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Scholarship awarded to Nebraska student

Larissa Wach, daughter of Loran and Nancy Wach of Hayes Center, Nebraska, was awarded a \$500 Marilyn Spiker Memorial Scholarship to the college of her choice. The scholarship was given by the Foundation for Agricultural Education and Development (FAED), which is the education arm of Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE). Only three scholarships were offered nationwide.

Wach will use her scholarship at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln at the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. She will major in Agribusiness and minor in Entrepreneurship. After college graduate Wach hopes to return to a rural area similar to the place of her youth.

WIFE is a grassroots dedicated to promoting prosperity in agriculture. Wach already has demonstrated her ability to speak up for agriculture through her activities in FFA. She looks forward to joining the agriculture community and

promoting agriculture through organizations like WIFE. She has observed her grandmother, Jean Wach of Hayes Center, in her WIFE activities and is eager to speak up for agriculture herself.

Wach said, "I am very honored to be a recipient of the Marilyn Spiker Memo-

rial Scholarship. Upon college graduation I hope to return to a rural area like the one I was raised in and be an advocate for agriculture the rest of my life. I appreciate all the National WIFE Organization has done to promote agriculture for my generation and generations to come."

Alabama WIFE educates kids

By Mary Ann Sheppard

Alabama WIFE visited Farm Links at Pursell farms in Sylacauga, Alabama. This farm consists of cattle, hay, crops, fishing, and a renown golf course. Pursell also has cottages, cabins and a wonderful place to eat good home cooking food.

This all started when the Pursells bought his father-in-law's fertilizer company. He created the Sta-Green brand fertilizer that was introduced for area garden centers, golf courses and ornamental slow release nitrogen as a component.

Instead of putting salesmen on the road to introduce their product, they brought potential customers to their farm to see how this product worked.

On April 27, the Big Hungry chapter of Alabama WIFE joined several agencies to help present "Being the Best Me I Can Be." We opted to help present a program at Macon East Academy on Environmental Health Fair in lieu of Ag Day this year.

WIFE chose George Washington Carver as an American example of integrity and intelligence. Jackie Sistrunk taught students about Carver's character



and his influence on the Alabama farmer to diversify. Betty Gottler, Edna Cope, and Marge Verney taught students to make clear latex glove greenhouses by placing seeds in the fingers of each glove and covering them with dampened cotton balls. Mary Ann Sheppard, Janette Torbert, Jo Gibbons, and Dot Gowan stuffed goody bags with games, puzzles, information sheets, and candy. Jeanette Torbert was acting photographer.



Proud Grandma Jean Wach presents the Marilyn Spiker Memorial Scholarship to granddaughter Larissa Wach during Hayes Center graduation ceremonies.



**By Deb Dressler
North Dakota**

President's Report

House leadership needs Farm Bill input

sure of giving, not by our measure of wealth; by our simple goodness, not by our seeming greatness. Therefore find the courage to be yourself in the faced of adversity. Choosing right over wrong, ethics over convenience and truth over popularity... these are choices that measure your Life. Travel

the path of integrity without looking back, for there is never a wrong time to do the right thing.

Remember our military and their families as they struggle to preserve our American freedoms. Go tell your story and don't look back. Happy trails until next month.

I send special summer greetings to all WIFE members wherever you are in your harvest progress. The dry hot days with machine operations leave a concern of fire to all. One neighbor has had four fires in the last year from operating machinery in dry, dusty conditions. May you all have a safe harvest.

The Farm Bill is still in the House of Representatives. I urge all of you to contact the leadership in the House and your respective legislators. The House Ag Committee needs help spurring on the House members to act on the Farm Bill before September 30, 2012.

I want to thank all the WIFE ladies who have so graciously committed to run for offices and commodity and topic chairs for the upcoming year. Our WIFE grassroots organization is as strong as its members. All candidates are asked to send short biography to WIFeline by August 25 for the September issue.

National Convention plans are shaping up with the emphasis on energy. Energy is a buzz word in the Dakotas. If anyone has suggestions or requests please contact Diane McDonald or Darcy Dressler.

I will leave you this month with the following:

In the end, each of us will be judged by our standard of Life, not by our standard of living; by our mea-



**By Dianna Reed
Kansas**

Dairy Report

Farm Bill path unclear

well already. They expect few changes, and continued the 60 percent allocation for livestock in the Senate draft. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) adds more flexibility for livestock producers during disaster times. It will also allow beginning farmers to graze land with no rental reduction.

3. In Title VII (the research title), the Senate markup looks to create a nonprofit 501C3 organization to raise money for food and agricultural research. At formation, the foundation becomes private with no government ownership.

Hazlett noted that there is no livestock title in the Senate's markup, and they don't anticipate it being added to the bill.

Hazlett's advice was that there is a need to watch for animal welfare issues from the greater House floor, coming on the heels of the Humane Society of the United States and United Egg Producers partnership. Amendments on antibiotics and check-offs may also be in play.

Although there is evidently no clear path for the Farm Bill, D.C. is unpredictable, according to Pete Thompson of the House Agriculture Committee.

Anne Hazlett, Senate Agriculture Committee stated in a recent article, "It's going to happen," referring to the Farm Bill. She explained that although agriculture laws can be found in many places, we need a new over-arching farm bill every five to seven years.

The Senate Agriculture Committee marked up their version of the draft in late April. Hazlett admitted there were reductions in funding. The Senate's markup reduced spending by \$23 billion over the course of the Farm Bill. The questions surround what the cuts will amount to and where they will come from. Additional changes to look for include:

1. Title I creates a new margin insurance program (the Dairy Security Act) for dairy, and puts money into a livestock disaster program.

2. Title II (the conservation title) was worked to streamline many programs. Many producers have commented that the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is working

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Article IX Officers

Change

Section 2: Officers shall be elected by members attending the Annual Convention

To serve for one (1) year or until their successors are elected. Candidates, including nominations from the floor, shall have the endorsement of their Chapter and Association.

Article X Area Directors

Change

Section 3: Area Directors shall be elected by the members attending the Annual Convention to serve for one (1) year or until their successors are elected. Candidates, including nominations from the floor, shall have the endorsement of their Chapter and Association.

Article XII Commodity/Topic Chairman

Change

B. Candidates, including nominations from the floor, shall have an endorsement from their Chapter and Association.

Currently the Policy and Procedure Manual prohibits any write-in candidates as of March 4th, 2012

Article XIX Amendment of Bylaws

Add: Section 5. Amendments to the bylaws shall go into effect January 1, following The Annual National Meeting at which they are adopted.

Reason for addition: To indicate when bylaw change takes effect.

Article XII COMMODITY/TOPIC CHAIRMAN

A. Change to read: In the event that a chairman is not elected, the President may appoint the position, conforming to the maximum of three (3) consecutive one (1) year terms provision.

Reason for the change: There is some confusion as to whether or not appointed Chairs must abide by the three one-year terms.

Submitted by: Bobbie Massey on Bylaws Committee and member of New Mexico WIFE.

Article XVI Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. To strike Legislative from the list of Standing Committees

Submitted by Nebraska WIFE

Article XVII: Parliamentary Authority

Addition:

1. A parliamentarian shall be selected from the host state of the annual Convention.

Submitted by: North Dakota WIFE

POLICY and PROCEDURE

Elected officials: Duties of Officers

Secretary: Change

The Secretary shall: B. Record and distribute the minutes of all meetings within 3 months of the meeting.

Duties of WIFELine Editor:

Proposed to delete:

1. D. Keep a record of the subscriptions that are sent to Congressional members.
2. E. Keep an updated gift subscription list.

Duties of Circulation Manager:

Proposed to delete:

Sentence # 2: delete the last sentence –Number of copies sent to each corporation depends upon the level of support.

Sentence # 3: Keep an accurate list of Corporate sponsors receiving the eWIFELine and supply to national president for distribution for eWIFELine. National Finance Chairman should notify WIFELine Circulation immediately when a change of address of contact person occurs. (No longer an eWIFELine)

Sentence # 4: Respond to inquiries concerning problems of individuals not receiving the WIFELine or those who are receiving too many.

Finance and Budget:

Sentence #6: Change:

6. Expenses for standing committee chairman, who are not officers, shall be equal to those of elected chairman.

Submitted by North Dakota

Election Procedure:

Add

Sentence #6. There will not be any write-in candidates for any office or commodity/topic chairman. Passed at Board of Directors meeting in Washington D.C. 3-4-2012

WIFE 2012 Area Directors

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Sheep and Goats Report



By Gwen Cassel
New York

Well, things are changing fast in the sheep/goat world. With the widespread drought-type conditions in the Midwest, and many areas in the Northeast, young lambs and kids and even adult sheep are being offered for sale earlier in the season than might occur most years.

Grass that is not growing, and/or grasses and grains that have little to no nutrition in them due to the lack of fluid flowing through the plants from root to blade or seed, has caused growth to slow down, has contributed to generally poorer condition of mothers, and what appears at this time to be a much earlier and higher worm load than is normally the case in some areas.

As I have stated before, I am located right in the "snow belt" of upstate New York! This area, east of Lake Ontario, northeast of Lake Erie, and north, northeast of the Finger Lakes (and the "wine country" of that rich soil area); we are used to snow by the feet most winters, and "lake effect rain" in the spring, summer and fall. Last winter we had little to no snow, although there were larger storms that affected other areas round us—one left three foot of snow just seven miles north of where I'm located, but at my farm we had only three inches! Having had lots of rain in the fall, the ground although not frozen solid, did heave and "cut roots" of some plants, which normally does not occur.

We had rain and excellent early growth of grasses this year. Our spring

Dry conditions increase weed growth

started almost a month before usual! But as soon as spring arrived, the rains diminished and our fields are continuing to grow on mostly random dew in mornings and evenings. This has led to bumper crops of opportunist weed plant growth: "redtop," milkweed (edible type), Canadian Bullthistle (the bane of buying "cheap hay from elsewhere in the past"), and Carolina Horsenettle, which is from the "nightshade" family, but again, edible for sheep and to goats as long as they don't eat the fruit ("little tomatoes") in the fall! General nutrition in the grasses is low, and the need for good supplement of water is an absolute this year.

With Ramadan already started, the early ethnic lamb buyers have already gotten their winter lambs grown out to about 60 to 80 pounds. The lambs wanted at the end of Ramadan about 28 days later should be that same 60 to 80 pounds. However, there is some question this year whether the crop of lambs available now will be grown to the desired weight and meatiness on this year's available forage. Supplementing with corn or another grain is difficult this year, too, because of lack of availability and cost due to the more widespread drought conditions in the Midwest of our United States of America!

Again, lamb, kids and adult sheep and goats are in demand throughout the year now, especially here, east of the Mississippi. But this year meeting the demand at the desired times of the year is going to be difficult. For those of us who depend on grass feeding ewes with lambs and even to finish lambs on grass during our usually rain rich fall, it has meant a hot summer of moving lots and lots of fence, more and more often, while moving water sources and

necessary free-choice sheep minerals mixed with salt to keep flocks healthy. Sometimes we have to move a tube or two of molasses in extreme situations!

WIFE Supporting Members

VIP Membership

- AT&T
- Bayer CropScience

Executive Membership

- American Petroleum Institute
- DuPont
- Farm Credit of New Mexico
- Monsanto
- Renewable Fuels Association
- Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association

Associate Membership

- American Bankers Association
- American Council of Life Insurers
- CHS, Inc.
- CropLife America
- Dow AgroSciences
- Florida, Texas, and Hawaii Sugarcane Growers
- U.S. Beet Sugar Association

Contributor

Membership

- American Sugarbeet Grower's Association
- CHS Cooperative
- Columbus Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- North Bridge Communications

In-Kind Contributors

- Eastern Arizona Ag Center
- Miller/Coors
- Rauner & Associates



By Marlene Kouba
North Dakota

Energy Report

Report shows emissions are decreasing

The U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) June report says that energy-related carbon dioxide fell to 5,473 million metric tons (MMT) in 2011, down from a high of 6,020 MMT in 2007, and only a little above 1995's level of 5,314 MMT. Better yet, emissions in the first quarter of 2012 fell at an even faster rate — down 7.5 percent from the same time in 2011 and 8.5 percent in the same time in 2010. If the rest of 2012 follows its first-quarter trend, we may see total energy-related carbon dioxide emissions drop to early-1990s levels. The most likely explanation for the decline is the shale gas revolution, made possible by hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. Increasingly, power plants are turning to natural gas because it has become abundant and cheap. Though technology is improving our ability to reduce emissions from coal usage, natural gas is still a much cleaner source. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit recently rejected arguments by several states and industry groups that the EPA was overstepping its authority and using strong-arm tactics to regulate greenhouse gasses.

After 2015, most of the increase in the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) was intended to come from cellulosic biofuels and by 2022 the mandate would be 16 billion gallons. The 2008 farm bill authorized grants and loans exceeding \$1 billion and contained a production tax credit of up to \$1.01 per gallon for fuels produced from cellulosic feedstocks. Under the RFS mandate refiners are charged \$1.13 per gallon for failing to use a biofuel that doesn't exist and the money goes to the government. The EPA recently cut its target of producing 500 million gallons of cellulosic ethanol by 2012 to a mere 8.62

million gallons this year. However--there are NO large-scale commercial cellulosic biofuel plants in operation in the United States. A few small-scale plants came online in 2010. The original Farm Bill energy spending estimate from the Congressional Budget Office for Fiscal Years 2008-12 was \$647 million. The actual spending for energy programs alone during this period is projected to total \$1.9 billion or \$1.3 billion over budget.

USDA Rural Development now moves closer to a goal to fund more than \$250 million for Smart Grid technologies. The plan includes support for nearly \$20 million in Smart Grid technologies. The \$334 million in loans are provided by USDA Rural Development's Rural Utilities Service (RUS). The funding helps electric utilities upgrade, expand, maintain and replace rural America's electric infrastructure.

The president strongly opposes H.R. 6082 that would require vastly wider offshore oil-and-gas leasing. The drilling bill is likely to clear the House but faces almost no chance in the Senate. On July 23 the White House warned that if it somehow reached President Obama's desk, his senior advisers would recommend a veto.

The EPA has proposed new national air quality standards that would significantly reduce levels of fine-particle soot to 12 to 13 micrograms per cubic foot of air, down from 15, calculated on an annual basis. Opponents call it burdensome and potentially damaging to the economy. The agency is required to issue a final rule by mid-December after holding hearings to seek public comment. Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA is required to consider revising its soot standards every five years and it last did so in 2006. Eleven states, the American Lung Association and the National Parks Conservation Association challenged the delay, arguing that it violated the Clean Air Act.

When he came into office, President Obama promised to bankrupt the coal industry. Through a recent EPA ruling he

has followed up on that promise. The ruling requires coal-fired plants to release no more than 1,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per megawatt hour. Environmentalists are praising the new rule as a vital defense against climate change--despite the fact that the earth hasn't warmed in the last 15 years. Not only will coal-fired power plants shut down under the EPA's new rule, the loss of supply will drive energy prices up as much as 30 percent as the president said they would. Coal industry representatives believe they've made great strides in reducing emissions through the years -- now capturing over 99 percent of particulate emissions released during the combustion process. They say EPA's proposed rule sets the bar too high and may force the closure of 20 to 25 percent of coal-fired plants across the United States since it would be too expensive to update.

After inauguration, the Obama Administration began rewriting a recently completed coal regulation, the 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule. This unnecessary action, carried out through the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) at the Department of the Interior, proposed to dramatically alter a regulation that took over five years of environmental analysis and careful scientific consideration to complete. Despite the fact that a thorough Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was conducted for the 2008 Rule, OSM hired another contractor to write an entirely new EIS for the Obama Administration's efforts to rewrite the Rule. This draft EIS could cost over 7,000 mining jobs and cause economic harm in 22 states. Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH) has sponsored legislation which can help. It's HR. 3409 – The Coal Miner Employment and Domestic Energy Infrastructure Protection Act and it has 18 co-signers. Contact your representatives to support it.

A study by the Heritage Foundation found that 19 of the companies that

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Water, Private Property, Natural Resources, and Endangered Species

Report



By Alice Parker
Washington

Environmental group uses litigation

tax receipts. Legal and policy interventions often generate costs for the affected county. In order to cover those costs the county must generate new revenues, usually through increased taxes.”

The WEG has challenged the drilling industry and has resulted in the EPA proposing new and strong nationwide air quality rules for oil and gas development. This is just more regulation to prevent the U. S. from becoming energy independent.

Other interests of WEG include coal mining, grazing permits, and more listing of species on the Endangered Species list. The argument being used regarding grazing permits is that public lands’ grazing has negative effects on native species, water use, large carnivores, fire ecology and aquatic ecosystems.

As usual, these environmental groups never consider the costs to local legal systems and what the overall costs are with additional regulations. Economics are not considered in their actions.

Instead, the primary interest is based on emotional, ecological and cultural goals.

The above information was taken from the Western Legacy Alliance. For more information about the Western Legacy Alliance, visit www.westernlegacyalliance.org.

The WildEarth Guardians is another environmental group with the mission “to confront the threat facing the beauty and diversity of the American West.” Although their mission sounds innocent, they are using strategies such as litigation, science, media and lobbying with the primary strategy of filing lawsuits. “Litigating for the Wild” is to uphold “THEIR” interpretation of environmental laws.

The Western Legacy Alliance reports in their Executive Summary that they find evidence that “interventions by WildEarth Guardians often, on average, are associated with lower median household income, but higher county

Energy emissions are down

Continued from Page 7

received loans or grants by the Obama administration have filed for bankruptcy or are in the process of doing so. These include Evergreen Solar, SpectraWatt, Solyndra, Beacon Power, which got \$43 million; AES’ subsidiary Eastern Energy, Nevada Geothermal, which received \$98.5 million; SunPower, which got \$1.5 billion from the government; First Solar, which received \$1.46 billion from the federal government; Babcock & Brown, an Australian company which received \$178 million from the administration; Ener1, a subsidiary EnerDel that received \$118.5 million; Amonix, which received \$5.9 million; The National Renewable Energy Lab; Fisker Automotive; Abound Solar, which received \$400 million; Solar Trust of America; A123 Systems, which received \$279 million;

Willard & Kelsey Solar Group, which received \$6 million; Johnson Controls, which received \$299 million; and Schneider Electric, which received \$86 million.

Delta Air Lines is buying a refinery near Philadelphia from Phillips 66. Fuel has become the largest and most expense for most airlines. Including Delta, U.S. airlines paid an average of \$2.86 a gallon for jet fuel in 2011 up from \$2.09 in 2007. Delta used 3.9 billion gallons of fuel last year costing them \$11.8 billion or 36 percent of its operating expenses while fares brought them \$33.1 billion. Saving \$300 million annually would lower a \$400 ticket by \$3.60. Buying the refinery will help manage expenses as it would process 185,000 barrels per day of crude oil and make 52,000 barrels per day of jet fuel. They will trade the gas, diesel and other products for another 120,000 barrels per day of jet fuel.

WIFE 2012 Standing Committees

Budget/Finance Resource Development

Sheila Massey
Shana Baisch
Committee
Deb Dressler
Ruth Laribee
Melinda Sorem

Bylaw/Procedure Manual Co-chair

Jenifer Felzien
Bobbi Massey
Mary Ann Murray
Sheila Massey

WIFeline

Erin Slivka

Legislative Membership

Tammy Basel
Mary Ann Sheppard
Darcy Dressler
Shana Baisch

Resolution/Directory/Policy Book

Mary Ann Murray
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By Pam Potthoff
Nebraska

Trade Report

U.S. manufacturing needs support

Our greatest United States athletes participated in the Olympic opening ceremonies in outfits made in China. Isn't there something wrong about that? Most Americans would have preferred to see them in cowboy hats, tee shirts and flip flops if those items had been made in the United States. We are all proud of our country's athletes. Why aren't we equally proud of our country's manufacturers, farmers, service providers, doctors, lawyers and all the other workers here? The U.S. Olympic committee promises it won't happen again. What were they thinking that it happened even once?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. employment in the apparel manufacturing industry has declined by more than 80 percent from about 900,000 to 150,000 jobs over the past two decades. U. S. Senator Sherrod Brown is pushing legislation to return off-shored jobs back to America. Brown's proposed Bring Jobs Home Act would cut tax breaks for companies that offshore and offer breaks to those bringing work back to the U.S.

Brown said he wants a "Buy America" plan to ensure the federal government purchases apparel that's 100 percent U.S. made. Current statutes require that only 51 percent of products purchased with taxpayer dollars be made here. For the next Olympics, let's make sure the athletes are dressed in U.S. apparel. Maybe we could even hire a more patriotic designer.

Despite U.S. loss of market share and manufacturing employment being down a third from 10 years ago, the U.S. manufacturing sector ranks number two in the world, slightly behind China. However,

we continue to move in the wrong direction. China produced 19.8 percent of the world's total manufacturing output in 2010, slightly more than the 19.4 percent that originated in the USA.

Maybe that will change as more emphasis is placed on Buy American policies and if legislation is passed to encourage jobs coming back to the U.S.

In July the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative announced a Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) Tribunal had reached a stalemate in the latest arbitration concerning British Columbian publicly-owned timber harvested in its interior being provided to Canadian softwood lumber producers for prices far below market value. The U.S. has prevailed in two cases under the SLA and will continue to monitor the situation closely to achieve fair pricing of lumber.

According to Russia's Ministry of Economic Development, Russia expects to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) on August 23. The Senate is expected to vote on granting Russian Permanent Normal Trade Relation very soon.

In June the World Trade Organization Appellate Body upheld a November 2011 Dispute Settlement Panel ruling that U.S. Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling discriminates against imported livestock and is inconsistent with U.S. trade obligations. The U.S. now has 15 months to bring the law into compliance or face the prospects of retaliatory tariffs. Perhaps compliance can be included in the pending Farm Bill.

Speaking of the Farm Bill, Brazil has threatened further trade retaliation of the U.S. Farm Bill does not end cotton subsidies. The WTO has already ruled U.S. cotton subsidies are trade distorting.

The WTO will investigate and decide if India's restrictions on U.S. poultry meat and eggs break global commerce rules. India says its ban on imports of various U.S. farm products is needed to

prevent the spread of low-pathogenic avian influenza. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative accuses India of ignoring scientific evidence.

In a decision that will rock global agriculture supply markets for years, the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago ruled June 27 that a civil suit alleging price fixing in American potash markets by a handful of global fertilizer suppliers can precede and to be heard in the Seventh Circuit. The nine-judge appeals panel made it clear the court wants to know if seven global suppliers of potash, called "the cartel", "initiated and sustained a successful effort to drive [potash] prices up beginning mid-2003; by 2008 potash prices had increased at least 600 percent."

The new Interagency Trade Enforcement Center (ITEC) is up and running and looking into trade problems in a half a dozen countries. The purpose of the new agency is to coordinate trade policies among various federal agencies and to encourage greater participation from citizens. Let's hope the results are positive.

Here are some American products no longer made at home: Huffy bicycles, Barbie, Ken, G.I. Joe, My Little Pony, Fisher-Price toys, Converse shoes, Gap, Levi's, Rawlings baseballs, Black and Decker appliances and tools, Radio Flyer, vending machines, sardines, cell phones, spoons and forks, Boeing products, laptops and iPads, Nike, Samsonite, Hershey's and Brach's candy, Craftsman and Stanley tools. It is time to look for alternatives to these brands.

What can each of us do to promote manufacturing in the U.S.? We can always look for the Made in the USA label. If we don't find it, we can ask stores and outlets for USA-made items. We can write our Congressmen urging support for government priority purchases of American-made supplies and legislation making off-shoring less attractive. Buy American!

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



By Donna Bolz
Nebraska

This month's article has information on several topics. Keep reading as there is something for everyone.

It is said that knowledge is power. For those looking for a place to find information on a variety of subjects important to Agriculture, check with the Farm Aid's Farmer Resource Network at Farmaid.org. A wide variety of subjects are covered.

One of the biggest USDA Rural Home Loan myths is that if the home has a swimming pool then it is not eligible for USDA mortgage financing. The USDA states on their own website that homes with swimming pools are not eligible but this is not a 100 percent absolute. USDA will grant exceptions. Many mortgage lenders have guideline overlays that will not allow for the exception request, but the USDA Rural Home Loan program is NOT one of them.

The exception process is a waiver and the local USDA Rural Development office closest to where you are purchasing the home must approve the waiver request. Once the paperwork has been completed the initial underwriting review will be sent to the Rural Development office for review. USDA Rural Loans require homes to be considered "modest in size, design, and cost". Just because the home has a pool doesn't mean it's a luxury home. There are some minor caveats though.

The value of the pool can NOT be considered in the appraisal. Typically, the appraiser will include two values on the RD appraisal, one with the pool and one without. For mortgage purposes,

Feeding America partners with Buffett

the property value will be considered WITHOUT the pool. If the value of the home without the pool supports your loan amount, then it is business as usual.

Don't let your lender convince you that switching to FHA is the only way to get the home you want just because there's an in-ground swimming pool. USDA Rural loans are still an option. Check with your local USDA Rural Home Office to visit with people who are Rural Home Loan experts and know all the intricacies of USDA mortgage financing.

Senator Jon Tester from Montana is taking his fight for rural broadband internet access straight to the President. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently developed a nationwide plan to reform the way resources are allocated and invested in broadband internet infrastructure. The plan could hurt Montana's small businesses by discouraging broadband investment in rural America. Tester told the President that the FCC should "rethink" its plan, saying that encouraging broadband internet investment in rural communities is proven to create jobs.

Tester wants the FCC to rework its plan in order to remove the uncertainty facing rural telecommunication companies. He noted that a recent study found that rural telecom companies support over 54 percent of jobs in rural areas. In Montana, rural telecommunication companies provide more than 1,000 jobs and help small businesses connect with

their customers. The National Broadband Plan released by the FCC would phase out parts of the Universal Service Fund, which has a long history of successful investments in rural telephone systems. The plan would also cut the amount of resources available to providers to invest in rural communications.

Billionaire Warren Buffett is well known for his charity work and so is his son Howard. Howard Buffett recently announced a new partnership to feed the needy with the food processing giant Archer Daniels Midland and Feeding America, a national hunger charity. Howard Buffett owns a 3,000-acre farm in Decatur, Illinois. Atop his tractor, he can see America's "bounty." But not far from here, he sees folks with almost nothing. He believes that he and his fellow farmers should pay attention to the need around them at home.

The "Invest an Acre" program that Buffett announced recently will allow the 80,000 farmers who use processing plants run by Archer Daniels Midland to donate the profits from at least an acre of their land. The profits from this acre of corn might be only around \$100 or \$200, but \$100 is enough to help provide 800 food bank meals. So multiply that acre after acre after acre -- and that could make a real difference in these communities. The money will go to thousands of Feeding America food pantries primarily in the Midwest. Buffett's foundation will cover up to \$3 million in administrative costs.



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Sugar Report



By Klodette Stroh
Wyoming

Farm Bill has a rich history

On July 4, 2012, this blessed country celebrated another Independence year. As we grow to take good things for granted, we may forget the bravery, hard work and self-sacrifice it took to build this land of liberty. As oral and written history reveals, in 17th century as people were moving to the United States, they brought with them livestock, and they learned from the Natives how to grow maize, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, beans, maple sugar, cotton, and tobacco. They gave their heart and soul to God to help them build this beloved nation.

In 1776 Continental Congress offered land grants to people who wanted to serve in the Continental Army. As a result of the land grants, young Americans started growing and producing crops from their lands to feed themselves and prosper. In the 1800s, farmers located in the northern areas produced a variety of crops and raised livestock. In the South, plantations operators mainly were producing crops to export. The exports began building wealth for this young nation. Soon tobacco became the chief cash crop and the most important export of the South.

The Declaration of Independence resulted in parting away from British control on farm exports, British restrictions on land titles, and the limitations on western settlement. The value of tobacco exports reached \$4.36 million by 1790.

George Washington, one of the founding fathers of our great nation, was a farmer and had his own plantation. He was a genius in developing ways to improve crop production. My husband Rick and I had the opportunity to visit George Washington's plantation at Mount Vernon a few years ago. His crop

rotation display and harvesting methods were decades ahead of his time, so much so that even today's farmers are practicing his methods. George Washington realized agricultural income would build a strong country; therefore, in 1799, he asked Congress to establish a National Board of Agriculture. My favorite quote from George Washington is, "will not be doubted that with reference either to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance."

Many of the early presidents realized the important role agriculture plays in the economic well-being of a nation. For instance, President Thomas Jefferson said, "Cultivators are the most valuable citizens...they are tied to their country." And at the time of Abraham Lincoln's presidency, the value of agriculture exports and the economic benefit to America escalated to \$182 million or 75 percent of total exports. President Lincoln is famous for his Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 which outlawed slavery. Abraham Lincoln valued the agriculture sector, which is our country's renewable resource. President Lincoln transformed George Washington's National Board of Agriculture to the People's Department, and today we know it as the United States Department of Agriculture, or USDA.

The Reclamation Act was signed by Theodore Roosevelt on June 17, 1902, authorizing construction of irrigation projects in 14 western states and two territories (Arizona and New Mexico). Congress added Texas in 1906. Today, irrigation agriculture contributes over \$10 billion annually, and there are 34 million acres under irrigation system.

Mount Rushmore National Memorial is an outstanding monument of the sculptures of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, which represents the first 130 years of the history of the United States.

George Washington's Board of Agriculture, which is United State De-

partment of Agriculture (USDA), is responsible for developing and executing agriculture policies such as nation's Farm Bill for securing food for U.S. citizens by assisting farmers and ranchers. It is also engages in agriculture trade and production work to assure food safety, protect natural resources, foster rural communities and address hunger in the United States and abroad. U.S. Congress is working on 2012 Farm Bill. The Senate agriculture committee passed a bill on April 26 with a vote of 16 for and 5 against.

The opposition to the Farm Bill is coming from Southern senators who don't feel there is enough support for rice and peanut producers. According to Secretary Vilsack, a bipartisan leadership group in Congress submitted a proposal to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, also known as the Super Committee, to cut \$23 billion out of the bill over the next ten years.

The so-called super committee members should be reminded of the fact that agriculture industry is currently contributing over \$3 trillion to help reduce U.S. deficit.

As for sugar policy, the provision contained in the 2008 bill will be in the 2012 Farm Bill. Senator Lugar (R-Indiana) has pledged to lead his usual fight against the sugar policy during the floor debate.

The House Agriculture Committee bill promises more balance between commodities than the Senate committee's version. The House will be in session June 1 until August 15.

Compatriots of the Declaration of Independence were farmers and tied to their land. American farmers represent the value of our nation: hard working, risk taking, and loving the land. It goes without saying that they also possess love of family and love of our country. Farmers are in partnership with God to take care of his land and feed his people. A proper Farm Bill will assure our nation's solidarity.

WIFE Notices

Resolutions due Oct. 1

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 and Daneen Dressler: daneen.dressler@stonemill.net.

National Convention

Bismarck ND

Best Western Doublewood Inn

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

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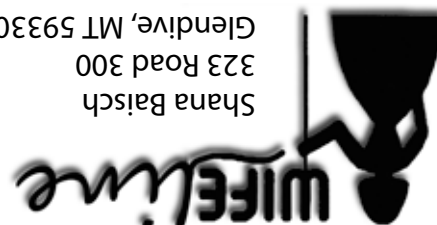
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