



line

Volume 50

July 2020

No. 2

Table of Contents

Letter from the President..... 1

Specialty Crops Report.....2

Sugar Report.....3

FAED Scholarship Winners.....3

Homeland Security Report.....4

Beef Report.....5

Trade Report.....6

44th Annual National
Convention Save the Date.....6

Energy Report.....7

Dairy Report.....8

Covid-19 Agriculture Statistics.....9

2020 WIFE Leadership.....9

.....

For any comments on the WIFeline, contact Sarah Bledsoe at sarahbledsoe@gmail.com, 719.648.7295.



Letter from the President

Dear Ladies,

I hope this letter finds all of you well. 2020 has turned out to be a wild ride for all farmers and ranchers. One that is so unfair to each of us that are trying to help feed the country. It seems that we have been taking a beating from every side. I would just remind you that you are not alone. WIFE may not be able to change the conflict in our nation, but we can surely help each other. Each and everyone of you ladies are special, strong and resilient. This year, many of you are going through the same problems and emotions. Please use the Wifeline, WIFE Facebook page or

contact me @ bmomfor3@hotmail.com.

This year's convention will be held in Nebraska. It will be filled with information on changing with the times in both your farm business and WIFE. What can we do to improve our organization and increase our membership?

Please plan to attend if possible - first week in November.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Steen
Jennifer Steen,
WIFE National President

Specialty Crops

By Mary Ann Unruh

Honey bees have been helping mankind for more than 40 centuries. In Greece and Rome honey was used to symbolize fertility, love and beauty and was used to pay taxes. It is mentioned in the Bible as "lands flowing with milk and honey".

White settlers brought the bee to North America where the Indians called it the "white man's fly". It is responsible for helping pollinate more than 90 different cultivated crops in America with a value over \$30 billion. It is an excellent germ killer so can be used on wounds and sunburns.

The Queen lays about 1,600 eggs a day during the summer and can lay her own weight of eggs in one day. Her life span is about three to four years. Royal jelly is a milky-white secretion produced by glands of worker bees to induce the superior growth and development of the queen bee. Royal jelly is the principal food of the honeybee queen. A drone's primary role is to mate with an unfertilized queen and is fed by the working bees as they cannot feed themselves. Worker bees collect the honey. A worker bee lives about six weeks while the field bee lives about four weeks.

Flavors vary according to the flowers that produce the nectar the bee uses to make honey. The bees pollinate as the pollen sticks to their legs as they fly from one flower to the next in search of nectar. One bee will visit only one type of flower at a time to collect its honey but may visit thousands of flowers. Generally the darker the honey the stronger the flavor.

A hive of bees may contain up to 75,000 bees. It takes 154 trips to make one teaspoon of honey but an



average bee makes about 1/12 teaspoon in its lifetime which is about five weeks or 20,000 trips to make a pound of nectar. Bees consume seven pounds of honey to secrete one pound of beeswax.

Americans consume over 285 million pounds of honey every year. Honey is sold in four ways. Bees make wax combs where they place their honey in the hives. Comb honey is sold in small combs which are edible. Liquid or strained honey has been extracted from the comb and strained to free it from crystals. Solid honey is also called candied, churned or creamed which is partially or wholly solidified to make a smooth spread. Chunk honey consists of pieces of comb in a container filled with liquid honey. Honey does not spoil. Keep in refrigerator, not the cupboard. If liquid honey becomes sugared or solid, place the open container in a pan of hot (not boiling) water until the crystals disappear. One pound of honey equals about 1 1/3 cups. It can replace sugar with honey in recipes but use 3/4 cup for each cup sugar.

North Dakota is the top honey-producing state in the country and most comes from alfalfa or clover flowers. In 2018, this state reported a total of 38.2 million pounds of honey which equates to a value of more than \$71 million. The average yield of each colony is roughly 78 pounds. Other leading states are Montana, California, South Dakota and Florida.

Regardless of the type, honey consists of two simple sugars, fructose and glucose. Honey is not a substitute for sugar by persons on restricted diets. One tablespoon contains 65 calories plus small amounts of vitamins and minerals. Do not feed infants under one year as they might get botulism carried by the bees.

Beeswax can be used in numerous ways so is not wasted. ■



Sugar

By Klodette Stroh

Greetings from Powell Wyoming. I have been praying for a prospers farming year for all American producers. The break of the Corona Virus or Covid -19 took us all with a surprise we were not prepared for. Many businesses were forced to close their doors to stop the spread of Covid-19. People stayed home to be safe and continued to conducted their business from their home.

As a farmer, there is no way Rick and I could shut down our farm. Farming is a unique business. Food producers in this country have been working to make sure Americans have a strong domestic supply of essential ingredients like meat, milk, corn, and sugar, which has been taken for granted. I hope after pass Covid-19 passes, law makers and supply chains will start to make American producers their priority to help and protect. Many Wyoming and Montana farmers have planting barley, corn, beans, and sugar beets.

There is no question that our farmers are struggling as they are fighting the weather conditions to save crops and are faced with low commodity prices. Farm income declining will force many producers to depend on off-farm income to make ends meet.

Thank God the disaster program which can be explained as appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019 authorized the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) to help agricultural producers affected

by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019. This includes hurricanes Michael, Florence, and Dorian as well as other natural disasters such as floods, snowstorms, and tornadoes. The WHIP+ will help sugar beet, dry beans, and corn farmers in Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota. Sugar beet producers just received their payment from the sugar co-op.

In the meantime, Mexico is shipping sugar to America for the past year's short fall, but USDA has to make sure to don't increase the sugar import too much.

Farmers like us are dedicated to our beloved country.

Farmers are in partnership with God, and I believe our loving Father in heaven is sovereign God and He is in control.

In America we spend 11.4% of our personal income on food, Japan spends 21%, Italy spends 26%, and China spends 53%. Just imagine spending half of your salary for food.

The United States is also the largest supplier of food assistance to the need in other countries.

United States farmers are the backbone of our nation and we are blessed to have God's favor toward us. Farmers will keep this country independent and strong. ■

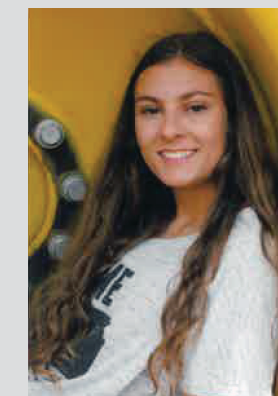
2020 FAED Scholarship Winners

This year the Foundation for Agricultural Education and Development (FAED) awarded two, one-year scholarships to two women who will begin their first or second year of college, technical or specialized study in a field related to agriculture.



Taizalee Glass

Taizalee Glass, from Hebron, ND, plans to attend Dickinson State University this fall. She is the daughter of Bryan and Tanya Glass. Her goal is to graduate from college with a degree in Agribusiness and wants to be able to help farmers and ranchers through tough years. She knows from growing up on a ranch just how hard, as well as rewarding, agriculture life can be. Through her experiences she has learned to be optimistic because agriculture always overcomes the issues it faces.



Kellie Rhodes

Kellie Rhodes, from Mullinville, KS, plans to major in Agriculture Science with the hope of returning to her family's farm to continue the work of generations before her. She would like to start a small alpaca herd and train therapy alpacas. Kellie is the daughter of Tony and Pam Rhodes. She was active in FFA, Band, FCA Choir, volleyball, basketball, and track during her high school years. She plans to continue her education at Concordia University-Nebraska in Seward, NE.

Homeland Security

By Marlene Kouba

In a global survey of 152 countries, 15 percent of the world's adults or 750 million people, say they would move to another country. The U.S. remains the most desired destination, with 21 percent of potential migrants or roughly 158 million, saying they would want to move to America. Canada and Germany are second and third with six percent each.

A Government Accountability Office report reveals that US spent \$27 million's worth of our money, since 2014, on departing gift bags for migrants deported back to Central America. This is on top of the annual \$116 billion that illegal immigrants cost taxpayers.

Fisher Sand and Gravel Company of Dickinson, North Dakota, was granted the largest contract to build the wall on the southern border. The \$1.3 billion contract for building the 42-mile section of the wall will go through tough terrain in the mountains of Arizona or about \$30 million per mile. It will be painted black which would retain heat and further deter any who wish to climb it. Plans are for 450 miles of wall by the end of 2020 and 187 miles are already built which replaced old shorter barriers but some is new.

During the month of April, a total of 408 people at ports of entry on the Mexican border were deemed inadmissible compared to 3,993 in March and 6,613 in February. In 2019, 126,001 people at ports of entry were deemed inadmissible, which seems to be a new term for illegal.

This month Homeland Security said it was suspending New Yorkers' ability to enroll in Global Entry and other programs that allow travelers to pass quickly through airport security and customs following a state law that allows undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. New York passed its Green Light law last



year which allows New Yorkers over the age of 16 to apply for non-commercial driver's licenses or learner's permits regardless of their citizenship or legal status in the U.S. By the end of 2020, about 175,000 New Yorkers will be removed from the programs because they are not eligible for renewal, while another 80,000 will not be accepted into the programs. Other states looking to pass laws similar to that of New York's could face the same restrictions.

Families are no longer being separated at the border. It is a federal crime to cross or attempt to cross the U.S. border at any time or place other than as designated. Once parents are taken into custody, children are separated until their case is heard. Big firms are now helping speed up the process. Some children under 16 are coming without adults but are sent by 'coyotes' who get paid to bring them across the border.

Mexican troops are blocking Central American migrants from crossing into Mexico. The troops closed a metal fence that says "Welcome to Mexico" to help block them. Mexico has reinforced multiple points across their southern border. Thousands are desperate to reach America. Heat is rising and so are tempers. Some say everything they had in Honduras has been burned. Some may be able to become Mexican citizens. The Guatemalan government is offering free bus rides back to their home. One man from Sri Lanka spent eight months to get to America and got with 75 feet before he was arrested. He said he had been beaten and threatened most of his life and wanted to be free.

Abraham Lincoln said "America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves." This is happening now in America. ■



Beef

By Pam Potthoff

There are many areas concerning livestock that need the attention of WIFE members. Please take time to comment on the purposed legislations below and/or contact your elected representatives. (For help in contacting your elected officials, go to contactingcongress.org. It will give you addresses and telephone numbers, plus, committees and their numbers.)

Reuters reports President Donald Trump has asked the Justice Department to look into allegations that U.S. meat packers broke antitrust law because the prices paid to farmers and ranchers has declined even as meat prices rose. The big four meatpackers control over 80% of the packing industry. For years, WIFE has been pointing out to our elected officials how this negatively affects farmgate prices. Let's hope this investigation goes forward in a fair and honest method without the usual influence of the big four.

The interruption of the meat supply due to the closing of some meat packing facilities has drawn attention to the problems farm to market programs face when needing USDA inspections. The PRIME ACT would help cattle producers during this crisis and beyond by lifting unnecessary regulatory barriers on custom slaughterhouses. The PRIME ACT would repeal the federal ban on the sale of meat from custom slaughterhouses and return control to the states to permit producers to sell meat processed at a custom slaughterhouse within the same state. This is an important step to empowering producers to sell meat directly to the consumer.

The Department of Justice's antitrust division last week sent investigative inquires to Tyson Foods, JBS SA, Cargill and National Beef. The four companies are the largest meatpackers in the US, controlling more than 80% of beef processing.



The USDA was already investigating why a rise in beef prices due to pandemic hoarding didn't translate into higher profits for farmers. As coronavirus started to spread across the country in March, meat sales rose as consumers stockpiled, but that boost didn't increase producers' profits. Wholesale prices for processed beef jumped almost 20% at the start of the pandemic, while the price paid to ranchers dropped 11%, according to the Food & Environment Reporting Network's Ag Insider. Drivers reported the packer margin had been over \$770 a head for the week ending April 24, 2020, while the feeders were bearing \$200 a head losses.

A bipartisan bill introduced by Sens. (Charles) Grassley and (Jon) Tester on May 12 would require each U.S. Meat processing facility that slaughters over 125,000 head of cattle each year to purchase fifty percent of their weekly volume of beef slaughter on the open or "spot" market.

The lack of cash negotiated sales in recent years has decimated price discovery and undercut the fundamentals of the CME cattle futures contracts. This bill would allow the Livestock Mandatory Reporting system to be better utilized as a mechanism for accurate and transparent reporting, which will advance price discovery and shore up the fundamentals of the CME cattle futures contracts.

Consolidation across the beef industry has led to concerns over the years about the authority companies have over suppliers when it comes to prices. Last year, the Ranchers Cattlemen Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of America and other cattle ranchers filed a class action lawsuit accusing the beef companies of conspiring to minimize prices paid to ranchers for cattle to inflate their own profits. That case is pending.

A grand jury in the U.S. District Court in Denver indicted four current chicken industry executives for conspiring to fix prices for broiler chickens from at least 2012 to 2017. This includes Pilgrims Pride, who supplies chicken for Costco and Kentucky Fried Chicken and Claxton Poultry Farms who supplies Chick-fil-A.

For a long time, WIFE has voiced objection to the lack of anti-trust and price-fixing scrutiny of the meat-packing industry. Lawsuits and investigations have occurred before but it always seems the meat packing industry comes out smelling like a rose. Will it be different this time? WIFE certainly hopes so. ■

Trade

By Ruth Laribee



July 1st is when the United States, Mexico, and Canada (USMCA) new economic trade deal will finally take effect. One of the major sectors to be affected will be agriculture. While we have visited the requirements that phytosanitary and sanitary standards for trade be based scientifically and environmental plus labor issues have extensive cooperation, new conditions have been added to the USMCA. Included are the protection of intellectual property, digital trade, and a higher measure for tax free treatment of deliveries to Canada and Mexico. It also contains commitments to precise legislature actions regarding collective bargaining by Mexico and formation for monitoring and accelerated enforcement of labor rights in Mexico. As in NAFTA agriculture products that had zero tariffs will continue under USMCA.

Tensions are high between the United States and China with the Covid 19 being a part of the situation. In January with a revisit to Phase 1 only a few of the tariffs each side had positioned for were lowered. Beijing however was permitted to circumvent additional tariffs/taxes on approximately \$160 billion worth of product/goods. Now it is understood that

in Phase 1 China committed this year and next year to buy an additional \$200 billion of U.S. services and goods. Lately some concerned economists are saying China “would have to increase its imports more than six percent each month for two years to honor the deal”. They question if China will be able to. Yet Liu He, China’s Vice Premier and chief trade negotiator has been reported as speaking to U.S. trade officials also with Secretary Treasurer Steven Mnuchin concerning putting together a “beneficial environment for seeing the deal through.” China is playing currency manipulation games again. The U.S. administration has placed tough sanctions on China, highly disapproved of their treatment of Hong Kong, and labeled them of mishandling Covid 19, now China is pushing back with their old tactics. Yes, like stated above currency manipulation!

Japan is the United States third largest trading partner and even though trade deals grossed 66.55 billion the first four months it was 8.78 percent less than last year for the same time. United States exports to Japan lessened by 1.54% and United States imports from Japan reduced by 12.32 %. Our trade deficit with Japan was \$69 billion in 2019. The trade deal with Japan and the U.S lessens or removes tariffs on approximately \$7.2 billion in U.S. agricultural exports. Also included in the trade agreement is digital with high standard requirements that safeguard data can be relocated across borders without limitations and guarantee consumer private protections. The U.S. and Japan have been working together for an open and free Indo-Pacific region through partnerships. So far, the Covid 19 has affected 186 countries. Countries have had to shut down production thereby slowing the supply chain and putting a damper on trade. ■



Energy

By Marlene Kouba

The tax revenue forecast for a 250 megawatt wind farm is \$28,232,800. It goes to schools, roads and bridges, fire and ambulance, hospitals. Wind energy has grown to 3,600 megawatts in 29 North Dakota counties. Some of the wind towers can last up to 25 years. However, on some days they run very low on transmission.

The coal industry has been slipping in many parts of the country due to renewable energies. The upper Midwest has been resilient. Federal data shows that the coal mining industry employed more than 175,000 nationwide in the mid-1980s but has fallen to about 53,000 as of October, 2019 partly due to inexpensive natural gas, automation and renewables. In North Dakota, lignite coal is mined right beside coal-burning plants which produce electricity for use within state borders and beyond. The ND Lignite Council says there is enough coal in the state for 800 years at continuous usage but the problem is regulation. Trump repealed Obama’s Clean Power Plan that restricted emissions in 2017. A coal plant near Center, ND is pursuing a \$1 billion carbon-capturing upgrade to its plant.

The world’s fossil fuels were reviewed recently. They discovered that the U.S. had 28 percent of the world’s high quality coal at 262 billion tons (not including Alaskan reserves). Russia had 19 percent, China 13 percent, Australia/New Zealand 9 percent, India 7 percent and the rest of the world had 24 percent. Our natural gas deposits were also estimated at 1,047 trillion cubic feet or enough to last 100 years at current rate. Meanwhile we hear more about renewables while 85 percent of the energy will come from fossil fuels until at least 2035 and is available and usable all year round.

Plunging prices have wreaked havoc on Texas oil companies struggling to avoid a wave of bankruptcies during the past five years, leaving them ripe takeover targets for rivals from China or others. Ninety-eight exploration and production companies in Texas with \$75.7 billion of debt filed for bankruptcy from 2015 through 2020. A 2018 oil discovery in the Permian Basin uncovered 46.3 billion barrels of crude, 281 trillion cubic feet of gas, and 20 billion barrels of natural gas liquids. A separate estimate found it could be as large as 230 billion barrels. When the industry is prospering, larger firms buy smaller firms. When markets are bad, the firms are purchased at low prices. The uncertainty surrounding the outcome of

the 2020 election will cause Chinese firms to “explore deals now. U.S. law prohibits foreign companies from directly holding many oil, gas and mineral leases, but does allow them to form U.S. corporations to make purchases. In 2015 a Chinese firm received approval to buy \$1.3 billion purchase of oil assets in the Permian Basin. The oil industry is critical for Texas, accounting for \$16.3 billion in 2019 and about 10 percent of the state’s labor force. An oil worker makes about \$132,000 a year or 1.6 times the state’s average wage.

A Canadian company has built the first piece of the disputed Keystone XL pipeline across the U.S. border and started work on labor camps in Montana and South Dakota. The 1,200 mile pipeline from Alberta to Nebraska was stalled for much of the decade before President Trump began trying to get it done. Tribes and environmentalists are opposed to it because of possible oil spills and climate change. Work started in April and 1.2 miles have been completed. There was a three-year construction timeline before a Montana judge cancelled a key permit needed to cross streams, wetlands and other water bodies. The South Dakota governor is now working with the tribes who are planning protests.

China and Brazil have announced ambitious initiatives to expand their use of solar power and are urging more countries to join the International Solar Alliance to trap solar energy in a big way. More than 60 have ratified the agreement. A portion of these solar installations will not be connected to any national electricity network. In smaller towns areas they get electricity for only two or five hours a day and the power supply from the grid is unpredictable. They are reliant on lead-acid batteries for storing unused solar power as increased use causes lead poisoning. The batteries only last up to five years. Lead gets stored in the teeth and bones, where it remains for decades. During pregnancy, lead is released in the blood and affects the fetus. Up to 50 percent of children who suffer from lead poisoning also experience stomach aches, constipation, fatigue, vomiting, seizures, and hearing loss. ■



Dairy

By Chris Anken

The COVID-19 challenge. There was no food shortage. Yet why were the food shelves empty? In some stores they had signs up. You could only buy two gallons of milk at a time. It was about the way food was being distributed. It consists of two main food distribution supply chains in the system. One for grocery stores and the other for restaurants, hotels, institutions, and schools.

The challenge was moving products through one supply chain that basically came to a halt, and the other needed to be replenished quicker. Think about the restaurants, hotels, schools, and college cafeterias that were no longer in need of bulk items for delivery and had stopped purchasing bulk product. Most Americans were preparing meals at home. Therefore there was an increase in need for raw ingredients. However, bigger organizations are not packaged the same as for those purchased by individual in a grocery store. Yet milk sales in the grocery stores increased, while the sale of milk to colleges, schools, restaurants, and hotels had decreased. Processors that provide butter, yogurt, and cheeses couldn't process fluid milk fast enough to meet the change in demand, and processors that provided the milk to consumers in grocery stores could not keep up the demand. Not all the processing plants are set up to multi-function. Some process fluid milk while for others the end product is butter, yogurt, cheese, ice-cream etc. Although the demand for fluid milk had increased in grocery stores, there was not enough processing plants to meet the demand to bottle the fluid milk for sale to the consumer. In turn, some milk cooperatives had told their farmers to dump the milk as they did not have the ability to process and package for the new demand in distribution. Supply chains struggle to adopt. There was just too much food and milk in the wrong place. Milk and vegetable brokers were trying to match buyers to sellers. I heard because of the shut downs they were having trouble finding bottle caps for the gallon jugs. Look what happened not only



to the dairy but the meat industry too. Dairy farmers sell cull cows and some have beef to sell. It is hard to find a custom meat shop with any opened dates until next year. President Trump made the big meat companies go back to work so the grocery stores would have meat on the shelves.

Lets not dump milk, put it on pizza. Just a couple of ounces of cheese on a pizza would have made the difference of dumping milk. Give it away. With this COVID-19 pandemic let us not dump or waste precious food-some of the BEST IN THE WORLD! Give it to the hungry right here in our COUNTRY. Let us not waste it and throw it away when so many are in need.

There is nothing like pizza. It more than weathered everything that came its way during the COVID-19 pandemic, not only surviving but outselling any other foodservice category in this recent period,which was pizza.

Pizza has always been a shining star for dairy farmers because of what it gives back to us many times over. About 25% of all cheese that moves through the food-service channel is piping-hot pie pizza.

Dairy Exports for April were surprisingly positive, despite the COVID pandemic. Dairy exports for the eighth straight months and April exports was positive. Record exports of dry ingredients to Southeast Asia in addition to rebounding volumes of whey products to China was driven in a positive direction.

June is DAIRY MONTH. Don't forget the ice cream this summer!

OUR Farmers and Ranchers are essential to our nation's future; let us not forget that.

GOD BLESS OUR FARMERS AND RANCHERS ■



Covid-19 Agriculture Statistics

By Pam Potthoff

--An American Farm Bureau Federation Market Intel report shows a total of 627 farm bankruptcy filings during the 12-month period ending March 2020, a 23% year-to-year increase and marking five consecutive years of Chapter 12 bankruptcy increases, including an accelerated rate since January. The data is from the U.S. Courts.

--Wisconsin was the hardest hit with 78 filings in the 12-month period, followed by Nebraska with 41 Chapter 12 filings and Iowa at 37. More than 50% of the Chapter 12 filings were in the 13-state Midwest region, followed by 19% in the Southeast. Agriculture is in a double crisis: Covid-19 and economic disaster.

--Many meat processing plants were shut down or slowed down production during the Covid 19 crisis. As of the first of June, meat processing nationally was at 95% of last year.

--Unions estimate 13,150 U.S. meatpacking employees were exposed and/or infected with Covid 19 in the workplace. Fifty-seven have died.

--As a sign that commodity exports might be picking

up, in June, China purchased 720,000 ton of new crop soybeans.

-- President Trump has authorized the purchase of meat, vegetables and other farm produce for Covid 19 relief. Let's make sure those are US products and not imported, which would do the US farmers absolutely no good.

-- In June, after planting was completed, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled farmers can no longer spray the controversial herbicide dicamba over-the-top of genetically modified soybeans and cotton.

Dicamba is a weed killer introduced by Monsanto. The ruling means that farmers will have to immediately cease the use of dicamba on millions of acres of crops across the Midwest and South. About 60 million acres of crops will be affected.

Farming and conservation organizations the National Family Farm Coalition, Center for Food Safety, Center for Biological Diversity and Pesticide Action Network, filed a lawsuit alleging that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency unlawfully approved the herbicide. ■

2020 WIFE Leadership

National Officers

President, Jennifer Steen

Secretary, Pam Potthoff

Treasurer, Jenifer Felzien

Area II Director, Donna Bolz

Past President, Diane McDonald

Commodity/Topic Chairman

Dairy, Chris Anken

Beef, Pam Potthoff

Energy, Marlene Kouba

Sugar, Klodette Stroh

Trade, Ruth Laribee

Specialty Crops, Mary Ann Unruh