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FAED ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Foundation of Agricultural Education and Development (FAED) received four applications for the 2014-2015 school year from North Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska and New York. The scholarship selection process proved to be a close race as all the ladies who applied were very talented.

The winners of the three FAED scholarships are: Grace Hammer of Wallace, Kansas; Andrea Wach of Wauneta, Nebraska and Gabrielle Domagala of Boonville, New York.

Melinda Sorem, FAED Scholarship Committee Chairman, will be sending out certificates via email to the WIFE presidents of the states the winners hail from so they can be presented to them personally. Congrats to all three winners!



LARISSA WACH WINS 2014 NEBRASKA WIFE/ NORMA HALL SCHOLARSHIP

Nebraska WIFE announced the 2014 Nebraska WIFE/Norma Hall Scholarship winner at their Lincoln legislative meeting on March 20. Congratulations go to Larissa Ann Wach of Wauneta, Nebraska as she was chosen as the 2014 winner of the \$1000 scholarship. She is the daughter of Loren and Nancy Wach of Wauneta and is currently attending the University of Nebraska--Lincoln. The Alternate candidate chosen is McKenzie Rae Beals from Alexandria, Nebraska. She is attending the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis. Her parents are Matthew and Amy Beals of Alexandria. A total of 29 applications were received and Nebraska WIFE is proud to have such a fine representation of young women in the State of Nebraska.

President's Report



By Ruth Laribee
New York

'Geographical Indicators' would harm U.S. cheese industry

WIFE has been extra busy lately; writing comments to the Federal Register and sending letters, e-mails and making phone calls to the agriculture committees and Representatives on agricultural issues in Washington, D.C. We have been working hard at informing those responsible for implementing laws about our WIFE policy on various and non-ending rules and regulations being put forth that would affect our agricultural producers.

For instance, we agree with Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) to inform consumers more about the product they are buying, disagree with the importation of beef from several Brazilian regions that are not Foot and Mouth Disease free and feel the government needs to clarify the wording in the Clean Water Act. We must all be diligent in these undertakings because as the saying goes, "If we don't do it, it will be done for us."

One case in point is the recent European Union (EU) threat to declare exclusive rights to many common cheese names including Swiss, Gouda, Parmesan and more. These cheeses are produced, advertised and consumed around the world. The EU proposition would permit protected Geographical Indicators (GI's or place-based product names) to be used only on products originating from inside the specified region, e.g., Parmesan cheese from Parma, Italy and Feta cheese from Greece. The concept of U.S. cheese

plants and cheese marketers being prohibited from selling their goods bearing those long-established names after decades of use defies everything the "free market" process represents.

If victorious, the EU's plan would pose apparent challenges to U.S. cheese makers. Less obvious is the fact that several U.S. dairy groups initially provoked this emerging trade dispute but now proclaim the European demands unfair. EU trade negotiators are demanding the right to prohibit the use of many Geographical Indicators on cheeses and other foods produced outside of the European Union. Well-known cheeses produced in the U.S. including those named above, Mozzarella and many more would no longer bear these names if the EU succeeds at the bilateral Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations. GI restrictions could generate massive marketing problems for U.S. cheese makers who would be forced to use unfamiliar names for their cheeses.

Prior to the import promotion assessment (which is 7.5 cents per cwt for the EU compared to .15 cents per cwt for U.S. producers) the EU has generally put up with the use of widespread names being used outside of Europe. The bitter assessment fight tremendously fired up the Europeans' anger but because of the collapse of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round talks a few years back it delayed the chance for the European retaliation on the import assessment.

In 2001, Executive Director Mario Castillo of the Dairy Trade Coalition warned of the import assessments' unintended consequences time after

time. One of the unintended consequences, which Castillo cited over ten years ago, included the threat of European retaliation on dairy Geographical Indicators.

He said in 2001, "Apparently, the Europeans are preparing to walk in to the upcoming WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun with stealth weapons aimed at the very heart of the U.S. dairy industry—those segments of our cheese market with the greatest growth potential." Since the EU officials lost out at the delayed Doha Round talks in Brussels, they are jumping at the chance this time around.

Castillo was right because now the Europeans have brought the Geographical Indicator challenge to the TTIP meeting and after a decade of waiting they will be ready for the fight. If they win, it will be a huge economic loss for the U.S. dairy and cheese industry. They will be exporting their cheeses to the U.S., an action that I suspect will raise costs considerably for our consumers.

The family of Errico Auricchio started making cheese after immigrating to the U.S. in 1979. He is now president of the company. Auricchio said, "there will be a huge cost with new packaging, new marketing, new names, need to educate the consumer and all the good will in the present names would be lost". As far as the benefits of the TTIP go, he sees none. Right now Auricchio's company can't export to Europe for two reasons, "very high duties and cheeses with our names are considered counterfeit."

Take a minute and call or e-mail your representative. Let your voice be heard.



By Jean Wach
Nebraska

Cereal Grains Report

Wheat futures have best week in U.S. history

by drought. Russia is the world's fifth-largest wheat exporter, followed by Ukraine, and turmoil in the region may curtail shipments from the Black Sea.

The renewed tensions between Russia and Ukraine have increased buying in Chicago. The trade world is increasingly nervous about supply from the region, and that has increased fund buying. Wheat futures

for July delivery rose 2.2 percent to \$6.98 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade at the time of writing this article. A close at that price would mark the biggest gain for a most-active contract since April 15. In the week ended April 17, U.S. export sales for delivery before May 31, 2015, doubled to 610,765 metric tons from a year earlier, U.S. Department of Agriculture data showed.

Prices also rose on concerns that moisture deficits will persist in the U.S., the world's top exporter, as rain forecast in coming days misses some areas and leave others too dry.

As much as 40 percent of the U.S. faces stress in the next 10 days. Drought intensified in the Great Plains in the week which ended April 22.

Canadian wheat growers may decrease seeding rates by 4.8 percent this year and also reduce the amount of canola they plant. Canada, the world's biggest wheat exporter after the U.S., will sow 24.8 million acres of grain, down from 26 million in 2013.

Spring wheat planting may fall 5.6 percent to 18.0 million acres, while Durum seeding is forecast to drop 2.6 percent to 4.84 million acres and winter wheat will decline 2.7 percent to 1.95 million acres. Canola seeding may fall 0.7 percent to 19.8 million acres from 19.9 a year earlier. Barley seeding is forecasted to drop 10.9 percent.

With the Ukraine wreaking havoc, the drought in the Great Plains, and less cereal grains being planted in Canada, the cereal grain prices could be volatile this summer (Ag Web Daily).

Wheat futures rose the most ever in a five-day period over the week of April 24, on speculation that the escalating crisis in Ukraine will boost demand for U.S. grain supplies plagued

Make a donation to win the fundraiser quilt!



The WIFE quilt, whose winning ticket will be announced at this year's national convention in Phoenix, AZ, is complete. The quilt's block designs are colorful and beautifully done and the creativity surrounding this work of art will knock your socks off. The quilt was created by WIFE members from six states as a fundraiser, with the winning ticket being drawn November 15 at the 2014 National WIFE Convention. A five dollar donation will buy you a chance to win the quilt, a \$100 beef certificate or a \$50 dining out certificate. Tickets can be obtained from any WIFE member and will be available June 1, 2014. If you donate \$25, your sixth ticket is free.

Trade Report



By Pam Potthoff
Nebraska

Source of deadly pig disease in U.S. is still unknown

As this is being written, President Obama is in Japan trying to drum up some enthusiasm for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In the meantime, Congressmen and major newspapers are questioning the wisdom of another North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)-type treaty.

Recently the New York Times editorial board, considering the loss of good-paying jobs in the U.S. due to ineffective trade treaties, urged trade treaty negotiators to “get it right this time.”

The Los Angeles Times published an op-ed from California Representatives George Miller, Rosa DeLauro and Louise Slaughter saying NAFTA has resulted in the outsourcing of jobs, downward pressure on wages and a meteoric rise in income inequality. That article urges trade negotiators not to “blindly endorse any more unfair NAFTA-style trade agreements, negotiated behind closed doors, that threaten to sell out American workers, offshore our manufacturing sector and accelerate the downward spiral of wages and benefits.”

The Los Angeles Times op-ed included recommendations to help the U.S. economy: investment in infrastructure, manufacturing and job training; addressing issues like currency manipulation, unfair subsidies for state-owned enterprises in other nations; and the use of commercial agreements that do not weaken the United States and its allies.

Japan continues to want protection

for key industries, including agriculture. In April, Japan signed a bilateral trade pact with Australia that reduced beef tariffs but the U.S. has pushed for even greater reductions in TPP talks. One way around the impasse, suggested by Japan, is not to eliminate ag tariffs in the TPP but to sign an individual agreement with the U.S.

How to handle state-owned enterprises, currency manipulation and intellectual property concerns are areas yet to be finalized in the TPP that just may be deal-breakers. But maybe, just maybe, the reality of a history of poor trade treaties is beginning to sink in!

For years, WIFE members in dairy have alerted WIFE to Europe’s protection of product names using “Geographical Indicators,” like Black Forest ham, Newcastle Brown Ale, and Gouda, Limburger and Roquefort cheeses. The European Union (EU) has long tried to extend that protection beyond its borders.

The U.S. has resisted protecting Europe’s geographic names. Now the EU negotiators are attempting to force the U.S. into complying with European labeling through the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The EU claims their rules promote sound environmental practice, strong animal welfare standards and can help increase sales.

Few American foods and preparations are currently safeguarded in the way of Europe. Idaho potatoes, Maine lobster and Vidalia onions have trademark protections, but many others, like Boston baked beans and New England yellow crookneck squash do not.

Think of the chaos that would result in U.S. supermarkets if they are no

longer able to use familiar names for products that have European geographic indicators. What might be a new name for “Gouda cheese?”

Agricultural exports set a new record of \$140.0 billion in Fiscal Year 2013, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) statistics. The reason, of course, was strong prices for U.S. commodities. Volume of exports remained rather flat. Prices have dropped dramatically since the 2013 crop year and, without increased export volume, ag will be facing a decrease in the dollar value of exports.

The Agriculture Act of 2014 included a trade promotion program called Market Access Program and the creation of an Undersecretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agriculture position, which are steps designed to continue and expand agricultural exports.

A program is in place in the United States to provide trade adjustment assistance to workers in the manufacturing sector who have lost their jobs due to increased imports caused by trade treaties. Since NAFTA, more than 845,000 U.S. workers in the manufacturing sector (and this number may be underestimated) have been certified for one narrow program. In the first two years after the Korean Free Trade Agreement, tens of thousands of U.S. jobs have been lost.

The international development group, “Oxfam America,” says H.R. 4005, which passed the House in April and is being considered by a Senate committee would require that a minimum of 75 percent of U.S. food aid be carried on U.S.-flagged vessels, up from the current rate of 50 percent. Oxfam says shipping anything on a U.S. flagged

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**By Pat Torgerson
Montana**

Transportation Report

Safety measures increase for crude transported by rail

The following is an article written by Susan Minichello of the Sidney Herald in Sidney, Montana.

After a series of explosive and fatal rail accidents involving crude oil shipments, more safety measures have been put in place by railroad companies and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

On Feb. 21, the U.S. rail industry voluntarily signed an agreement to increase track inspections, improve braking systems, lower speeds and fund training for first responder emergency response teams. Parts of the agreement start taking effect at the end of March, and are completely in effect by July 1.

“We ... have worked together to swiftly pinpoint new operating practices that enhance the safety of moving crude by oil,” Edward Hamberger, Association of American Railroads CEO and president, said in a press release.

The U.S. Department of Transportation issued its fourth emergency order on crude oil transportation in seven months.

“From emergency orders to voluntary agreements, we are using every tool at our disposal to ensure the safe transportation of crude,” Anthony Foxx, Department of Transportation secretary, said in a press release.

The latest emergency order, effective immediately, requires proper testing, classification and packing of crude oil. The 72 Bakken oil tanks that derailed in Lac-Megantic, Quebec, on July, 6, 2013, which exploded and killed 47 people, were later found to be mislabeled as less flammable than they actually were.

According to the emergency order, 18 of the 21 tank cars that derailed in Cassleton, N.D. on Dec. 30, 2013 ruptured and exploded. An estimated 400,000 gallons of oil spilled, 1,400 people were evacuated and damages cost around \$8 million.

The damage cost of the Lac-Megantic derailment is estimated at over \$1 billion.

Another recent derailment occurred on Nov. 8, 2013 in the wetlands near Aliceville, Ala., where 11 of more than 20 derail tank cars spilled oil and exploded, with damages at around \$3.9 million.

Oil transport by rail has increased in recent years in large part because of the Bakken oil boom, where oil production exceeds pipeline infrastructure.

The Association of American Railroads estimates that originated car loads of crude oil on U.S. railroads was 9,500

in 2008. In 2013, it was approximately 400,000 tank cars of crude, a significant increase. A standard car load of crude oil contains around 30,000 gallons.

The emergency order is not only in response to recent derailments of trains carrying Bakken crude (like the ones preceding it), but also due to concerns found in a Department of Transportation investigation call Operation Classification, commonly referred to as the “Bakken Blitz.”

Operation Classification conducts unannounced inspections of crude oil labels on trains in the Bakken. The investigation was launched in August 2013, a month after the Lac-Megantic derailment.

The railroad agreement stated it would have trains with 20 or more tank cars of crude run at 40 miles per hour in high threat urban areas, and 50 miles per hour in other places.

WIFE 2014 Commodity & Topic Chairs

Beef

Whitney Klasna

Cereal Grains

Jean Wach

Dairy

Kay Zeosky

Energy

Barbara Broberg

Homeland Security

Marlene Kouba

Media

Diane McDonald

Natural Resources/Private Property/Water/Endangered Species

Alice Parker

Rural Life/Farm Finance Communication/Tax/Health

Donna Bolz

Sheep & Goats

Tammy Basel

Sugar

Klodette Stroh

Trade

Pam Pothoff

Transportation

Pat Torgerson

Beef Report



By Whitney Klasna
Montana

Livestock Handling and Agro-Security Conference to be Held in Montana, June 27-28

What if you could improve the performance of your livestock and spend little or no money achieving that improvement?

Are you worried about what could happen to your ranch in the event of a disease outbreak?

In response to these questions and concerns, Maggie Nutter (Montana WIFE member) and the Marias River Livestock Association in Montana will be hosting the Gentle Hand Livestock Conference on Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28th in Shelby, MT. On Friday, the conference features leaders in the livestock industry including Dr. Jude Capper, Dr. Temple Grandin and a live, low-stress cattle-handling demonstration by Curt Pate. Friday afternoon will also include a beef lunch cooked by Dick Kinyon, a mini-trade

WIFE submits comments on APHIS proposed import rule

show with booths filled by our sponsors for the event, and a beer booth. On Saturday, the event will have two separate events going. Jeanne Rankin, DVM and Foreign Animal Diagnostician, along with her team of Agro-Security Experts will present a seminar on Foreign and Emerging Livestock Diseases including topics on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv). At the same time teens will be learning to share their passion about farming, food and fun on Social Media. Ag social media gurus Dairy Carrie, Ryan Goodman and Jude Capper will lead our future farmers and ranchers through how to use Facebook and Instagram to share their story.

This is not a Montanan only event! You can register for the event, find a full event schedule, and read more about the event at www.mariasriverlivestock.com or find the Marias River Livestock Association on Facebook.

WIFE Submits Comments on the APHIS-Proposed Rule Concerning Brazil Fresh Meat Imports

With the comment period now closed on a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) proposal to allow fresh beef imports under specific conditions from 14 Brazilian states, the agency will begin wading through more than 800 comments submitted since the rule was proposed in December 2013.

Below is the comment WIFE submitted regarding the APHIS proposed rule:

The National Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) organization does not support this proposal for importation of fresh (chilled or frozen), maturated, and deboned beef from the specified 14 regions in Brazil into the United States. The risk and potential for catastrophic impact due to the introduction of FMD into U.S. cattle herds is not worth the small amount of trade that would be gained.

Our National WIFE policy states: "WIFE urges prohibiting the importation of livestock from any country that experiences outbreaks of serious zoonotic diseases, including pests, until scientific evidence demonstrates the disease and/or pests have been eradicated or fully controlled and there is no known risk of further spread."

FMD is one of the most economically damaging animal diseases in the world. Brazil is not a country considered completely free of FMD with certain regions and adjacent countries having confirmed cases as recent as the past decade.

Although FMD is not a food safety concern, nor a threat to public health, but [sic] it does permanently affect the health, productivity and well being of infected animals, spreading rapidly and also has an indirect impact on the livelihoods of ranchers and producers caring for those livestock.

Therefore, the National WIFE organization does not support this proposal for importation of fresh (chilled or frozen), maturated, and deboned beef from Brazil.

*Sincerely,
Whitney Klasna, WIFE Beef
Committee Chair*

The WIFE Board of Directors will hold its yearly conference call meeting on Wednesday, June 18, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. MST. To participate in this meeting, dial (605) 477-3000 and use access code 182545#. Upon joining the call, please say your name and the state you represent for the Secretary's notes.



By Alice Parker
Washington

Natural Resources Report

Supporters of Clean Water Act say proposed rule addresses farmers' concerns

The debate and discussion continue regarding the "The Clean Water Act" and the proposed rule.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Corps of Engineers argue that the rule will clarify the protection for streams and wetlands to all Clean Water Act Programs. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy states, "that it clarifies protection for up-stream waters that are vital to downstream communities. Clean water is essential to all Americans that rely on safe places to swim and healthy fish to eat and farmers who need abundant and reliable sources of water to grow crops." The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Jo-Ellen Darcy, adds that "the rules will better protect aquatic resources by strengthening the consistency, predictability and transparency of our jurisdictional determinations."

The agencies say they have worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that the concerns of farmers and the agricultural industry were addressed in the proposed rule. Currently, the proposed rule preserves the existing exemptions and exclusions for agricultural activities.

Exemptions included 53 established Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practices, implemented in accordance with published standards from Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, dredge or fill permitting requirements if they occur in waters covered

by the Clean Water Act.

The proposed rule will preserve current agricultural exemptions from Clean Water Act permitting, including:

- Normal farming, silviculture, and ranching practices. Those include plowing, seeding, cultivation, minor drainage and harvesting for production of food, fiber and forest products.

- Upland soil and water conservation practices.
- Agricultural storm water discharges.
- Return flows from irrigated agriculture.
- Construction and maintenance of farm or stock ponds or irrigation ditches on dry land.
- Maintenance of drainage ditches.
- Construction or maintenance of farm, forest and temporary mining roads.

2014 WIFE Officers

President

Ruth Laribee
7639 East Road
Lowville, NY 13367
(315) 376-2644 EST
grlaribee@hotmail.com

Vice President

Linda Newman
24728 DY Trail
Winifred, MT 59489
(406) 462-5583 MST
dlnewman@3riversdbs.net

Secretary

Darcy Dressler
PO Box 116
Taylor, ND 58656
(701) 590-3579 CST
darcy_dressler@yahoo.com

Treasurer

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

The Clean Water Act will also:

- Provide greater clarity, certainly to farmers
- Avoid economic burden on agriculture
- Encourage the use of voluntary conservation practices
- Be consistent and support existing USDA programs

Some lawmakers, as well as some farm organizations, are concerned with the proposed rule. Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) stated, "While I am suspect of the impact and objectives of this rulemaking, I give the agency some credit for finally choosing to use the rulemaking process and allow for public input as Congress intended. I encourage citizens to carefully review this proposal and weigh in with EPA to ensure that regulations like this one are based on sound science, consider economic impacts and demonstrate common sense."



By Klodette Stroh
Wyoming

Sugar Report

U.S. is world's second largest importer of sugar

Farmers are struggling to plant crops this year. Extreme wet weather in Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, South and North Dakota has delayed farmers' operations. The price of sugar continues to stay low due to excess import of sugar from Mexico under the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). American lawmakers have to be vigilant about excess import of commodities coming into the U.S., which threatens farmers' livelihoods.

U.S. sugar acres have held steady for past years but American sugar producers will be losing \$1 billion in sales of their 2013 crop due to prices that are half of 2011 levels. Excess sugar imported from Mexico under the NAFTA agreement has cost U.S. government \$250 million this year. The excess sugar coming into U.S. breaks the 2008 Farm Bill provision of the sugar program. Prior to the government's recent intervention there has been no cost to taxpayers from 2008-2012.

More than 100 countries produce sugar and American producers are among the most efficient. More than half of the world's sugar is produced at a higher cost than in the U.S. America is the second-largest net importer of sugar in the world, after Russia.

Low sugar prices have harmed our sugar farmers. NAFTA explicitly permits the filing of anti-dumping cases and NAFTA countries have

filed 114 anti-dumping and countervailing duty cases against each other since the trade deal went into effect. Of these 114 cases, Mexico has filed 31 cases against the United States, and the United States has filed 30 cases against Mexico, not counting the pending sugar petitions. The U.S. International Trade Commission is responsible for determining whether or not domestic producers are injured by dumped and subsidized imports. It is expected to make a preliminary determination in May.

The U.S. Department of Commerce will initiate an investigation to determine if the Mexican govern-

ment has subsidized Mexico's sugar production and whether that sugar is being dumped into the U.S. market. According to American Sugar Alliances, as of March 31, Mexico had already sent 1.15 million tons of sugar to America, putting it on pace to ship 2.3 million tons for the year. That is compared to last year's all-time record of 2.1 million tons. Unless the pace slows, imports of sugar from Mexico will be 500,000 tons more than U.S. government officials had expected this year.

For approximately 100 years, the United States has maintained anti-dumping and countervailing duty laws to ensure predatory trade practices don't drive domestic industries out of business. If U.S. producers are harmed, these laws permit duties to be imposed on the imported products that benefit from subsidies or are sold below fair market prices.

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 authority to regulate the import quota to the Secretary of Agriculture. Controlling import quotas stops oversupplying the market which results in collapsing prices. Surely, farmers have many more hidden costs that go unmentioned, especially in the 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 are the bloodline and backbone of America's West and this country.

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Energy Report



By Barbara Broberg
Montana

Keystone Pipeline progress is now at a standstill

The Keystone Pipeline is not able to move forward, as of April 23, 2014. The U.S. State Department cited more needed study. After hearing the news, I received a telephone call from a Canadian friend who wanted me to know that she thought oil was a good industry and wondered what Americans were thinking to stop the Pipeline.

The Keystone Pipeline would tie major oil producing areas together by creating a dedicated line directly to refineries on the southern U.S. coasts.

Gone are the days when you needed to worry about hitting a pipeline every so often while digging or plowing, now a lot more goes into getting a pipeline established.

Finding environmentally preferred routes, getting landowner access and right-of-way and getting through the civic regulation makes years of work. Acquiring the material, placing, getting the actual work done safely and efficiently takes even more time.

After the line goes in, maintenance and the monitoring of pipe and product is always on going. Politics, environmental activists, labor unions, and jobs are all included in why (and why not) the Pipeline is at a standstill.

The truth of the matter is, a project of this magnitude creates

work and jobs. The Montana Bakken Shale has an advertisement for help at <http://www.BakkenShale-Helpwanted.com> and they call these kinds of jobs "JOB jobs."

The Canadian Government also has an advertising campaign at www.GoWithCanada.ca. The website describes Canada as the number one provider of oil to the United States (more than Saudi Arabia and Venezuela combined, they say). Canada has oil sands which render oil.

In Montana, we see some of the equipment headed to the oil sands-complicated, engineered structures. As a farmer, the observation most obvious is: this particular item is not cheap.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are targeted to be reduced by 17 percent by the year 2020. Part of the Keystone quandary has to do with whether everything the Pipeline brings will lower or raise GHG in the long run. The answer might just be "let's try it and see."

On a more practical side of the energy world, there will be new fluorescent tubes filled with LED lighting available in your future, most likely next year. They are already starting to be made available. More information, including replacement bulbs, can be found at www.interlakeresources.com.

Also included on the site is how to re-wire your existing fixture to use these linear bulbs in your existing fixtures. The new bulbs have no hum and no ballast, the electricity

only comes to the bulb in one end (hence the wire modification).

And, here, near the end of the wood stove burning season, I will add that while wood burning is not carbon neutral, it can create smoke! The wood you use makes a difference.

I was unable to change what America was thinking on the Keystone Pipeline. But I did get a pile of wooden roofing shingles burned up this winter in our (partly modern) wood-burning stove. Underneath the pile was the four years-lost end gate to the dump truck. The dump truck had been used to catch the wood shingles as they were pried off the mother-in-law's home. I don't know what a bonfire on top of the end gate would have done to it, but the shingles provided some fast burning fuel for our stove.

Some other fuel for this stove has been numerous pieces of absolutely useless wood from the good ole days. It seems when an alternative to wood heat came to this area, that people embraced it immediately.

New York City has been busy on the smoke reduction and modification front. Even restaurants and elegant fireplaces will have to monitor and modify to meet the regulations. Trying these laws is how we learn what works and innovation may very well bring something useful to us. So here's to continued innovation on the energy front; oil from different sources or renewables implemented to today's living.

Rural Life Report



By Donna Bolz
Nebraska

World of Twitter opens new forms of dialogue for farmers

I have never tried it but I have thought about it. I have heard about people that use Twitter in a variety of ways and never gave it much thought until I found a story in *Progressive Farmer* titled “#Agriculture in the Twitterverse.”

The story is about a farmer named Rob Sharkey who says Twitter as one of the biggest changes to come to farming. This social media tool can connect you to the world with text messages no longer than 140 characters. If you decide to try Twitter, you create an account, which is as simple as creating a username and password and plugging in your email address on the site’s home page, www.twitter.com.

Why should you join? There are several reasons. Twitter allows you can be plugged into conversations relating to agriculture, hunting and everything else, depending on your interests. It is a tool used for sharing information and learning new information. One example is if you want to hear what other farmers are saying about their decisions for the upcoming planting season, you join a conversation about it.

What about privacy? Users have the ability to determine who follows them on the site by making the profile public or private. Users also have the option to block or report offensive behavior or harassment. Users may choose (or not) to share their location and full name.

Is it worth it? Rob says Twitter is simple to use and provides valuable information. He follows weather and grain stocks information. He gets market insight from traders and fol-

lows stock information via foreign farmers. Twitter makes it easy to deal with people around the world. Rob has visited with farmers in Australia, South Africa, South America and the United States.

Does anyone use Twitter now? If so, it would be great to hear from you. It sounds interesting!

On another topic, a recent newspaper article with the title, “Is it possible to have too much happiness?” caught my eye. The article says that a new study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* suggests that those lucky few who enjoy high levels of well-being can reach a point of diminishing returns. In other words, people with the most positive attitudes toward their lives tend to enjoy the little things that happen on a daily basis less than those who have lower overall expectations of life. While I find this hard to believe, I guess it is some food for thought.

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vessel is one of the more expensive ways to move cargo. This proposal would take money away from food and put it into getting that food to the poor. An earlier proposal was to use less American-grown products and more “buy local” products for food aid.

Eli Lilly and Company (NYSE:LILY) announced an agreement to acquire Novartis Animal Health for approximately \$5.4 billion in an all-cash transaction. Upon completion of the acquisition, Lilly’s animal health business, Elanco, will be the second-largest animal health company in terms of global revenue.

Here are some additional foreign-owned companies: Chinese companies own AMC Theaters, Motorola mobility, Sheraton Universal Hotel, One Chase Manhattan Plaza, and Hoover; French companies own BF Goodrich and RCA; Swiss corporations own Carnation and Gerber; Japan owns Columbia Pictures and Firestone.

The deadly Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus (PEDv) continues to cause devastating losses in the pork industry. PEDv has killed millions of baby pigs since it was first detected in Colorado in May of 2013. It has since spread to at least thirty states.

It is unclear how PEDv entered the U.S. The disease was previously found in Europe and Asia so it had to be imported. The disease is carried through the air, and can be carried on shoes, tires and even through feed. So far, no prevention method or cure has been found for the disease.

The USDA has issued a proposed rule to allow the importation of fresh and chilled beef from fourteen states in Brazil, a country that has been plagued with the most contagious disease known to cattle—foot and mouth disease (FMD). WIFE has been actively opposing this move which opens the door for FMD to enter the U.S.



By Marlene Kouba
North Dakota

Homeland Security Report

DHS approves bill to end Saturday mail delivery

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has approved a bill that would end Saturday mail delivery and make permanent the temporary hike in the cost of a postage stamp at 49 cents. It would also restructure a congressional requirement that forces the agency to make a \$5.6 billion annual payment for future retiree health benefits.

New Homeland Security Secretary, Jeh Johnson, is reviewing the department's policies about when border agents can use their guns. Customs and Border Protection (CPB), which oversees the Border Patrol, has been criticized for allowing border agents to use deadly force against people throwing rocks at them. Border Patrol Chief Michael Fisher said last year that a report recommended a ban on deadly force against rock throwers and assailants in vehicles.

Now, agents can use deadly force if they have a reasonable belief that their lives or the lives of others are in danger.

The Border Patrol has long maintained that rocks are lethal weapons. Agents were attacked with rocks 339 times in the 2011 budget year. Rock-throwing incidents were the most common assault reported. Agents responded with gunfire 33 times and with less-than-lethal force 118 times.

The latest incident happened on February 18, when an agent fatally shot Jesus Flores Cruz, 41, who allegedly struck the agent in the head with a rock near San Diego. The Border Patrol said Agent Daniel Basinger feared for his life.

The U.S. government is taking no

action in which two Mexican soldiers came across the border near Sasabe, Arizona, and held U.S. Border Patrol agents at gunpoint. After the 35-minute confrontation on January 26, the Mexican soldiers retreated south across the border as if nothing happened and the government just let it slide.

According to a Border Patrol report, the Mexican soldiers retreated when the U.S. agents drew their weapons and summoned assistance. The Mexicans were claiming to be pursuing drug smugglers but were protecting cartels as they transported their cargo into the U.S. through the desert.

Records from the DHS show Mexican military invasions occur often and go unpunished by the U.S. The problem has only gotten worse over the years. DHS documents reveal 226 invasions by Mexican government personnel into the U.S. occurred between 1996 and 2005. In 2007 alone, there were 25 invasions. The fact that guns were drawn makes the January incident one of the most serious in recent years.

Declassified Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) documents confirm the existence of an Islamic Jihadist enclave in Texas that is part of a network in the U.S. identified by the Department of Homeland Security as a terrorist organization.

The enclave belongs to the network of Muslims of the Americas, which is linked to the Pakistani-based militant group Jamaat al-Fuqra. The group was founded in New York in 1980 by Sheik Mubarak Ali Gilani, an Islamic cleric in Pakistan who at one time was in Pakistani custody in connection with the abduction of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

Muslims of the Americas (MOA)

says it has a network of 22 "villages" around the U.S., with headquarters at an encampment in the Catskill Mountains near Hancock, N.Y., called Holy Islamberg. At the time, neighbors of Islamberg were deeply concerned about military-style training taking place there and frustrated by an apparent lack of attention from federal authorities.

The FBI describes the compound in Texas, called Mahmoudberg, as an "enclave" and "communal living site." Located near Sweeny, Texas, the commune is estimated to be about 25 acres and dates back to the late 1980s.

Muslims of the Americas is identified as a terrorist group in the FBI documents. The document also says Muslims of the Americas is now "an autonomous organization which possesses an infrastructure capable of planning and mounting terrorist campaigns overseas and within the U.S." MOA members believe the holiest Islamic site in the country is their Islamville commune in South Carolina. Along with Islamberg, other MOA entities include the International Quranic Open University, United Muslim Christian Forum, Islamic Post, Muslim Veterans of America and American Muslim Medical Relief Team.

In 2005, the Department of Homeland Security privately agreed to list Jamaat al-Fuqra and Muslims of the Americas as a possible sponsor of a terrorist attack on the U.S. The State Department has not designated it as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and it continues to organize in the U.S. In 1998, the State Department's Patterns of Global Terrorism report described Jamaat al-Fuqra as an "Islamic sect that seeks to purify Islam through violence."

WIFE Updates

Best Western Airport Inn to host 2014 National WIFE Convention in Phoenix

The 2014 National WIFE Convention will be held November 12 - 15, 2014 in Phoenix, Arizona at the Best Western Airport Inn. Travel days for the convention are Tuesday, November 11th & Sunday, November 16th. Take note of the following information so you can book your room today:

Best Western Airport Inn
2425 South 24th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Local phone number: (602) 273-7251
Toll-free phone number: 1-800-528-8199

When you call to get your reservation, mention "WIFE" to get the discounted rate of \$84.20 (tax included) for a single bed room or double standard room that includes two double beds. The hotel offers free parking, free wireless internet and complimentary airport shuttle services. Thank you to WIFE members Pat Torgerson and Fran Kreutz for your hard work in finding a host hotel in Phoenix! If you have any questions, email Kerry Froese at kerryjewell_33@hotmail.com.

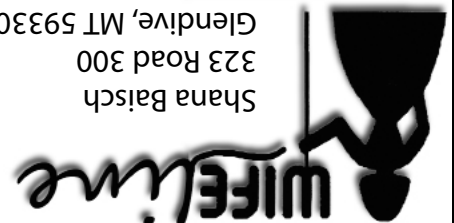


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Mariah Shammel, Editor
2091 Salt Creek Road
Hilger, MT 59451
(406) 462-5639
paisleyprairies@gmail.com

Change Service Requested

Shana Baitsch
323 Road 300
Glendive, MT 59330



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