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APRIL 2007

KENTUCKY

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KFB OBSERVES AG DAY

Agriculture is responsible for providing the necessities of everyday life. That's the message KFB delivered for last month's celebration of National Agriculture Day.

KFB teamed with its farmer-members, agribusinesses, universities and government agencies to celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. The Ag Day program is committed to increasing public awareness about the agriculture industry. As the world population soars, there is even greater demand for the food, fiber and renewable resources that the United States produces.

The Agriculture Council of America, organizers of National Ag Day, believe that everyone should understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced and should value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.

Ag Day focused on educating con-

sumers about the industry, so they may also acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber and renewable resource industry.

"It's important to increase awareness of the benefits that agriculture brings to Americans," said KFB President Marshall Coyle. "National Agriculture Day is an opportunity to get the story of agriculture in front of the public.

"As we develop new sources of renewable energy, whether it comes from corn, soybeans, grasses or other crops, we now have the capability to support our energy needs on a long-term basis. That's important to celebrate," Coyle added.

In Frankfort, Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer celebrated Kentucky Agriculture Day by honoring the winners of the Department of Agriculture's annual Poster and Essay Contest. Contestants created posters and essays based on the theme "Kentucky Farms are Fun." Winners of each contest in each grade were awarded \$100 savings bonds. Each winner's school was given \$500 for the winner's classroom to purchase agriculture-related materials or activities. The school award was sponsored by the Kentucky Grocers Association.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

At press time, several of KFB's priority issues had not been resolved in the legislative session which was scheduled to end on March 27. Foremost was House Bill 1, which had appropriations for upgrades to the livestock disease diagnostic labs in Lexington and Hopkinsville plus a dairy research project involving UK and Eastern Kentucky University.

Among several other bills of interest, KFB was awaiting action on a measure to provide incentives for alternative fuel production and renewable energy facilities.

The General Assembly did pass several bills that KFB actively supported. *A complete wrapup of the 2007 session will be featured in the May issue of KFB News.*



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A MULTI-COUNTY LEGISLATIVE APPRECIATION DINNER

STATE SENATOR JERRY RHOADS (SEATED LEFT) OF MADISONVILLE AND STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRENT YONTS OF GREENVILLE (SEATED RIGHT) WERE THE GUESTS OF HONOR FOR A DINNER MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF HOPKINS AND MUHLENBURG COUNTY FARM BUREAUS.

“COMMENT”

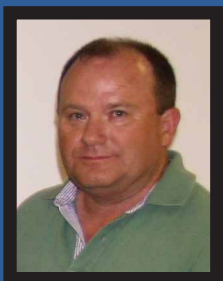
Farmers own or operate the largest majority of the land area with the most miles of streams so it is likely they contribute to non-point source pollution. Many of Kentucky's farmers recognize their contribution to water pollution and the impact it has on water quality and are actively engaging in measures and making choices that will, over time, improve the quality of Kentucky's water.

Since October, 2001 Kentucky's Agriculture Water Quality Act has required farmers to develop and implement "water quality plans" for their operations. Over 60,500 landowners now have water quality plans according to the Division of Conservation (DOC), which tracks certifications filed with conservation districts by landowners stating they have agriculture water quality plans.

Individual water quality plans are developed through choices of best management practices (BMPs) designed and approved in the State Water Quality Plan. They are designed to prevent runoff from sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other sources of pollution from activities on a farming or silviculture operation. Implementation of these BMPs can be very costly and requires intensive technical assistance to meet certain standards and specifications. The cost often makes them prohibitive to many farmers. DOC administers several programs through Kentucky's 121 conservation districts to make technical and financial assistance available to landowners.

The Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share program provides cost share assistance to farmers to install best management practices. Top priority is given to animal waste and targets watersheds where water quality impairment exists. The program has been very successful in its' short history but the demand is still much greater than the funds available. There have been 21,465 farmers who have applied for cost-share assistance to install BMPs at a cost of \$214 million. The Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission has approved 7,725 applications and DOC has disbursed \$82 million to landowners, fully utilizing all funds available for cost share.

Conservation Districts have just completed this year's sign-up period. Once again there is a huge demand for funding to put best management practices identified in individual agriculture water quality plans into place. The Commission will rank the applications and announce the funding at their next meeting in May. This will put in place another year of best management practice implementation by farmers to help protect our natural resources and to continue to set an example of how every day can be Earth Day.



Steve Coleman

DIRECTOR

KENTUCKY DIVISION OF CONSERVATION

ON THE COVER:

A VINEYARD IN WOODFORD COUNTY.
PHOTO BY ROGER NESBITT

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Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all.

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"The Voice of Kentucky Agriculture"

www.kyfb.com

CONGRESSIONAL TOUR IS A CAPITAL IDEA



IN KEEPING WITH A TRADITION HE STARTED YEARS AGO, CONGRESSMAN HAL ROGERS LED A LARGE GROUP ON A TOUR OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING.

KFB members continue to show up in big numbers for the annual Congressional Tour.

This year's event attracted 222 members from 57 counties — numbers that likely will preserve KFB's status as the state which brings the biggest group to the nation's capital to meet with lawmakers.

AFBF Vice President Steve Appel, who is president of Washington FB, stopped by the opening session at the Holiday Inn Capital Hotel to bring greetings to the large contingent from

the Bluegrass State. He noted that four other states (Washington, Utah, Mississippi and Idaho) also had members in town for their annual legislative visits but had much smaller groups.

Appel commended KFB for its commitment to the process, saying: "It's personal visits that really count" with lawmakers. Concurring was AFBF Public Policy Director Mark Maslyn, who followed Appel to the podium.

"It's all about the relationships that you establish," Maslyn said. "It's who you know and putting yourself in a position to influence policy."

The opportunity to rub elbows with Kentucky's Congressional delegation is a big attraction, but so is an agenda that leaves plenty of free time for sightseeing. Tours of landmarks like The Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial and Mount Vernon are a popular feature. And a large group usually joins Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers for a tour of the capitol building. (Rogers has conducted the tour for many years and expanded it beyond his constituents by graciously inviting everyone to join him.)

Many members comment that the



going to be spectacular,” predicted Senator Jim Bunning. His colleague, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, agreed, adding: “A lot of fascinating things happen when oil is \$70 a barrel.”

At the breakfast meeting McConnell noted that it was his 22nd year at the event, a tenure surpassed only by Congressman Rogers. Kentucky’s senior senator had high praise for KFB, remarking that “this organization has been extraordinarily led over the years.”

KFB also drew praise from other members of the delegation. Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis was especially complimentary of the KFB group. “I appreciate you coming up here to build on relationships,” Davis said. “You are building partnerships for success and those relationships are very important.”

Third District Congressman John Yarmuth, a new member of the Kentucky delegation, affirmed his interest in agriculture. He told the breakfast crowd that he is aware that agriculture is an “integral part” of Jefferson County’s economy and important to the state as a whole.

In keeping with a long-held tradition, Kentucky’s Congressional delegation had breakfast with the KFB group, with each lawmaker taking a turn at the podium. Sixth District Congressman Ben Chandler was unable to attend the breakfast, but met afterward with about 20 of his constituents and three KFB staffers.

The other House members also met separately with constituents. Later, Senators McConnell and Bunning con-

Washington trip is their favorite Farm Bureau function.

“This is probably the best thing Farm Bureau does with members,” said Gary McGruder, a former president of Bullitt County FB. “It helps us maintain a good working relationship with our (Congressional) delegation, it’s very informative and there’s enough free time for us to enjoy the visit.”

The farm bill and immigration reform head the list of national issues for this year. Guest speakers, as well as Kentucky lawmakers, addressed both issues during the course of two days of meetings. The outlook, according to the Washington insiders, isn’t entirely favorable to Farm Bureau policy.

AFBF public affairs staffers said farm bill programs probably will suffer budget cuts as a result of the nation’s record fiscal deficit, and that Congress is expected to move slowly in addressing the highly-controversial immigration issue.

On a brighter note, there was a consensus of opinion that farmers will benefit from energy and conservation policies that are in the works. “There are some things in energy that are

ABOVE: CONGRESSMAN RON LEWIS (LEFT) CHATTED WITH KFB DIRECTOR FRITZ GIESECKE OF HORSE CAVE.

BELOW: KFB DIRECTOR TERRY ROWLETT OF HENRY COUNTY (RIGHT) VISITED WITH CONGRESSMAN JOHN YARMUTH FOLLOWING THE BREAKFAST.



CONGRESSIONAL TOUR...



LEFT: CONGRESSMAN ED WHITFIELD SPOKE WITH HIS CONSTITUENTS DURING THE ANNUAL VISIT.

BELOW: KFB STAFFER MATT HILTON INTERVIEWED CONGRESSMAN GEOFF DAVIS FOLLOWING THE BREAKFAST.

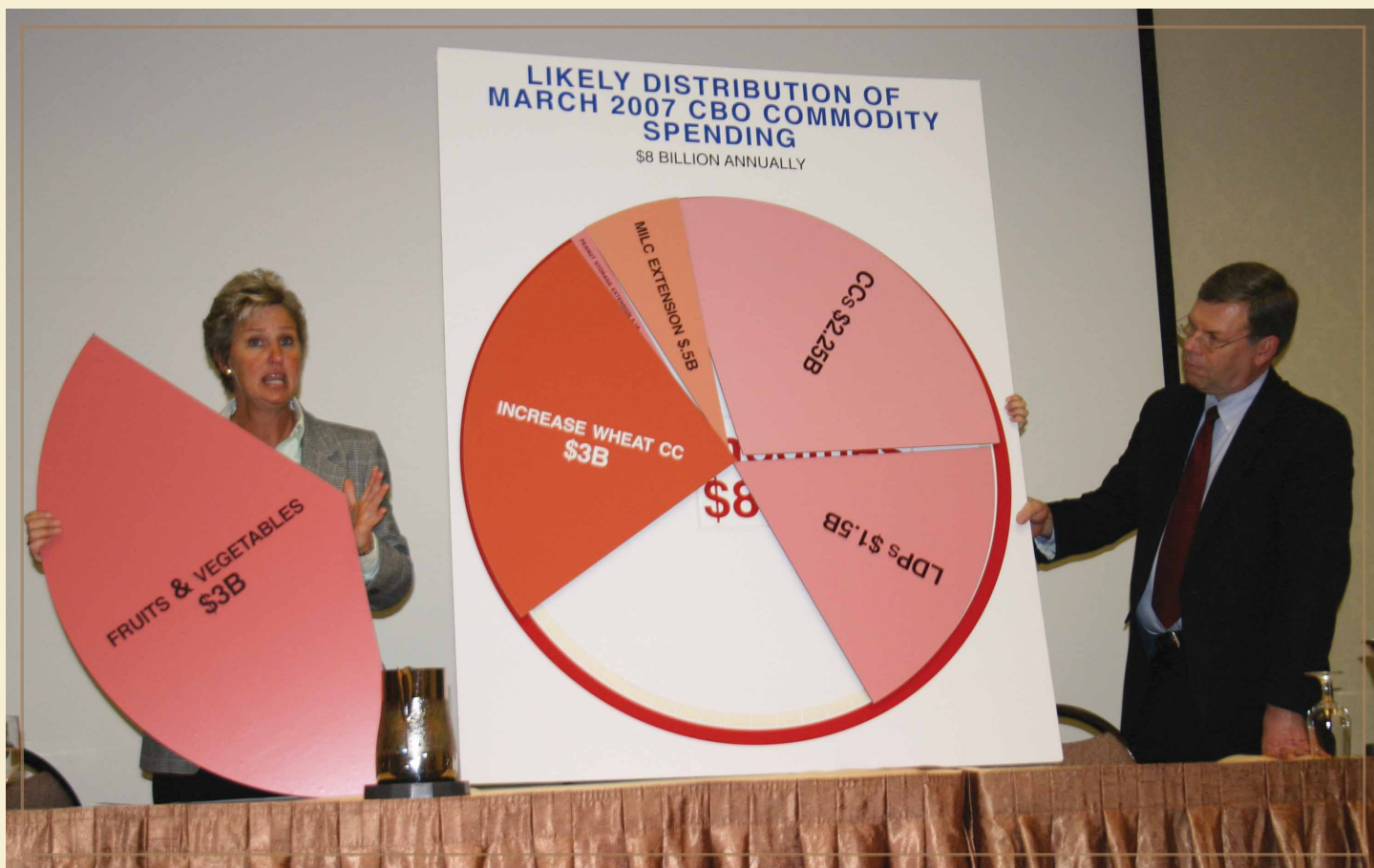




LEFT: SENATORS MCCONNELL AND BUNNING CONDUCTED THEIR ANNUAL MEETING WITH THE VISITORS FROM KFB.

BELOW: KFB DIRECTOR TERRY GILBERT OF BOYLE COUNTY INTRODUCED CONGRESSMAN BEN CHANDLER TO CONSTITUENTS PRIOR TO THEIR MEETING IN A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' MEETING ROOM.

BOTTOM: AFBF'S MARY KAY THATCHER, WITH AN ASSIST FROM COLLEAGUE MARK MASLYN, USED AN INTERESTING GRAPHIC TO EXPLAIN THE DYNAMICS FOR BUDGETING THE FARM BILL.





GOOD MANAGEMENT CAN RESTORE IDLE LAND

BY LAURA SKILLMAN
UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Spurred on by higher grain prices, producers are considering bringing fallow land back into production. This can be done successfully if producers follow good management techniques, according to research conducted by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture.

"We aren't getting as many questions about this from farmers in western Kentucky as from central Kentucky," said Lloyd Murdock, UK Extension soils specialist. "There was a lot of land that was eligible to come out of the federal Conservation Reserve Program this year, but all but about three million acres have been re-enrolled nationwide."

In the mid- to late 1990s, UK scientists conducted research in preparation for what was anticipated to be a move from fallowed land to production. It never materialized at that time, but demand and high prices for grain crops are moving producers to consider adding acreage this year. Some of those fields will have been left completely fallow while others may have been used for hay or pasture.

It is unclear how much fallow land and hay or pasture fields will ultimately switch to row crops, but Murdock said for farmers considering doing so, it is important to understand the challenges.

If the land has been fallow and in sod for several years, the quality of the soil will be greatly improved, he said. Maintaining the quality will require planning and good management.

Key factors are fertility and pest control. The research conducted earlier by UK can provide producers with answers to some of the challenges they will face in this transition.

Fields left in grass for multiple years see improvements in pore volume and size distribution, which help with filtration, water-holding capacity, aeration and the portion of soil water avail-

able to plants. When determining whether to use some type of tillage system or to no-till, farmers need to consider that tillage will cause the soil structure to deteriorate and organic matter and nitrogen also will decline.

While tillage aids in weed control and removes much of the residue from the surface that can harbor pests, no-tillage provides the best option for retaining most of the gains from the field being in long-term sod.

The No. 1 pest problem in sod ground that is going to be cropped is a rodent called a prairie vole. Voles need food and a full canopy to protect them from predators. Established sod fields provide an ideal environment for large vole populations to exist. Heavy damage from voles can occur in no-till production if they are not controlled.

"Voles are going to be a problem and you've got to address that early," Murdock said.

"To address it properly, you need to kill all the vegetation 30 days before you plant."

Burning the vegetation can also be helpful. Mowing will help some and can help predators see the voles more clearly. Seed treatments are also available to protect seed from voles.

"They can really damage a crop, so you are going to have to do something to manage voles," he said.

While tillage is a very effective way of destroying vole populations, it is not the best option for the soil. If a farmer had the mindset to till for the first year with something like a bog disk to remove the excess vegetation, then returned to no-till the following year, he could retain much of the soil quality, Murdock said.

It is important to plan well in advance and to start control options early to allow for the use of more than one control, evaluate the control achieved, repeat if necessary and change your plans if needed.

The nutrient status of fields that have been in long-term sod change with time, Murdock said. A review of

the nutrient status of 50 fields that had been in sod and left fallow for eight to nine years showed high amounts of variability between fields. Each field must be tested and treated separately to assure adequate fertilization and liming for good production.

"If you've got something that's been out of production for quite some time, it is real important to soil test," he said. "You can really screw up by not doing that."

The surveyed fields indicated that phosphorus was low in most fields, which will make it one of the most limiting nutrients in most fields. A significant amount of phosphorus fertilizer will be required for best production.

Land that has been in sod for 10 years or more will have experienced at least a one percent increase in organic matter in the plow layer. Nitrogen is in the organic matter and may be released as the organic matter decomposes. This release is subject to the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio in the residue, tillage method and weather.

Because of this available nitrogen, the nitrogen recommended for corn planted using tillage should be reduced by 50 pounds per acre in the first year of production, compared to that recommended in a long-term cropping system. No-till planted corn should only be reduced by 25 pounds per acre or less because decomposition and the resulting available nitrogen will be slower than in tilled fields.

In no-till planting, research showed that soybeans were a better option in the first year a field is returned to production. So, if it is a toss-up between planting soybeans and planting corn, then soybeans would be the better option, Murdock said. However, with the major demand seen for corn and the subsequent high prices, soybeans may not be in the picture for some farmers, he noted.



FARM PRODUCTION NEWS

INVINSA TECHNOLOGY PROTECTS YIELDS AGAINST DROUGHT

AgroFresh, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Rohm and Haas, has introduced its Invinsa technology, an important new chemistry that protects agronomic crop yields against heat and drought stress.

Over the past two years, AgroFresh and university researchers have conducted research trials using the new Invinsa technology in corn, soybean, cotton, sunflower and other crops, in both North and South America. In field trials with heat and drought stress, the Invinsa technology has shown up to 20 percent higher yields as compared to the untreated control.

Protecting plants from ethylene, a naturally-occurring substance produced by all plants, is the key to this important new technology. Invinsa technology prevents ethylene-induced stress responses, allowing the crop to remain actively growing during periods of environmental stress. "This is important because under conditions of heat and drought stress, ethylene signals flowers to abort, leaves to senesce and causes other negative effects, limiting the plant's productivity" said Trent Leopold, AgroFresh Vice President of Strategic Market Development.

AgroFresh has become the global expert in ethylene management through its proprietary 1-MCP technology (1-Methylcyclopropene) under the SmartFreshSM Quality System, first used beginning in 2001 to enhance fruit quality. The SmartFreshSM Quality System has been heralded worldwide for its contributions in maintaining apple quality by helping packers and shippers maintain quality throughout the value chain all the way through to the consumer. Today over 50 percent of apples in the United States are SmartFreshTM quality apples and the business continues to grow with over 26 registrations globally.

NEW SOIL SENSORS AVAILABLE

Onset Computer Corporation, a leading supplier of battery-powered data loggers and weather stations, has added two new plug-and-play Soil Moisture Smart Sensors for use with HOBO Weather Stations.

The new Soil Moisture Smart Sensors provide high accuracy measurements of volumetric water content in soil, and integrate industry-proven Decagon ECH2O dielectric probes for precise, long-term soil moisture monitoring.

Suitable for use in wide range of applications including agricultural research and irrigation management, the new sensors provide a number of key features, including:

- Low sensitivity to temperature and saline effects - broadens the range of soil types, including sandy and high-salinity soils, which can be monitored

with HOBO Weather Stations.

- Compact form factor - enables easy installation in pots, greenhouses, and other environments

- Smart Sensor design - enables the sensors to be plugged into HOBO Weather Stations and Micro Stations and automatically recognized without complicated wiring, programming or calibration requirements.

The new Soil Moisture Smart Sensors work with Onset's 15-channel HOBO Weather Station and 4-channel HOBO Micro Station. These systems can be configured to measure the user's choice of a wide range of parameters, and are powered for one year using only four AA batteries. Onset offers a number of data logging software and communications options for HOBO Weather Station products. The sensors are priced at \$139.

CORN HYBRIDS TARGETED FOR ETHANOL

Demand for corn for ethanol production continues to grow rapidly, with industry experts expecting 25 percent of total corn use going toward ethanol production this year and increasing to 35 percent in 2008. Growers interested in planting corn that consistently yields high levels of ethanol in dry grind production should consider one of 18 Garst brand hybrids earning the company's ExtraEdgeTM designation.

Garst's ExtraEdge corn hybrids have been characterized for specific end-use markets, including ethanol. The 18 hybrids exhibit grain characteristics especially suitable for dry grind ethanol production. The hybrids represent a wide variety of general relative maturities (GRM) and are available for the 2007 growing season.

"The growth in ethanol production has been phenomenal, and it truly is an opportunity for ethanol producers and corn growers to show how agriculture can help the United States reduce its dependence on foreign oil," says Steve

Klein, head of marketing for Garst. "We are committed to delivering hybrids that provide increased value to growers through higher yields and agronomic performance in addition to providing value to processors involved in ethanol production."

Specific to ethanol production, ExtraEdge DGE hybrids have been tested and characterized using methodology established by the University of Illinois, which many in the industry consider the most accurate test since it mimics the dry grind ethanol process and measures actual ethanol creation.

According to Klein, three-fourths of U.S. ethanol is produced through dry mill processing compared to wet milling.

Before earning the ExtraEdge qualification, Garst hybrids are evaluated in multiple locations and under various environmental conditions. The hybrids must consistently deliver high yields and strong agronomic characteristics, in addition to the highest levels of ethanol production compared to other Garst hybrids, adds Klein.

AG SUMMIT DRAWS BIG CROWD



GOVERNOR ERNIE FLETCHER TOLD THE FARM INTERESTS THAT "AGRICULTURE OCCUPIES A SPECIAL, ALMOST SACRED, SPOT IN THE HEARTS OF KENTUCKIANS."

He asked Kentucky's agricultural leaders to develop a plan with state, federal and non-government components that prioritizes the industry's issues, establishes action plans and sets benchmarks.

Agriculture leaders including KFB President Marshall Coyle, Commissioner of Agriculture Richie Farmer, and University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Dean Scott Smith accepted the governor's challenge on behalf of Kentucky agriculture. Each made brief remarks following the governor's address.

Governor Fletcher encouraged farm leaders to assess how the public views the agricultural industry as it relates to the use of technology and farm policy. He emphasized the importance of agriculture's leaders having support of the public in farm programs and environmental and resource use issues. He also encouraged agriculture leaders to complete the state portion of the strategic plan before the General

Assembly meets next January.

In his remarks to the large group, Coyle said KFB was proud of the progress in recent years stemming from the state's agricultural development initiative but that "it's time to take Kentucky agriculture to the next level." Turning to the governor, Coyle said: "We accept your challenge."

Coyle point-

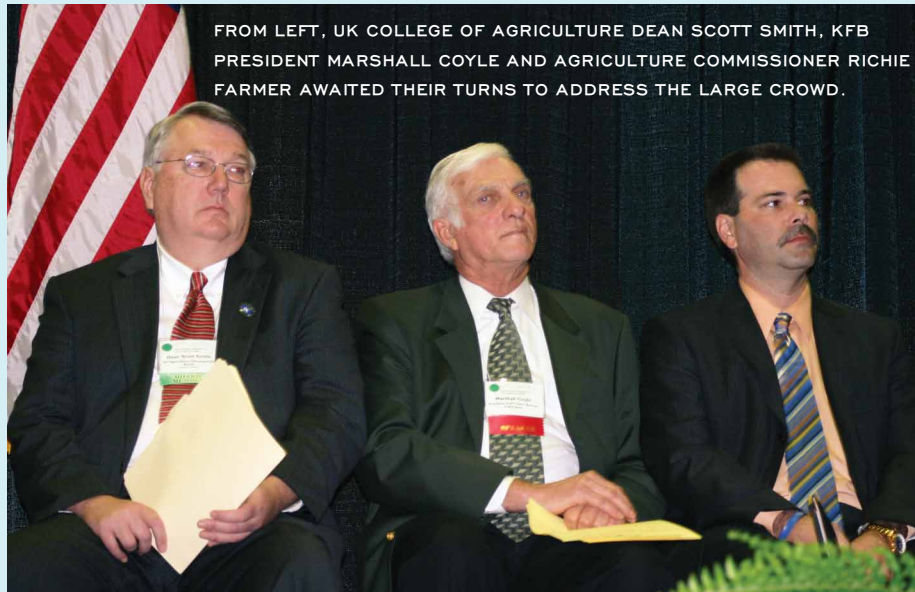
ed to several issues that offer promise, including stepping up research and development projects, taking advantage of the booming demand for biofuels and doing more to promote Kentucky farm products to consumers. He said that although Kentucky agriculture has made great strides toward diversification, "I'm firmly convinced that we've just begun; there's so much more we can do."

At the request of Governor Ernie Fletcher, KFB and other farm groups have agreed to put together a plan for moving the industry forward in Kentucky.

Dozens of state and local Farm Bureau leaders were among some 500 agriculture interests who responded to Governor Fletcher's request to gather in Louisville for a "Governor's Summit on Agriculture." The day-long event at the Kentucky Exposition Center featured nationally known business and economic experts as well as top leaders in Kentucky's agricultural industry.

Governor Fletcher addressed the attendees and issued a call to the state's agricultural leaders and organizations, agri-businesses and farmers to develop a strategic plan of action which builds on the industry's progress in recent years.

"I challenge Kentucky agriculture



FROM LEFT, UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE DEAN SCOTT SMITH, KFB PRESIDENT MARSHALL COYLE AND AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER RICHIE FARMER AWAITED THEIR TURNS TO ADDRESS THE LARGE CROWD.

to bring forward a plan that embraces the goals and objectives of the entire industry and creates a roadmap to guide our farm families to a brighter and more profitable tomorrow," said Governor Fletcher. "We are in the midst of a strong farm economy, and today I call on Kentucky agriculture to devise a strategic plan to secure a prosperous future for the entire industry. I pledge my support to help accomplish this goal."

Survey will evaluate dairy regulatory program

BY AIMEE NIELSON
UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Kentucky's dairy industry is changing. Numbers of cows, farms and producers have been on the decline — 4,000 fewer head in 2005 than in 2004, and milk production down four percent in the same time period.

To keep current with the state's dairy operations, the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture's Division of Regulatory Services surveyed dairy farmers about their enterprises in 2006. Now in 2007, a survey is aimed at dairy laboratory managers and technicians, milk haulers, marketing agency representatives, processor representatives, and other allied and public service representatives impacted by milk program activities.

"The dairy industry has fewer

farmers, but herd sizes tend to be growing," said Chris Thompson, coordinator of the milk program in the UK College of Agriculture Division of Regulatory Services. "With that in mind, we need to know how to plan for the future to better serve our clientele."

The milk program's mission is to ensure raw farm milk produced and marketed in Kentucky is bought and sold using accurate weights and tests, and to provide a fair and equitable marketplace environment for all producers and processors in Kentucky's dairy industry. The program uses education, licensing, monitoring and service to accomplish the mission.

Thompson said the industry survey results will provide valuable input to help evaluate the milk program's current activities and also help plan future activities.

The college's Department of

Community and Leadership Development is administering the survey. Thompson expects to have completed surveys returned sometime in May.

"We will combine the results of the industry survey with the farmer survey done in 2006," he said. "With input from both sides, it will really help us to see a clearer picture of what we need to be doing down the road. It will be valuable in guiding the milk program's efforts during the next five years."

Thompson plans to present a report drawn from the combined surveys to the Kentucky Milk Handler's Advisory Board later this year.

Surveys were developed and distributed with support from the UK College of Agriculture Division of Regulatory Services, UK Department of Community and Leadership Development, Kentucky Department of Agriculture and the

Heifers stand out at Beef Expo sale

Three breeds surpassed \$100,000 in gross sales at the 21st edition of the Kentucky Beef Expo. Total gross sales were \$863,000 on 561 lots from 21 states. The pen heifer sale had the highest gross, \$156,800, followed by the Kentucky Angus Sweepstakes, \$141,700, and Simmental, \$107,950.

The top money-earners were from Kentucky. Triple J Angus of Salyersville sold two embryo transfer calves for a total of \$20,000 to Fox Run Farms of Mexico, Mo. The top-selling Simmental bull, consigned by Happy 6 Simmental of Georgetown, sold for \$8,000 to B&J Cattle Company of Greencastle, Ind. The Grand Champion Limousin female, consigned by Nathan Hicks of Midway, sold for \$8,000 to Pennsylvania's Tubwell Creek Farms.

Youth exhibitors showed 180 steers and 280 heifers at the Junior Show. The top five Kentucky steers were shown by Cody Emmons of Flemingsburg, Kyle Ayers of Calhoun, Josh Southworth of Lexington, Ashley Burks of Hardinsburg and Kim Arnett of Mount Sterling. The top four Kentucky heifers were shown by Taylor Stevenson Tolle of Taylorsville, Amanda Conley of Georgetown, Taylor Blandford of Springfield and Kelsey Culp of Nicholasville.

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USDA STUDIES LIVESTOCK MARKETS

USDA released the results of a major study on livestock markets. The report, GIPSA Livestock and Meat Marketing Study, presents the final results of the analysis of extent of use, price relationships, and costs and benefits of alternative marketing arrangements (AMAs) for the cattle/beef, hog/pork and lamb/lamb meat industries. AMAs refer to all possible alternatives to the cash or spot market.

Available on the GIPSA web site at www.gipsa.usda.gov, the report has extensive background information on each industry and numerous conclusions about the impact of AMAs on market prices and the efficiencies of market participants during the October 2002-March 2005 period.

The report states that beef producers and packers interviewed believed that some types of AMAs helped them manage their operations more efficiently, reduced risk, and improved beef quality. Producers that used AMAs identified the ability to buy/sell higher quality cattle, improve supply management, and obtain better prices as the leading reasons for using AMAs.

The study found that the 29 largest beef packers purchased cattle through 61.7% cash or spot markets, 28.8% marketing agreements, 4.5% forward contracts, and 5.0% packer ownership or other method.

AMAs are an integral part of the hog marketing system and provide different levels of risk from which producers can select. Researchers concluded that limiting AMAs would hurt producers and consumers, but not the packers.

GRAIN STORAGE IS UP

USDA statistics show that Kentucky farmers added five million bushels of grain storage capacity in the 12 months ending December 1, 2006. Total capacity of 175 million bushels was the largest on-farm estimate in seven years. Storage capacity reached a low in 2002 with 150.0 million bushels.

Commercial off-farm facilities numbered 190 with storage of 65 million bushels, up one million from a year earlier.

EGG PRODUCTION FALLS SLIGHTLY

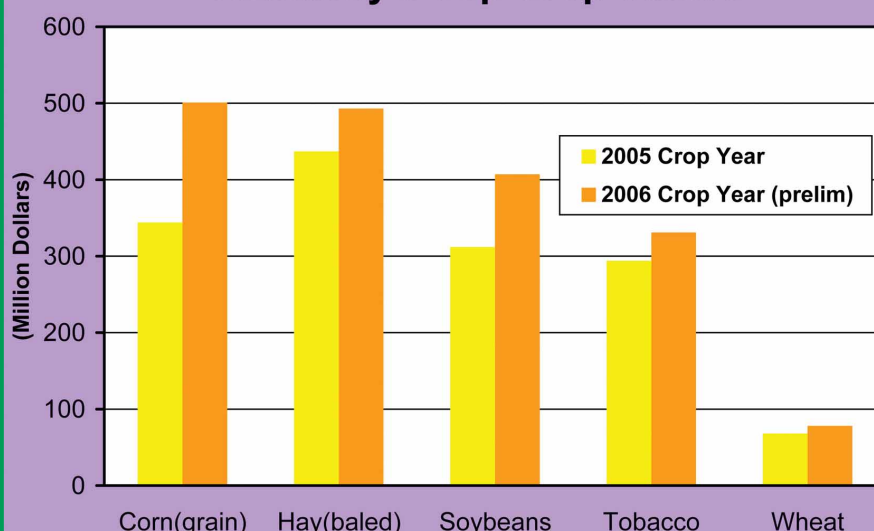
U.S. egg production totaled 6.91 billion during February 2007, down one percent from last year. Production included 5.92 billion table eggs and 998 million hatching eggs, of which 937 million were broiler-type and 61 million were egg-type.

All layers in the U.S. on March 1, 2007 totaled 347 million, down one per-

cent from last year. The 347 million layers consisted of 288 million producing table or market type eggs, 56.5 million producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.82 million producing egg-type hatching eggs.

Broiler-type chicks hatched during February totaled 724 million, down one percent from February 2006. Eggs in incubators totaled 664 million on March 1, down slightly from a year earlier.

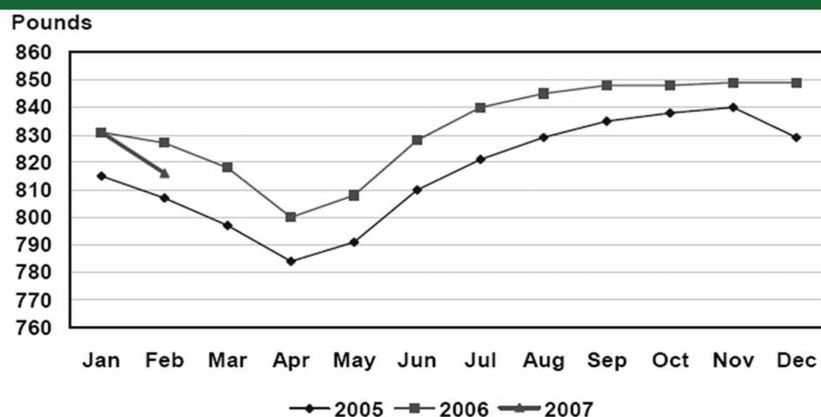
Kentucky's Top Crop Values



Source: Kentucky Agri-News, USDA-NASS, Kentucky Field Office

Average Dressed Weight – Steers

U.S. Monthly Federally Inspected



Source: Livestock Slaughter, USDA, March 2007

Young farmers concerned about availability of land

The availability of land and overall profitability continue to be the top concerns of America's young farmers and ranchers. However, the majority of young farmers say they are better off financially than they were five years ago.

Those are just a few of the key findings of an informal survey of young farmers and ranchers, ages 18-35, from across the United States, conducted by AFBF. Overall, the 15th annual survey of participants in AFBF's Young Farmer & Rancher Program shows that the future of American agriculture is in competent and caring hands. Despite challenges, today's young farmers and ranchers are continuing to invest in new technology and business practices to sharpen their competitive edge, while providing for their families and communities, and protecting the environment.

"The survey results show that young farmers and ranchers in general are optimistic about the future of agriculture, otherwise we wouldn't see a place for our children in farming and ranching," said YF&R Chair Chris Chinn, a hog producer from Missouri.

For the second straight year, the vast majority of young farmers and ranchers (79 percent) said they were more optimistic about farming than they were five years ago. In 2002 less than 60 percent were optimistic. In addition, when asked if they felt better off financially than they were five years ago, 85 percent said "yes," down from last year's record 91 percent and up sharply from the survey's low of 70 percent in 2000.

As professional opportunities continue to abound, the percentage of young farmers who envision their professions as lifelong (92 percent) remained high. The highest-ever number in this area was nearly 100 percent (99.5 percent) in 1995. While more young farmers (44 percent) started their profession by being raised in a farming family, 30 percent started on their own, which is the highest ever in the survey's 15-year history. In addition, the percentage of young farmers who would like to see their children follow in their footsteps (93 percent) also remained high despite economic challenges.

For the second straight year, young farmers said availability of land and facilities was their top concern (29 per-

cent). Just two years ago, only 5 percent deemed it their top challenge. In addition, 56 percent listed it as among their top three concerns. These findings reflect the growing demand for U.S. farmland. Like last year, the young farmers indicated overall profitability was their second biggest challenge, selected by 23 percent. That's up from 18 percent in 2006 and down sharply from 36 percent in 2000, which marked the highest ever. Also like last year, urbanization and loss of farmland was the third biggest challenge. Thirteen percent of respondents listed it as their number one challenge, while 36 percent ranked it as among their top three. Over the survey's 15-year history, this challenge was never ranked among the top three until 2003, indicating that concerns are intensifying.

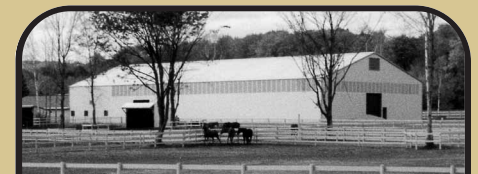
"It is clear that our young farmers and ranchers have growing concerns regarding open space and the availability of farmland," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "The issue of property rights is a critical issue facing American agriculture. Not only farmers and ranchers, but anyone who enjoys open land needs to join in protecting landowners."

When asked to choose three steps from a list of 13 that could be taken to help their operations, 22 percent said more financial help in getting started was their first choice. Forty-five percent listed it among the top three steps that could be taken to help young farmers. Respondents this year said the second most important action (16 percent) government could take to help them was to strengthen protections for property owners. This item has been among the top three in all surveys since its inception. Rounding out the three most important steps that can be taken to ensure the present and the future of agriculture, according to young farmers and ranchers, is federal tax reform (11 percent).

The vast majority (63 percent) said farm income should come "totally from the marketplace," while 37 percent said farm income should be supplemented by farm program payments. Last year 79 percent of respondents indicated they wanted sole reliance on the marketplace. This question was first added to the survey in 1996, when 88 percent of respondents wanted to rely only on the marketplace for farm income.

Young farmers are taking advantage of technology with nearly all (90 percent) owning a computer and utilizing the Internet (87 percent). Most respondents who have access to the Internet use it to stay current on markets and general news affecting agriculture (70 percent) while 51 percent use it for recordkeeping.

Mirroring past surveys, this year's respondents reported a strong commitment to conservation and the use of environmentally beneficial farming practices. Fifty-seven percent said they employ conservation tillage on their farms. Nearly half (47 percent) said they regularly test soil or crop tissue prior to the application of nutrients. And 46 percent utilize crop rotation practices with three or more commodities.



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CORN, PORK PRODUCERS DISAGREE ON ETHANOL INCENTIVES

Keith Bolin, president of the American Corn Growers Association (ACGA) and a hog and corn farmer from Manlius, Ill., took exception to a statement by the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) which called for the elimination of federal incentives for renewable energy.

"I was shocked to hear that an organization of pork producers wants to dismantle one of the nation's most positive incentive programs for helping America move toward energy independence," said Bolin. "I believe that all American farmers want to end the nation's dependence on imported oil."

The NPPC has called for the elimination of the 51-cent per gallon ethanol blender's tax credit and the 54-cent tariff on imported ethanol. "I know that there are adjustments that must be made in order to deal with higher feed prices due, in part, to expanding ethanol production," said Bolin. "I raise hogs and I raise corn, but I have yet to meet a family farmer in this country that wants to continue what President Bush calls our addiction to imported oil."

"Sure corn prices are higher these days, but at \$4 a bushel, corn farmers are finally making a modest profit after selling corn at a loss for most of the past three decades," added Bolin. "And I cannot believe that a family farmer raising hogs, corn or any other commodity wants to make their living off of the under-priced crops raised by other farm families. I personally doubt that any family hog farmers would ever ask to remove the renewable energy incentives, and I suspect it was the integrated, industrialized livestock industry that has. I respectfully ask NPPC to reconsider their resolution."

ACGA represents 14,000 members in 35 states.

MONEY AVAILABLE FOR DUMP CLEANUPS

The Division of Waste Management in the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet is accepting grant applications for illegal dump cleanups. The grant application deadline is June 1. This is the fourth round of grants financed by the Kentucky Pride Fund.

The Kentucky Pride Fund was established by the 2002 General Assembly for the remediation of illegal open dumps, litter and orphan landfills. It was expanded by the 2006 Legislature to include recycling infrastructure development and household hazardous waste management/collection programs. Revenue comes from a \$1.75 per ton environmen-

tal remediation fee on waste disposed at Kentucky landfills.

Reimbursements will be given to participating counties for costs up to \$1,000 in connection with removal of tires from a dump or a roadside. This money comes from the Waste Tire Trust Fund, established by the 1998 General Assembly, to receive revenue from a \$1 fee from customers for each new tire sold.

Forms and additional information are available at waste.ky.gov or by contacting Division of Waste Management, 14 Reilly Road, Building 5, Frankfort KY 40601, 502-564-6716.

WEB SITE BOOSTS FOOD MARKETING

An innovative new Web site is connecting Kentucky agricultural businesses, farmers and markets, making it easier to get Kentucky food products to consumers.

MarketMaker:Kentucky is an interactive mapping system developed by private and public partners. It has a comprehensive directory of Kentucky businesses and farms, including about 500 Kentucky Proud members, that are buying and selling food-related products. Anyone can find farmers, farmers' markets, restaurants, processors, wholesalers, distributors and retailers on the site.

MarketMaker:Kentucky is made possible by a collaboration among the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy (GOAP),

and Allied Food Marketers of Louisville.

"This partnership is a great example of what MarketMaker can do for Kentucky," said Michael Judge, executive director of the KDA's Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion. "The Web site will serve as a catalyst for new relationships among food buyers and suppliers."

Kentucky is the fourth state to become part of this national program, piloted in Illinois. Since Kentucky got on board, six more states have signed on to the project.

The Web site is free to consumers, farmers and businesses. Any Kentucky farmer or food business can register. For more information, visit www.marketmakerky.com or contact the Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion at (502) 564-4983.

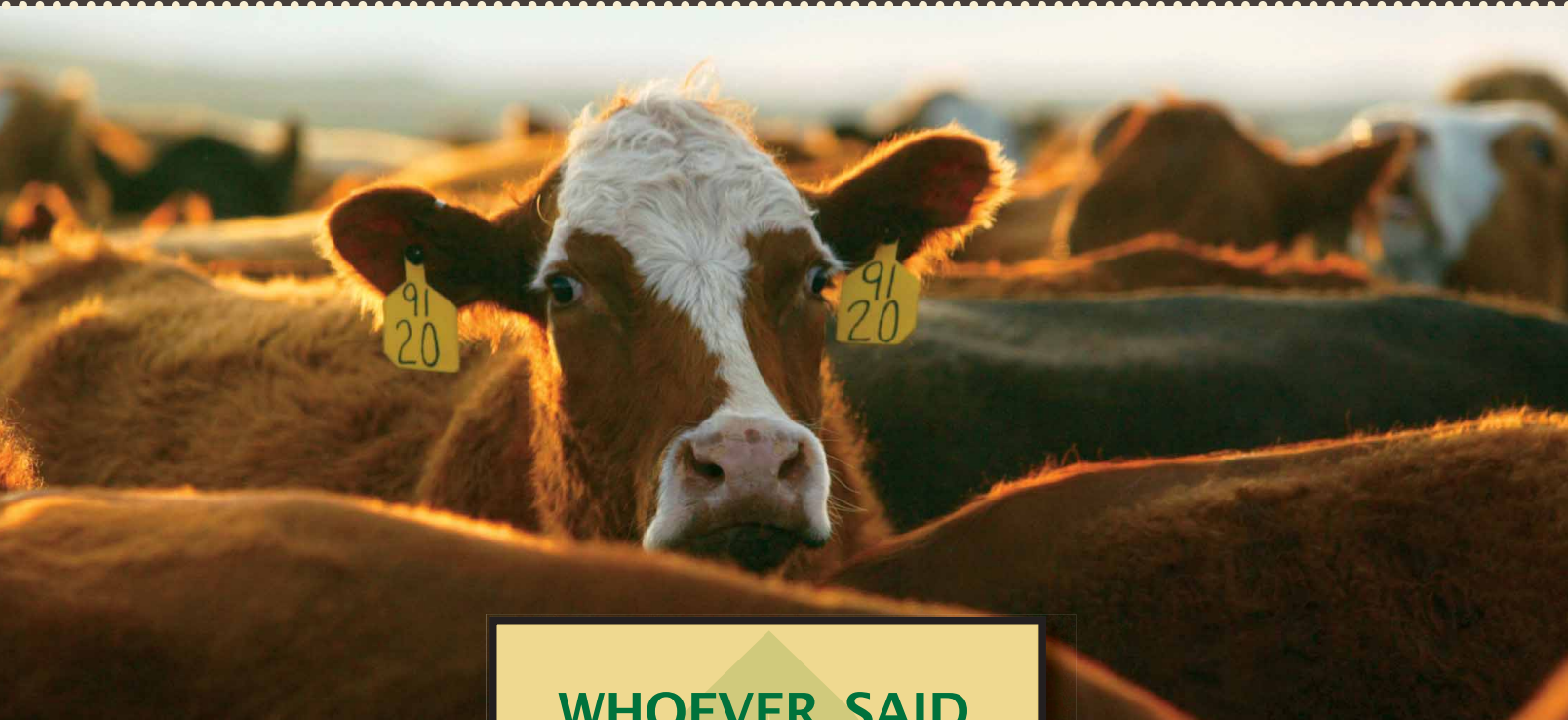
AFBF ADVOCATES PUBLIC FUNDING FOR RESEARCH

Public funding for research initiatives has fallen over the past two decades, and that trend needs to stop, according to AFBF President Bob Stallman. He advocated for increased public funded research at the Farm Foundation's conference.

Stallman said with new expectations being placed on American agriculture, as well as farmers and ranchers exploring new ways to improve the environment through innovative conservation practices, the need for research is intensifying. He said Extension research must be greatly enhanced to provide critical outcomes

and essential tools needed to respond effectively to these expectations, while still providing safe and affordable food, fiber and fuel for the U.S. and abroad.

Key areas where research is needed, according to Stallman, are bio-security; improved diets; the environment; rural revitalization; biotechnology; and renewable energy. Regarding energy, Stallman cited research on cellulosic ethanol, which uses switchgrass and other renewable sources, rather than grain. He said commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol production is expected in about five years.



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