365. Job description and duties can be furnished upon request to Mr. Waller at the above address, by email at Cath4143@gmail.com or calling at 919-920-5654. Closing Date for Applications is October 1, 2017.

National Association of Wheat Growers: Weekly Update

Farmer, Rancher, Fisherman Airs Tonight on the Discovery Channel

The Farmer, Rancher, Fisherman "Restoring Kansas" episode featuring Justin Knopf airs tonight on the Discovery Channel 9:00pmEST. Justin Knopf is a fifth generation farmer with around 4,000 acres of Kansas farmland. He practices "no till" farming, which helps to preserve the land. Watch the clip [here](#).

China rejects U.S. Request for Dispute Panel in Grain Quota Case

The United States' first request to China to establish a dispute settlement panel in a WTO case involving tariff rate quotas has been denied. The panel would address concerns that China has been blocking billions of dollars in wheat, rice and corn imports and was requested following bilateral discussions within the WTO's agriculture committee which didn't result in any fixes. The U.S. can now reissue its request for a panel at the next meeting of the WTO's dispute settlement body where unless all members in attendance agreed not to

establish it, would allow the panel to move forward. This sets up what could be a lengthy litigation process with years of appeals.

New Studies Put Dollar Signs on Conservation Practices

Cover crops and no-till soil health practices can reduce erosion and runoff, increase organic matter retention, and enhance biodiversity. The National Association of Conservation Districts and Datu Research, LLC recently released a set of case studies detailing the economic advantage of adopting these practices. After adoption, the case studies found the net farm incomes had increased by up to \$110 per acre. Although these studies focus on corn-soybean crop rotations in the Upper Mississippi River Basin (UMRB), these conservation practices can ultimately benefit the fertility and productivity of a wide range of agroecosystems.

Diaz Farm

The Diaz farm had been a no-till operation since its purchase; however, once erosion had become more prevalent, the Diaz family decided to invest in cover crops. After three years of investment, budgets detailed in the fourth and fifth years generated positive results. By year four, Dan Diaz began receiving significant economic returns and the net change in income was \$109.91 per acre by 2015.

Willis Farm

The Willis family had been practicing no-till farming since 1986; however, the family wanted to prevent erosion, generate additional organic build-up, and increase water filtration. Their use of cover crops contributed to a net change in income ranging from \$16.48 to \$18.43 per acre in three of the four years. Additionally, yield improvements and increased soil stability were observed.

Moore Farm

The Moore family adopted no-till practices since 1988 which has improved the health of the soil and helped mitigate weather-related costs. By the third year of no-till practices, the Moore family observed improvements in soil health and costs saved in labor and erosion-related repairs.

Kuhns Family

When the Kuhns family observed poor soil conditions and performed regular erosion-related repairs in the 1990s, they decided to practice the idea of “work smarter, not harder”. The transition to no-till farming took two years to develop and their economic increases ranged from \$54.72 to \$107.81 per acre above the baseline. Although this required additional investments in expenses and termination, the economic and ecological improvements outweighed the costs.

USDA To Measure Small Grains Production with September Surveys

During September, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts two surveys critical to small grains producers around the country, including those growing wheat, oats, barley and rye. The results of the surveys (Agricultural Survey – September and the County Agricultural Production Survey) help determine elements of farm payment and risk management programs. The Agricultural Survey also asks for grain stocks information.

Survey results will be published in several reports, including the annual Small Grains Summary and Grain Stocks on September 29 as well as County Estimates on December 14. These and all NASS reports are available online at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications. See how NASS data are used via a video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBW-g1FgLN8>.

NCSGGA Upcoming Events

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

September 21st, 2017
AG Fest
University of Mount Olive
Mount Olive, NC

September 29th / 8:00am - 2:00pm
Halifax County Harvest Days
4-H Rural Life Center
Halifax, NC

October 10th - 12th / 8:30a-2:00p
Stanly County Ag Awareness Week
Stanly County Agri-Civic Center
26032 Newt Rd # B,
Albemarle, NC 28001

October 13th / 8:30a - 2:30p
Agriculture Science Day
Red Oak Elementary School
5603 Red Oak Rd,
Red Oak, NC 27868

October 16th - 20th
Fall Wheat Industry Mtg. (NAWG)
Charleston, SC

October 24th - 26th / 8:30a-2:00p
Hoke County Ag Awareness Week

Hoke Robeson Gin
7480 Old Maxton Rd,
Red Springs, NC 28377

October 31st, 2017
Plant Science Initiative
Ground Breaking Ceremony
Raleigh, NC

November 2nd, 2017
Northeast Regional AG Expo
Bob Martin Eastern Ag. Center
2900 NC Highway 125 S.
Williamston, NC 27892

November 7th – 8th / 9:00a-3:30p
Ag Youth Day
Richlands, NC

November 9th, 2017
Farm City Week Banquet
Elizabeth City, NC

December 7th – 8th, 2017
NCSGGA Board Meeting
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
4700 Emperor Blvd.
Durham, NC 27703

*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. *****