



Volume 35

July 2012

No. 6

## Drought, fires plague producers across U.S.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, more than half of the contiguous United States is experiencing moderate to extreme drought.

"The recent heat and dryness is catching up with us on a national scale," said Michael Hayes, director of the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln "Now, we have a larger section of the country in these lesser categories of drought than we've previously experienced" in the past 12 years.

The drought is causing ripple effects throughout agriculture. In Wyoming, the Torrington Livestock auction reports sales of 18,000 head of cattle in May, up from its usual 3,500 head, according to Michael Schmitt, one of the market's owners. In June, sales were at 17,000 head, up from the normal level of 1,800. Schmitt attributes the dramatic increase in sales to the drought and says that the weather could affect both the long term future of agriculture in the state as well as the future prices for beef.

Grain markets are also responding to widespread drought conditions. Wheat futures rose to a 14-month high in July as hot, dry weather damaged spring wheat crops. Portions of North Dakota, which ranks first in wheat production in the U.S., have not received rain in the past two weeks. In South Dakota, irrigators are being told to turn off the water, and officials indicated that more shutoff orders will follow if conditions don't improve.

Wildfires are raging across hundreds of thousands of acres in areas affected by drought. According to Dick Deshamps, acting State Director for the Montana Farm Service Agency, 4,400 head of livestock have been displaced so far in the Ash Creek Fire in south-

east Montana. That fire alone has scorched nearly 250,000 acres. CRP has been opened for emergency grazing in some counties, and livestock organizations are encouraging hay and pasture donations for those affected by

fires. Whether or not the livestock lost in wild-fires will be protected under a livestock loss program is uncertain since the livestock assistance programs that were involved in the 2008 Farm Bill sunsetted in 2011.

## HR 1505 addresses border issues

*By Mary Ann Murray, Area 1 Director  
Jordan, Mont.*

HR. 1505, the National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act, needs support. This act would give the Border Patrol immediate access to any public land managed by the Federal Government for purposes of conducting activities that assist in securing our borders.

Having been raised on the southern border, and visiting New Mexico and Arizona this fall, brought this issue to the forefront. Rob Krentz's widow and fellow Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) member told of his murder while out on regular ranch duties and offering an illegal a drink of water, and being shot in the back as he was leaving along with his dog. The murderer was able to escape via the wilderness areas as the U.S. Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies could not travel except by foot. Two local ranchers tracked the assailant on horseback and found the tracks where he had crossed back into Mexico.

Many illegal activities are occurring in these areas. We also listened to story after story of break-ins at homes and people being terrorized. I just received a call this morning of another 80 year old woman in southeastern Arizona's home broken into at gun point just two days ago. There have been beheadings of

innocent people with family members unwilling to talk about it for fear of further retaliation to family members.

Ranchers in the "boot heel" of New Mexico were sent out letters from the New Mexico Department of Agriculture informing them they had two specific days to inspect their livestock scales as the inspectors had to be escorted with armed guards to the ranches as the department felt it unsafe in the areas for their inspectors.

There are signs on the federal highways stating, "TRAVEL CAUTION SMUGGLING AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION MAY BE ENCOUNTERED IN THIS AREA."

I ask, "If Government Agencies deemed it to be unsafe to travel south of Highway 9, then is it not safe for the farmers and ranchers who make their homes and living there?"

I also ask, "If this area is unsafe, then why does the President of the United States and Secretary of Homeland Security continues to say our borders are more secure than they have ever been?"

After all, it is the governments' responsibility to secure our borders. As a United States citizen we have the right to feel safe in our homes. This act does nothing that the border patrol doesn't have the right to do on private lands. It just extends the authority to federal lands as well.

# President's Report



By Deb Dressler  
North Dakota

This note brings greetings to you from southwestern North Dakota. July is the month we all celebrate Independence Day with fireworks, family gatherings and activities particular with your part of the United States. Our freedoms in America came into place 236 years ago. Many lives have been lost to preserve those freedoms. As we reflect in July let us remember the toil, heartache and lost lives that generations have given.

Have you ever thought about all the "free" products in the market place today? Products vary from fat free to stress free and the list goes on. The greatest gift of all is our freedoms and

## WIFE directors hear Farm Bill report

how we chose to use them. Freedom never comes free.

It is easy to become dissatisfied with our country especially in election years. I urge you to exercise your freedom to vote. Now is the time to tell your story to incumbents and candidates. If we don't tell our story as a grassroots organization no one else will or it will be biased.

The summer WIFE Board of Directors conference call was well attended. Thank you to all WIFE members for taking time out of your busy schedules to participate. Special thanks to the committee members and state presidents who give of their time and talents. Several legislative issues were discussed; the Farm Bill was foremost on everyone's mind. Jess Peterson, United States Cattleman Association gave an extensive update on the Farm Bill and fielded questions from WIFE members. Contact your members in the House of Representatives to retain crop insurance subsidies, keep permanent disaster programs in place, retain safety net to protect crop revenue and leave Livestock Indemnity and like programs in the Farm Bill. Other topics of concern included the wildfires, simplified conservation easement, regulation on breeders of working class dogs and continued support of the sugar subsidy.

Many agricultural states are experiencing mild to severe drought. WIFE thoughts and prayer go out to all of you in the gamble of farming and ranching. In the northern plains shortage of hay is due to drought and insect infestations. Last year 3,500 large round bales were put up on the same acreage this year that will yield 250 bales.

According to a recent study by

Harris Interactive, 95 percent of Americans think it is important to produce food domestically. Agriculture is one of the few U. S. business sectors to boast a trade surplus, exporting \$11 billion in farm goods in 2010.

Have a great summer and safe harvest. Enjoy the family weddings, reunions, and gatherings. Remember the servicemen and women who are in danger to protect our freedoms. Go tell your story and don't look back. Happy Trails until next month.

## 2012 WIFE Officers

### President

Deb Dressler  
8463-20th St SW  
Richardton, ND 58652  
(701) 938-4246 MST  
debdressler1@gmail.com

### Vice President

Ruth Larabee  
7639 East Road  
Lowville, NT 13367  
(315) 376-2644 EST  
grlarabee@hotmail.com

### Secretary

Diane McDonald  
3540 35th ST NE  
Inkster, ND 58633  
(701) 248-3654 CST  
ddmcdon3654@msn.com

### Treasurer

Shana Baisch  
323 Road 300  
Glendive, MT 59330  
(406) 365-4133 MST  
jsbaisch@wb.middrivers.com

## WIFE 2012 Area Directors

### Area 1

Mary Ann Murray  
HC 69  
Jordan, MT 59337  
(406) 557-2400 MST  
(406) 557-2402 FAX  
lige@middrivers.com

### Area 2

Sheila Massey  
PO Box 70  
Animas, NM 88020  
(575) 548-2420 MST  
masseyfarm@vtc.net



By Dianna Reed  
Kansas

# Dairy Report

## Dairy Production Margin Protection program would replace MILC

insurance program.

An amendment offered by Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO), which would have struck the Dairy Market Stabilization Program from the bill and left a stand-alone dairy producer margin insurance program, was withdrawn.

Milk supply is increasing which is again driving the price paid to producers

down. What happens with the farm bill has probably been run into the ground, but it is a key issue worth staying on top of. If you have producers in your area, I would encourage you to urge them to contact their congressional representatives to have the best plan available for dairy producers nationwide so that we do not see a re-occurrence of 2009.

In late April, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry voted 16-5 to approve the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012, thus sending it to the full U.S. Senate for consideration.

The dairy title of this legislation repeals the Milk Income Loss Contracts (MILC), Dairy Product Price Support Program (DPPSP) and Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

These programs are replaced with the Dairy Production Margin Protection Program, which offers a no-cost insurance coverage at \$4.00 margin of the all-milk price over the national average feed cost. It also includes a supplemental margin insurance component with a two-tiered premium structure where dairy producers can purchase margin insurance for up to 90 percent of their base milk production at levels from \$4.50 to \$8.00.

Those who opt to enroll in the margin program will also be subject to the Market Stabilization program that asks dairy producers to reduce milk production up to 8 percent depending on certain milk-feed margins.

The plan is similar to the Dairy Security Act, introduced in the House by Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN). However, the committee also approved two amendments to the dairy title of the Farm Bill—one, offered by Senators Johanns (R-NE) and Casey (D-PA), that authorizes a review of the Market Stabilization Program at the end of the five-year bill's lifespan; and a second, offered by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY), that extends the MILC program through June 2013, at a reduced rate, so there is a safety net in place while the USDA implements the new dairy margin



By Jacquelyn Sistrunk  
Alabama

# Specialty Crops Report

## Cottonseed is an additional source of farm income

Feeders and crushers are the biggest buyers of cottonseed.

Sag oil, going into biofuels, has forced cottonseed prices up. Corn and soybean planting competed for cotton acreage, and the Texas drought cut cotton by 1/3 in 2011. This pushed the by-product, cottonseed, prices up.

Although good cottonseed prices benefit gins and farmers, they also make users, dairymen, search for lower price alternative. The price on cottonseed used as dairy feed doubled last year. Here's hoping cotton farmers don't price themselves out of the dairy feed market.

Cottonseed is a little gift that comes to cotton farmers after ginning. Cottonseed finds its way into plastics, ice cream, computers, medicine, and television services, as well as oil-drilling "mud", but about half is consumed by dairy cows.

In 2007, cottonseed price was about \$90/ton. In 2012, the price has been \$220/ton to \$350/ton according to location.

Soybean and wheat acreage jumped when farmers planted 20 percent to 40 percent less cotton.



**WIFeline**

a publication of  
WOMEN INVOLVED  
IN FARM ECONOMICS

Published monthly except June and November

Erin Slivka, Editor  
6074 PN Bridge Rd  
Winifred, MT 59489  
(406) 462-5474  
eslivka@mtintouch.net

# Sheep and Goats Report



By Gwen Cassel  
New York

The “absent shepherd” has returned. I apologize for not presenting sheep and/or goat information for several months, but with the various changes in my life, time and concentration to sit at a computer and organize thoughts on this interest while at the same time caring for and overseeing 550 ewes and four rams in a new situation with a new (to me) management style has consumed my energy and time with benefit to the sheep and additional knowledge and understanding to me.

Many of you know that I relocated to a large farm that had been a free stall dairy farm during the summer last year. I am the “resident shepherd” for half of a 1000+ ewe flock that a friend of Butch and mine has been compiling over the past year. Five hundred and fifty were relocated from Virginia and Ohio at the end of last summer and in the fall. Housed in the large free stall barn for the winter, we fed large square bale haylage and dry round bales of hay. In addition, we provided free choice spent brewers grain from the local Budweiser beer plant! Winter was pretty uneventful, although a group of ewes, unknown to us to have been exposed to a ram in the summer, did start to lamb out on grass in the late fall. These lambs grew well on grass and in the barn and provided a “bonus crop” which is being sold now.

The ewe flock consists of mostly purebred Katadin hair sheep (developed at the University of Maine), and the rams put to the two groups of 250+ were white Dorpers, an African hair breed known for increasing meat characteristics in terminal (meat) lambs. The majority of these sheep were to be first time mothers, although about one-fourth of the flock were experienced sheep. We expecting an 80 percent lamb crop, and any above that this spring would be considered a “bonus”!

A couple of weeks before turnout on grass, the brewers grain became unavail-

## New operation is learning experience

able! In a perfect world we would have fed some additional corn silage if we could have obtained it, but none was available. We added some molasses tubs for extra energy and protein, but this was not the point in their pregnancy to change nutrition. Several ewes decided to lamb early, some with good milk and some with barely enough, so we moved the group out onto grass a little early. Within two days their condition improved, and many starting lambing, having predominantly twins, some triplets and a quad or two. They’re in the first third of lambing, so it may be a very profitable year for the owner.

With that in mind, lamb remains a product in demand and continues to bring all time high prices on a consistent basis! Both experienced diners and the various “ethnic populations” who seek lamb are

continuing to purchase in record quantities. We do not allow on-farm slaughter/processing on this farm, but the owner is set up to do so on his home farm to record numbers of individuals who would be considered, Hispanic, African, Middle Eastern, even Spanish and Mexican, who buy a lamb or kid, or older sheep or goat, and butcher to their own needs, take virtually all of the animal with them!

Here in the East and in the Midwest, lamb and goat is much sought. Realizing that the economy is still very questionable, it is difficult to project how this will continue, to what level and for out long, but sheep farming is “in” at this time, and can be profitable for both the small and larger producer who understands and meets the needs of the customer that is being supplied, either individually or in large numbers.



By Pat Torgerson  
Montana

Food *and* fuel or fuel *then* food? That is the question. Which will get rail service: grain, oil, or coal?

Will the northern railroads continue to ship grain, or will the prediction of the next five to 10 years rail shipments be dominated by coal and oil? Grain can get to markets by trucking, but rail shipment of grain is much more efficient.

The U.S. coal export market is predicted to explode. Terminals are under construction in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. We have the coal, and China wants it. Nine export terminals in the Pacific Northwest have been targeted to handle coal for export. This rail traffic

## Transportation Report

### Food or Fuel?

could mean three trains per hour every day for the next 10 years. A train consists of 102 cars.

This won’t leave much room or time for grain transport. The expected coal train traffic will result in several major choke points or bottlenecks on the rail routes. These choke points will impact all other rail traffic to and from the Pacific Northwest ports. Where will this leave wheat, barley, and other grain crops that are seasonal? It has also been predicted that up to 70,000 plus barrels per day of Bakken oil will cross Montana headed to Washington state to its refineries.

Money talks, and corporations want profits. Put two and two together: three coal trains (306 cars) every hour, every day plus 70,000 barrels of oil daily verses 12 to 15 million tons of grain yearly. I doubt food will win out. One thing agriculture has gong for it: you can’t eat coal and oil, and everybody eats.





By Pam Potthoff  
Nebraska

# Trade Report

## WTO develops new world label

Since 2001, trade between China and the U.S. has been expanding. Since 2001, over 50,000 American factories have disappeared, more than 25 million Americans can't find a decent job and America now owes more than 3 trillion dollars to the world's largest totalitarian nation.

The WTO's highest tribunal is expected to rule by June 29th on the U.S. appeal of an earlier ruling concerning U.S. country of origin labeling (COOL) brought by Canada and Mexico. This is the final step in the case. In a typical case, if the U.S. loses, the WTO would request the Obama Administration to change the existing COOL rule.

The country that eats the most meat is now China. The U.S. still eats the most meat on a per capita basis but, remember, China has a lot more people.

The U.S. Grains Council released new trade information that indicates Tunisia is on track to become the largest international export market for U.S. corn oil for the second year in a row. In the past, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have been the largest export markets for U.S. corn oil, but biotechnology constraints are now holding them back.

The World Trade Organization has been working on a "Made in the World" label. The intent of the WTO's "Made in the World" initiative is to modernize global trade statistics, reduce public pressure on politicians for protectionist trade policies, and reduce public opposition to free trade.

Russia's desire to join the WTO has caused them to offer to drop restrictions on genetically modified crops for food and feed. Cultivation of transgenic crops has been prohibited in Russia and products containing 0.9 percent of GMO in-

gredients must be specially marked.

On May 21, 2012, the Senate Armed Services Committee released a report on counterfeit parts in the Department of Defense supply chain. More than 70 percent of the parts tracked were traced to China, coming from more than 650 companies. Counterfeit parts included unauthorized copies of an authentic product and previously used parts that were made to look new and sold as new. The parts often change hands multiple times before being bought by defense contractors, who may know little about the source of the parts they buy, the report said.

Dan Akerson, CEO of General Motors, says that seven out of 10 GM automobiles are built outside the U.S. They have 11 joint ventures with Chinese government controlled auto manufacturers. They are moving research and development to China.

The Peterson Institute for International Economics estimates the renminbi (China's currency) to be undervalued by between 25 and 40 percent. That means on every made-in-China sneaker sold in the United States, there's at least a 25 percent discount. And on every U.S.-made aircraft sold in China, there's at least a 25 percent premium layered on top of the price.

Five million Brazilian farmers have taken on US based biotech company Monsanto through a lawsuit demanding return of about 6.2 billion euros taken as royalties from them. The farmers are claiming that Monsanto unfairly extracted these royalties from poor farmers because they were using seeds produced from crops grown from Monsanto's genetically engineered seeds, reported Merco Press. In April this year, a judge in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, ruled in favor of the farmers and ordered Monsanto to return royalties paid since 2004 or a minimum of \$2 billion. The ruling said that the business practices of seed multinational Monsanto violate the rules of the Brazilian Cultivars Act (No. 9.456/97). Monsanto has appealed the decision.

In April, the U.S. trade deficit declined by more than \$2 billion overall, but the specific deficit with China increased by nearly \$3 billion.

The U.S. trade deficit in goods with South Korea tripled during the first full month the U.S.-Korea free trade agreement was in force according to April trade data released by the Commerce Department. The bilateral FTA went into effect on March 15.

China broke global commerce rules by imposing anti-dumping and anti-subsidy duties on more than \$200 million of U.S. steel products, the WTO said in a ruling June 15th. China, the world's biggest steel market, announced provisional anti-dumping and countervailing levies on the specialty-steel products, used in large electric machines such as transformers and reactors, in December 2009. The anti-dumping duties were set at 7.8 percent to 64.8 percent and countervailing duties at 11.7 percent to 44.6 percent in 2010. Both governments have 60 days to appeal the panel's findings.

Interest in "Buy American" is increasing. For example, Starbucks Corp. has a new line of merchandise that it said will be used to help support American jobs. The coffee giant will sell a limited-edition mug, tumbler and bag of coffee – all made domestically – to raise money for its Create Jobs for USA fund.

The U.S. government announced June 19th that Canada has been extended an invitation to actively join the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement negotiations. Mexico had previously been invited to join negotiations so all three NAFTA partners will be involved.

A leaked draft agreement for the TPP between the U.S. and eight Pacific nations shows a U.S. proposal that would allow foreign corporations operating in the U.S. to appeal key regulations to an international tribunal. The body would have the power to override U.S. law and issue penalties for failure to comply with its ruling.

# Water, Private Property, Natural Resources, and Endangered Species **Report**



**By Alice Parker  
Washington**

## Hastings opposes amendment to expand federal control over U.S. waters

in 2007 and 2009 that would have taken the word “navigable” out of the Clean Water Act. Currently, he is a cosponsor of H.R. 4965, which would prevent both the

Corps and the Environmental Protection Agency from implementing their proposed guidance to expand the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act.

*(Following is a release from the office of Doc Hastings (R-WA))*

Congressman Doc Hastings voted against an amendment offered by Representative Jim Moran (D-Virginia) that would drastically expand the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ reach over U.S. waters.

“I am pleased that the House rejected this misguided amendment, which would allow the federal government to seize control of virtually all U.S. waters, usurp state water rights, and regulate ditches, farm ponds and even mud puddles,” said Hastings. “The last thing we need is for federal bureaucrats to mandate complex and expensive federal permitting for basic land use activities in farm fields and back yards. This amendment would have unnecessarily opened up farmers in Central Washington to frivolous and expensive lawsuits, and I am pleased that a strong bipartisan majority of my colleagues joined together in defeating it.”

Specifically, Moran’s amendment would have stripped a provision in the Fiscal Year 2013 Energy and Water Appropriations bill that prohibited funds from being used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to implement flawed proposed guidance for the Clean Water Act that would have drastically expanded federal jurisdiction over U.S. waters. Currently, non-navigable waters are managed by state and local governments.

Moran’s amendment was defeated by a bipartisan vote of 152 to 237. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on final passage of the overall bill next week.

Hastings has long opposed efforts to impose federal control on non-navigable waters. He and his colleagues successfully prevented passage of legislation offered

## Sugar Report

### Ag needs support

try, made it all possible. President Roosevelt gave a sensational speech in front of the U.S. Congress, a key argument to the bill that Senator Francis Newlands introduced to the United State Congress. The 1902 Reclamation Act appropriated a \$50 million dollar loan to 14 Western States to build irrigation projects such as dams and irrigation canals. Users of the water on the projects would pay the loan back.

We are lucky to have the Buffalo Bill dam and reservoir. The first irrigation for Powell flat will use 69,000 acre-feet (1 acre-foot = 325,851 gallons) of water. This will satisfy 97,000 acres of crop land. A study shows one acre of hay needs 2.2 acre-feet, one acre of corn needs 1.8 acre-feet, one acre of spring grains needs 1.3 acre-feet and one acre of sugar beets need 1.9 acre-feet of stored water to grow. Cost of upkeep of dam, irrigation canals, and ditches adds on crop production costs for irrigated land farmers. There are also hidden production costs like irrigation pickup, irrigating boots, siphon tubs and plastic dams. As the Shoshone Irrigation District Water Commission, we spend over \$1,500,000 for O&M (operation and maintains) of Buffalo Bill Dam project.

Commodity prices are higher, but as we all know there is not much talk about American farmers’ cost of pro-



**By Klodette Stroh  
Wyoming**

I pray our farmers have a good weather this year to plant their crops. Our lives and security will be in jeopardy if our world faces a year without crops to feed us. I still can hear my mother’s wise saying, “Farmers are in partnership with God’s hands to feed and shelter his people.” Having good weather, water or rain and most of all God’s blessing makes it possible for farmers to grow crops.

Powell farmers planted their malt barley, corn, wheat, sunflowers, sugar beets, and dry beans in May. We had a dry winter last year. Western dams and reservoirs are life line of agriculture. The history of the arid American West is basically tied to water and its availability. The West receives a very small share of fresh water supply, and the bulk of that water arrives in the form of snow which runs off quickly in spring and early summer.

I commend Theodore Roosevelt for his support of the reclamation movement. His personal experience in the West, and his passion for our coun-

*Continued on Page 9*



**By Marlene Kouba**  
**North Dakota**

# Energy Report

## Energy development revives small towns

Oil companies began exploring Southern Kansas over a year ago, seeing enormous potential in the area now that new technologies have made it possible to tap into the oil-rich Mississippian Limestone formation. SandRidge Energy estimates there are about 15 billion barrels of recoverable oil in this part of Kansas. The company plans to drill 130 wells in the state by the end of the year, up from 10 last year, and its wells are hitting oil 100 percent of the time. Farmers are leasing their mineral rights for as much as \$1,250 an acre and are also getting royalties from whatever oil is produced on that property. Because of the influx of workers and the oil money, the city of Anthony, which is southwest of Wichita along the state line, is at the heart of Harper County's oil action and is finally being revived. Local businesses are bouncing back, a new shopping center is being built and old buildings are being renovated to create new stores and office space for oil companies.

In April, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN) joined with Sen. Kent Conrad (D-ND) in drafting an amendment to the proposed 2012 Farm Bill which was adopted by the Senate Agriculture Committee. The Conrad-Lugar amendment would set mandatory funding totaling \$241 million over five years for Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and \$193 million for Bioenergy Crop Assistance Program. Another \$216 million would be required over the life of the new farm bill for the Biorefinery Assistance Program, \$130 million for the Biomass Research and Development Program, \$15 million for the Biobased Markets Program and \$5 million for a Biodiesel Education Program. The programs, which have no authorization beyond the Sept. 30 expiration of the current farm bill, are zeroed out under

Congressional Budget Office baseline estimates, leaving them vulnerable in the upcoming appropriations process.

Colorado Democrats Sen. Michael Bennet and Sen. Mark Udall are both concerned that their state alone could lose 6,000 jobs if Congress fails to pass legislation to extend the federal tax break for wind energy producers, known as the production tax credit, which is due to expire at the end of this year. The American Wind Energy Association says as many as 37,000 manufacturing jobs could be at risk nationwide. The producer credit helps offset the cost of electricity production during a wind farm's first 10 years. It came about in 1992 when the industry was getting started. It must be renewed periodically by Congress. Proponents say if lawmakers wait until the end of 2012 to get this done, the industry risks losing out on potential wind development projects. Bennet has co-sponsored a bill in the Senate that would give the credit a two-year extension while a House version calls for four years but both are moving slowly. Not everyone thinks wind is worth the effort or the estimated \$2 billion to \$4 billion it could cost next year. Over the last 20 years, the wind industry has grown to provide about three percent of power grid electricity nationwide. In some states, it makes up almost a quarter. The production tax credit helps developers of wind farms and turbine manufacturers with production and research.

The first ever national standards to control air pollution from gas wells that are drilled by hydraulic fracturing became effective on April 18 by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Drillers will be given about two years to employ technology to reduce emissions of smog and soot forming pollutants during the stage between drilling and actual production or about 10 days but will require drillers to burn off the gas in the meantime. Industry groups say such technology and equipment is not yet available. EPA updated existing rules for natural gas processing

plants, storage tanks and transmission lines. Since companies could capture the natural gas and sell it, EPA estimates they would save about \$11 to \$19 million a year starting in 2015. The American Petroleum Institute says much of the industry is already doing that and meeting standards and don't need the EPA to tell them how to save money. WildEarth Guardians sued the EPA in 2009 to force regulations. Thus far fracking has not affected drinking water in North Dakota except some now has an odor.

For sale: As part of its bankruptcy proceedings, Solyndra is reportedly very close to landing a buyer for its mammoth, high-tech production plant in Fremont, Calif. Solyndra built the facility from the ground up, spending \$300 million for a project that was completed in October, 2010. Today, the only activity is in the massive production area, which, at 280,000 square feet, could easily contain several football fields. Robotic machines and other equipment sit idle, waiting to be sold at auction. A skeleton crew remains on site to maintain the electrical, air, and plumbing systems, and ensure the back-up generators are in working order. There has been global interest in the property by numerous high-tech manufacturers, primarily from Europe and Asia. The asking price has not been listed, but there is no other manufacturing property like it for sale in the U.S. Any buyer will get a good deal and could start production right away.

Shell Oil will begin drilling test wells in 150 feet of water off the coast of northern Alaska in July, opening a new frontier in domestic oil exploration and accelerating a global rush to tap the untold resources beneath the frozen ocean. Industry experts and national security officials view the Alaskan Arctic as the last great domestic oil prospect. Shell's Arctic quest has consumed seven years and \$4 billion over two presidential administrations, overcoming many environmental con-

*Continued on Page 8*



# Rural Health, Farm Finance, and Communications **Report**



**By Donna Bolz  
Nebraska**

I have taken a vitamin each day for many years. Does this really help? Older people who take vitamin D and calcium supplements may live longer than their peers, according to an international review of studies covering more than 70,000 people.

Researchers writing in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology* found that older people who were given the

## **Vitamin supplements are beneficial**

supplements were 9 percent less likely to die over three years than those given placebo pills. Vitamin D alone had no impact on death rates. A 9 percent dip in death risk over a three year period may seem small, but lead researcher Lars Rejnmark states that the effect is “at least as pronounced” as the benefits linked to cholesterol-lowering statins and blood pressure drugs.

“In my view, a 9 percent reduced mortality in the general population of elderly is of major importance,” Rejnmark, an associate professor at Aarhus University in Denmark, told Reuters Health by email.

“Except for stopping smoking, there are not many other known interventions that are capable (of) such a reduction in the risk of death.”

Rejnmark and his colleagues combined the results from eight clinical trials that involved more than 70,000 older adults, mostly women. In each trial, people were assigned at random to take vitamin D or a placebo. Some studies used a combination of vitamin D and calcium. The doses varied, but most trials used a daily vitamin D dose of 10 to 20 micrograms.

In the United States, health officials suggest that most adults get 15 micrograms (or 600 IU) of vitamin D per day, while people older than 70 should get 20 micrograms (or 800 IU). In trials that used calcium, the dose was 1,000 milligrams per day. In general, women older than 50, and everyone over 70, are told to get 1,200 milligrams of calcium each day.

Vitamin D and calcium are probably best known as bone-builders. Older women often take the supplements to ward off the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis. Some trials have found that the supplement combination can prevent falls and bone fractures in the elderly. That does not explain the lower death risk in this study.

When the researchers factored in hip and spine fractures, they did not account for the dip in death risk. It was also found that supplements curbed people’s risk of dying from cancer. Rejnmark said there’s some evidence that calcium and vitamin D may lower the odds of colon cancer, but the evidence is not yet “firm”.

Rejnmark states the findings supported getting the recommended amounts of vitamin D and calcium. Some members of Rejnmark’s team had connections to supplement makers that market vitamin D and calcium products.

*Thanks to Marlene K. for the information above.*

## **Energy benefits small towns**

*Continued from Page 7*

cerns, the opposition of an Inupiat Eskimo leader and the fallout from the BP disaster. The Natural Resources Defense Council said the exploration is a reckless gamble we cannot afford and views it as political.

SolarReserve, a 110-megawatt Crescent Dunes project that would produce 500,000 megawatt hours per year is being created on 1600 acres of land leased from the Bureau of Land Management in Nye County, Nevada. Located 14 miles northwest of Tonopah in southwest Nevada, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Energy Secretary Stephen Chu said in May, 2011 that 600 construction jobs and 45 permanent jobs would be created. Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi is facing accusations of cronyism as her brother-in-law, Ronald Pelosi and second in command of the project, for getting the \$737 million loan guarantee from the Department of Energy, despite the Solyndra scandal.

The loan was finalized in September but is our tax dollars. The investment has intensified the debate over the effectiveness of solar energy as a major power source.

North Dakota oil production continues to increase. It produced 18.28 million barrels of oil in April. Since 2008, there are 17 new rail terminals to move oil out of state. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) hauls about 75 percent of the crude that leaves the state but that is only one-fourth of the daily production. Rail can now move 470,000 barrels of oil daily and that could double by end of the year. The rest goes by truck and pipeline. State officials believe the state’s oil production could double in the next three years to more than one million barrels a day. One company believes the Bakken formation holds 27 to 45 billion barrels and there are more formations. This means billions of dollars in projects to keep pace with it. There were 6,921 producing wells in March and they are expected to pump for at least 29 years.





By Lisa Goodheart  
Kansas

# Cereal Grains Report

## Bloggers invited to tour wheat farm

They have an active following through Twitter, Facebook, Youtube or blogs. Some have authored books or articles or have been on television or radio programs.

The purpose of the Wheat Safari was to educate these influencers about wheat foods from planting through processing. The dietitians participated in several hands-on activities including a gluten lesson, a pretzel baking workshop at the American Institute of Baking, a tour of the Hal Ross Flour Mill at Kansas State University and a tour of the Farm to Market Bread Company in Kansas City.

This group also toured a farm in the Chapman area where they enjoyed a luncheon and took combine rides for a close-up look at wheat fields. Five acres of standing wheat had been saved so the bloggers could ride around the field. They learned about the life cycle of Hard Red Winter wheat, how farmers care for crops and had discussions about the future of wheat production. This was the first time most of them had been in a combine and was an important lesson in how Kansas wheat producers help to

feed the world. The bloggers updated their Twitter and Facebook followers throughout the three day tour, which was a wonderful way to educate consumers about what the American farmer does and provides.

We have heard this before: use social media to reach and educate consumers on what farmers and ranchers do and how they care for crops and animals.

I don't usually write articles that are "Kansas-specific," but something happened here in Kansas that I think is interesting to all of us. More than twenty bloggers and columnists from all over the U.S. came to Manhattan, Kansas, recently for the first ever "Wheat Safari" sponsored by the Wheat Foods Council. The Wheat Foods Council, WFC, is funded by Kansas wheat producers through the Kansas Wheat Commission and was created in 1972. It is a partnership dedicated to increasing the consumption of wheat and other grains by providing nutritional information, education, research and promotional programs.

Participants were registered dietitians who are considered to be "influencers" in the field of food and nutrition.

## Farm Bill should support sugar

*Continued from Page 6*

duction. There is a different cost of production for sugar beet farmers that live in Minnesota or Florida (they don't use irrigation) compared with sugar beet farmers that live in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado or Idaho ( using irrigation) because of growing crop practices. Sugar beet farmers spend \$350 to \$400 an acre just for fertilizer. Sugar cane farmers have high expenses harvesting cane stocks.

America's lawmakers are looking very closely to reduce this country's deficit. We make sure to include the nation's sugar program in the Farm Bill. As you know 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 au-

thority to regulate the import quota to the Secretary of Agriculture. Controlling import quota stops oversupplying the market which results in collapsing prices. I am sure farmers have much more hidden cost that is not mentioned especially on Farm Bill. Sugar beets were one of the crops that paid back government loans owed by irrigation projects constructed under 1902 Reclamation Act. History has a valuable lesson to teach this generation. Water and agriculture is the bloodline and back bone of America's west and this country.

President John F. Kennedy once said, "The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything he buys at retail, sells everything he sells at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways." He was right, and let's hope Congress keeps those words in mind.

## WIFE 2012 Standing Committees

### Budget/Finance Resource Development

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Shana Baisch  
Committee  
Deb Dressler  
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### Bylaw/Procedure Manual

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### WIFE Archives

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### Media Relations

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# WIFE Notices

## Nominees should submit bios

All those nominated for offices or commodity / topic chairs may submit a bio for publication in the Wifeline. Bios should be 200 words or less and include qualifications and background information related to the office or chair sought. Submit bios to:

Cathy Scherler, Chairman  
WIFE Nominating Committee  
21899 County Road 59  
Sheridan Lake, CO 81071  
Home: 719.729.3367  
Cell: 719.688.3312  
Email: cscherler@fairpoint.net



## National Convention

### Bismarck ND

### Best Western Doublewood Inn

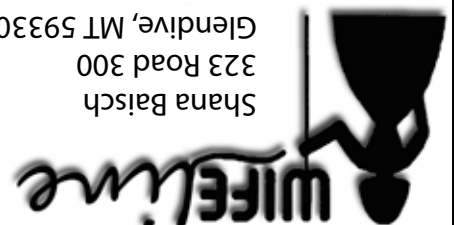
- November 14: Pre-convention meetings
- November 15-17: Convention

## Resolutions due Oct. 1, 2012

Reminder: Resolutions are due October 1, 2012 unless your state has officially requested an extension during the June BOD. When an extension is granted, states have 2 days following their state convention to submit the state's resolutions. Resolutions may be sent to: Mary Ann Murray: [lige@wb.midrivers.com](mailto:lige@wb.midrivers.com) and Daneen Dressler: [daneen.dressler@stonemill.net](mailto:daneen.dressler@stonemill.net).

Change Service Requested

Shana Baisch  
323 Road 300  
Glendive, MT 59330



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