

Agriculture & Food Policy Center working for agriculture, backed by agriculture

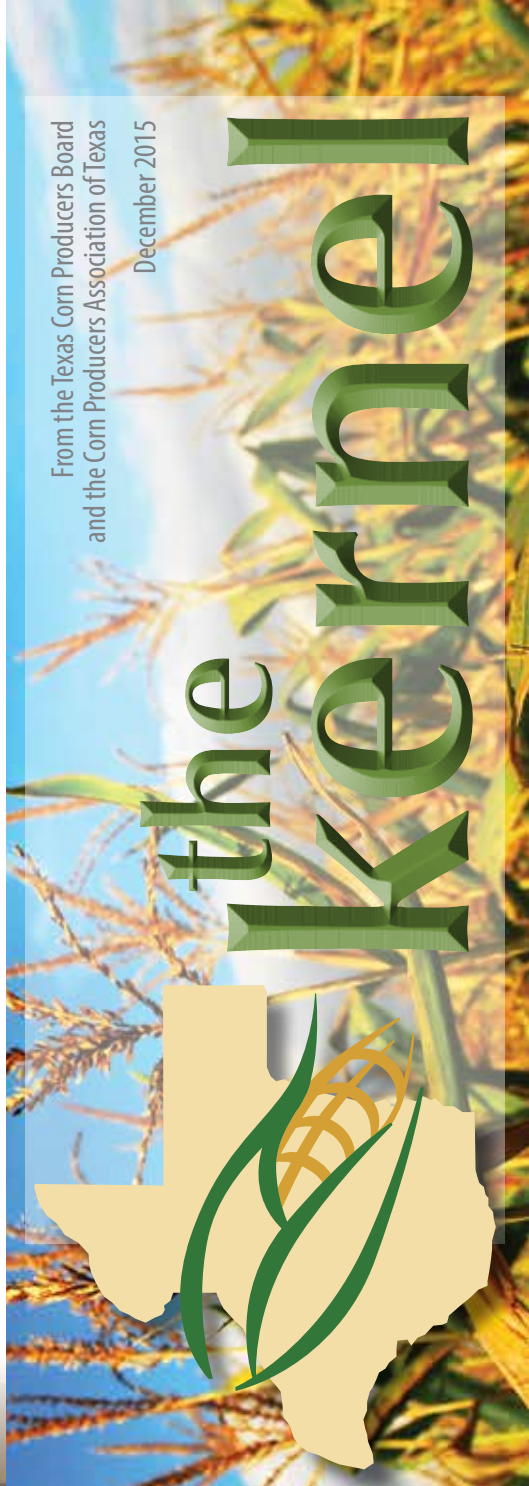
Farmers know all too well how policies and regulations made in D.C. and Austin can have a direct impact on their farms. While legislation and regulations often make headlines, what often does not is how local and national officials make these decisions. Often, experts and researchers are asked to provide economic information that proves key in the decision making process.

Fortunately, Texas is home to one of the most prominent agricultural economic resources for lawmakers in the country – the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University. This is an endeavor the Texas Corn Producers Board has seen at work in the U.S. Congress, and even the Texas Legislature. Additionally, the center has worked closely with TCPB and other commodity groups providing valuable resources on timely issues to the industry.

As a part of the Department of Agricultural Economics, AFPC conducts analyses of the impacts of government policy proposals, implementation procedures on farmers, agribusinesses, taxpayers and consumers. It also conducts research and/or education programs for government agencies, farm and agribusiness organizations, and agricultural leadership throughout Texas, the nation, and the world.

AFPC is funded in a variety of means, but historically has pulled significant federal and state funding to provide its service. With a vision for the center's continued success, Parr Rosson, Ph.D., and head of the department of agricultural economics at Texas A&M, says they working to establish an endowment for the center.

"The main objective is to try to endow the Agricultural and Food Policy Center
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From the Texas Corn Producers Board
and the Corn Producers Association of Texas
December 2015

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CORNER Comments



David Gibson
TCPB Executive Director
CPAT Exec. Vice President

As harvest is ending and the 2015 crop is final, producers need to spend some time looking at policies and regulations that are ongoing and will affect their operation well into the future.

The EPA has proposed pesticide applicator rules that will affect every farmer in Texas and across the country, we encourage growers to look at these and submit comments about how the changes will affect your operation.

The Texas Department of Agriculture has proposed many increases in fees that impact all Texas growers.

These fees are on pesticide applicator licenses, seed certification, grain warehouse licenses and inspections, pump and scale certification, etc. Producers are well aware that any increase in cost to our suppliers or grain handlers will ultimately be passed back to the grower in lower prices for our commodity or higher input cost. Comments on these proposed fees were open earlier this year, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs will hold a hearing Dec. 8 on the matter.

Congress is busy in D.C.
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The Gen X'ers and older farmers remember when a 9 billion bushel national corn crop was considered a success. Today, thanks to improved hybrid genetics/performance, bio-technology and precision production practices, a 13-14 billion bushel national corn crop has become the new norm. Time will tell how high yields will increase. One thing is for sure: trend line yields are going to continue to increase.

Creating increased demand for this added production is a high priority for corn farmers and the organizations that represent them. Ethanol has certainly filled demand for the increased production. At a recent NASCAR event, TCPB volunteers along with the Biofuels Mobile Educa-

tion Center, a corn combine, and the #3 American Ethanol car driven by Austin Dillon interacted with thousands of race fans to promote the benefits and educate the public the truths about ethanol.

Dried Distiller's Grains with Solubles (DDGS), once considered to be a low value by-product of ethanol production, has become an important high protein livestock feed component. Demand for DDGS has not only increased domestically, but is also being exported to other countries as improving economies have increased demand for meat in their diet.

A diverse, well-supplied energy resource is essential to the economic success of any country. America is fortunate to have such a resource at our disposal.



Scott Averhoff
TCPB Chairman
Waxahachie, Texas

TCPB's mission is to increase the profitability of Texas corn farmers. Please contact us with your thoughts or concerns. 🌽

Farmers learn from professionals, each other

Farming and farm management is not just a walk in the park. There are always new strategies in which to improve upon. Trainings, field days, and webinars are great ways to learn these new strategies.

Texas Corn Producers coordinated an Advanced Training for Agricultural Professionals program that dozens of farmers and professionals attended in early September in Fort Worth, Texas. With four of the nation's most renowned agricultural economists discussing best business management practices to adopt, farmers were sure to find some take-aways and applications from the training.

"We created this training to provide a low cost opportunity for farmers to gain economic insight for their farm, and learn better techniques to strategically manage their businesses," David Gibson, TCP executive director, says.

Danny Klinefelter, Ph.D., an economist at Texas A&M

University AgriLife Extension, David Kohl, Ph.D., an agricultural finance and small business management professor at Virginia Tech University, Allan Gray, Ph.D., and Mike Boehlje, Ph.D., who are both agricultural economics professors at Purdue



Corn farmers and agricultural professionals gleaned strategic business techniques from experts and one another

University each spoke at the event. The presenters shared their expertise on best management practices, strategic planning and megatrends, strategic management, and strategic positioning.

Jim Sugarek, a corn farmer from Beeville, Texas, ex-

pressed his appreciation for the event and the topics discussed.

"David Kohl's speech on global perspective was very beneficial," Sugarek says. "Sometimes we are too focused on the local perspective; we do not realize what else is going on. It is important for us to understand what is going on around the world and how it affects our market."

Besides listening to speakers, farmers were given the opportunity to network and discuss issues going on around their farm and part of the state.

"I think as much as anything, you learn from producers that are out of your area," Sugarek says. "When you get out of your lo-

cal area, you tend to learn a lot about things that can help you as a farmer."

Make sure you do not miss out on an opportunity like this training in the future. Stay updated through the TCP website, www.TexasCorn.org.

2nd Annual leadership program a success

For the second year, 11 couples gathered at the Fort Worth Stockyards to learn more about the future of agriculture and how they could help the industry.

The Leadership, Activism, Networking, Development (LAND) program brings to-

gether up-and-coming farmer leaders with expert industry advocates and professionals to work together to better the corn industry.

The 2015 class of LAND leaders includes: Tyler and Bobbie Black of Muleshoe, Payton and Alex Thoreson of Gruver, Ben

and Alana Hayes of Lubbock, Allen and Natalie Meissner of Bartlett, Jared and Kayal Skala of Rosebud, Braiden and Brittany Cartrite of Sunray, Zane and Kristin Nicholson of Blooming Grove, Tyler Norman of Howe, Chandler and
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THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

With corn harvest wrapping up across the country, a large portion of the nation's corn farmers will spend the coming months reviewing their financials and will begin planning for the 2016 corn crop. Many of these discussions will take place across the desk from the local banker, as growers will work with lenders to develop strategies to remain profitable in an environment of depressed commodity prices. Cash flows and operating budgets will no doubt be squeezed as producers tighten their budgets and negotiate with suppliers and equipment manufacturers to weather the storm.

Both Texas Corn Producers and the National Corn Growers Association are working to help corn farmers remain profitable in addressing two key areas: increasing yields and growing the demand base for corn. This month the Texas Corn Producers Board

will have its annual meeting in Amarillo, in conjunction with the Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show. At this meeting, TCP will be voting to fund numerous research projects, which will take place across the state. These research projects will span a wide range of production areas, including hybrid selection and breeding, pest and disease management, and water/irrigation management just to name a few. These research projects will be funded by grower checkoff dollars, which amounts to \$0.01 for every bushel of corn produced in Texas.

Another major area of concern for the organization is increasing demand for corn. TCP works closely with NCGA to both protect and grow corn demand. A great example of this work was on display recently at the AAA Texas 500 NASCAR race at Texas Motor Speedway, where the organization worked closely with American Ethanol



Bruce Wetzel
CPAT President
Sherman, Texas

to promote ethanol and the Renewable Fuels Standard. The continued success of ethanol is a major driver in the success of the nation's corn farmers.

You can always log onto www.TexasCorn.org for more information on our research activities and how TCP is working to promote and advocate for the state's corn farmers.

AFPC endowment, continued

ter in the Department of Ag Economics in order to sustain its mission to work with producers and congress to look at the formulation and implementation of farm programs," Rosson says. "So the overall purpose is to get that entire process endowed so that the center can focus on that core mission."

Understanding this need, and seeing the immense value in the work done by the AFPC, TCPB was among the first to step in by presenting \$300,000 for the endowment.

"For the overall endowment we would like to try to raise about \$10 million, and what the corn board has done is hugely important," Rosson commended. "It's a major

first step. We hope that others will follow their example and support our efforts."

In addition to providing invaluable, factual information to lawmakers, AFPC is responsible providing a number of farmer resources such as the farm bill decision aid tool. Learn more about AFPC and its services at www.afpc.tamu.edu.

Leadership program, continued

Natasha Preston of Dumas, Walter and Nicole Spurlock of Stratford, and Phillip and Kristen Johnston of Sandia.

TCP created this program to train young producers to become more knowledgeable of the corn industry, and gain insight to leadership opportunities in the agricultural industry. All the while, it encourages networking and highlights the need for both farmers and their spouses to be active advocates for agriculture.

Corn farmer from Stratford, Texas, Walter Spurlock, attended the training with his wife Nicole. Walter says he appreciated the opportunity to participate in this program for a few reasons.

“It was great to network with other farmers, hear about the agricultural issues, and the unfavorable view of farmers, the minority, with the media,”



2015 LAND Class in Fort Worth

Walter says. “It is important to learn how to communicate agriculture and how to inform the American public of our actions and that what we are doing is not harmful to you.”

Spurlock also encourages young farmers to inquire about participating next year, and to get involved in the advocacy and communication of the agricultural industry.

“I think it is a great learning opportunity for young farming

and agricultural couples. To network with others and learn what today’s issues are and how to communicate to the American public on those issue and what agriculture is doing to resolve them, is an extremely valuable skill,” Walter says.

Do you know a rising leader in the corn industry? Find out how to nominate them for the LAND program at www.TexasCorn.org or by emailing info@texascorn.org.

Gibson, continued from p. 2

finalizing the budgeting process for the coming year. Proposed cuts to crop insurance are still on the table. Your congressman and senators need to hear from you that it is important that no changes should be made. The recently passed farm bill contained \$23 billion in cuts, and the proposed additional cuts of \$3 billion should be rejected and not implemented.

31 of our 36 U.S. House members signed on a letter that potentially reduces the

amount of ethanol in the fuel supply. Members need to be reminded that Texas uses ethanol to lower auto emissions, meet air quality standards in non-attainment zones, and all cars manufactured in 2001 or newer are approved to use E-15 fuel. Texas has four operating ethanol plants. The renewable fuel sector in Texas, including ethanol, biodiesel, and advanced biofuels and suppliers, contributes nearly 54,000 jobs, and \$1 billion in taxes. Reduction in

use of corn for ethanol would lower the price of corn even further at a time when the cost to grow the crop is at or above the price of corn.

We strive to keep our website updated with items as noted above that you’re your comments, letters or phone calls. I encourage growers to visit www.TexasCorn.org on a regular basis to see what is occurring in the policy and regulatory realm that may affect your farm.

“Start your engines...” fueled by American Ethanol

When many think of NASCAR they think of fast cars, flashy awards and celebrations, and of course a lot of left turns. What can't be overlooked is the intense fan base of the sport. Camping out for days before the race, NASCAR fans are renowned for their passion for token drivers and their sponsors, and of course the good time to be had with a weekend of races.

With equal enthusiasm and passion, corn farmers were off to the races with a message on the benefits of ethanol to consumers during the AAA Texas 500 race weekend Nov. 6-8 at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth.

“This was the third year for Texas Corn Producers to team up with American Ethanol in Texas,” TCP Executive Director David Gibson said.

American Ethanol has been promoting the use of ethanol in NASCAR since 2011 as part of NASCAR's launch for a Green Initiative. The partnership uses 15 percent American ethanol in each lap of every NASCAR race, and helps reduce greenhouse emissions by 59 percent.

With the help of American Ethanol and Nebraska Corn

Board, as well as volunteers from these organizations, North Dakota Corn Growers, and Missouri Corn Growers, TCP had a large display on the Midway. From the jaw-dropping machinery of the combine and corn header provided by ASCO Equipment to the Biofuels Mobile Education Center and the #3 American Ethanol Sprint Cup car, fans flocked to the site. The display gave volunteers ample opportunity to visit with fans about ethanol, dispel myths, and even provide insight on farming in the U.S. and the hard work farmers put into providing food for consumers.

“NASCAR fans have proven to be loyal to both their drivers and their sponsors,” Gibson said. “This gives us an excellent opportunity to engage
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Corn farmer volunteers from across the nation joined TCP for this important ethanol and agriculture promotion



Sprint Cup Driver Austin Dillon made an appearance at the American Ethanol Exhibit, attracting hundreds of fans

www.TexasCorn.org

Industry news, events, markets and weather in one convenient location!

ODDS *AND* ENDS



TCPB elections to be held in January

The Texas Corn Producers Board will hold elections in three of its five voting regions to elect five board members where current members' seats are expiring. The TCPB election is conducted by voting regions and will be held from Jan. 9, 2016, until Jan. 23, 2016.

There are three seats open

for election in Voting Region Two, one seat in Voting Region Three, and one seat in Voting Region 5.

Corn producers eligible to vote in the elections are persons, including the owner of a farm on which corn is produced or the owner's tenant or sharecropper, engaged in the business of producing corn or

causing corn to be produced for commercial purposes for at least one production period during the three years preceding the date of this election (Jan. 23, 2016).

Learn more about the election, ballots and more at www.TexasCorn.org.

Time to renew agricultural and timber registration numbers

Ag/timber numbers issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts must be renewed every four years, regardless of when the number was first issued. The current numbers expire Dec. 31, 2015.

To continue claiming the

exemption on qualifying purchases on or after Jan. 1, 2016, agricultural and timber producers must renew their current ag/timber number.

Persons claiming the agricultural exemption on their purchases must give their

suppliers an exemption certificate that includes the ag/timber number with a current expiration date.

Detailed information about the renewal process is at: comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/agriculture/.

NASCAR fueled by ethanol, continued

with an eager audience to discuss ethanol, as well as the agricultural industry as a whole.

Additionally, the group took the opportunity to get out in the campgrounds with these fans to discuss directly with consumers the positive aspects of ethanol, and dispel myths about the renewable fuel, the farmers who grow it, and agriculture in general.

TCP also sponsored the Loud and Proud Pre-race Show fueled by American Ethanol featuring American rocker Sammy Hagar. This provided yet another opportunity to expose the American Ethanol brand to race fans. In publicizing the

event, the brand was brought in front of Dallas-Fort Worth consumers - the largest media market in the South, and the fourth largest in the U.S.

TCP also helped publicize the event by providing complimentary concert and race tickets to a variety of radio stations across the state. Radio broadcasters were encouraged to use the tickets as a giveaway for their listeners. Included in this ticket promotion were ethanol and corn facts the broadcasters could use for trivia on air. The addition of this promotion helped spread the American Ethanol brand and information even farther than the racetrack.

The volunteers' weekend of hard work certainly paid off. Texas Corn Producers Board Chairman Scott Averhoff and Corn Producers Association of Texas President Bruce Wetzel also had the opportunity to present Jeff Gordon the American Ethanol Green Flag Restart Award before the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series AAA Texas 500.

"This activation gave us the opportunity to engage with an audience generations removed from the farm to dispel myths about ethanol, and promote its value as a homegrown, renewable, and clean fuel source," Gibson concluded. ●

Directors

Scott Averhoff, *Ellis Co.*

Jay Beckhusen, *Milam Co.*

Daniel Berglund, *Wharton Co.*

David Ford, *Hartley Co.*

Robert Gordon, *Dallam Co.*

Mark Howard, *Parmer Co.*

Larry Mason, *Dallam Co.*

Joe Reed, *Swisher Co.*

Charles Ring, *San Patricio Co.*

Wesley Spurlock, *Sherman Co.*

Max Swinburn, *Castro Co.*

Bart Thoreson, *Hansford Co.*

Wesley Valerius, *Cameron Co.*

Dee Vaughan, *Moore Co.*

Jimmy Wedel, *Bailey Co.*

Bruce Wetzel, *Grayson Co.*

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Communications Director

Kaci Bearden

Business & Finance Coord.

Hallie Bertrand

Industry Relations

Angie Martin

Industry Relations

Jessica Corder

Communications Intern

Taylor Bartek

Administrative Intern

Upcoming Events

Dec. 24-25, 2016
TCP Office Closed for
Christmas Holidays

Jan. 1, 2016
TCP Office Closed for
New Year's Day

Jan. 5, 2016
Blackland Income
Growth Conference
Waco, Texas

Jan. 19, 2016
Bell County Crops Conf.
Belton, Texas

Jan. 20, 2016
2nd Annual TAWC
Water College
Lubbock, Texas

Even more events at:
www.TexasCorn.org

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