

Start your engines!

Farmers rev up “ag”vocacy at Texas race

While many farmers were driving their combines down rows of gold, some took a brief break from those straight rural rows, to engage with fans of a slightly faster vehicle making many left turns - NASCAR.

Texas Corn Producers (TCP) once again made its way to NASCAR race weekend at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth to talk with race fans about something their crop and the sport have in common: CORN!

The weekend-long promotion included many ways for farmers and fans to connect - allowing farmers to trace the connections from their farmland to the consumers' forks. TCP's volunteers and staff visited with fans about agriculture and American Ethanol - the key component to Sunoco E15 racing fuel used by every NASCAR race car in the sport.

TCP hosted a large exhibit at the track's Midway that included an ASCO Equipment combine, Texas Farm Bureau's (TFB) harvest experience and mobile learning barn, Austin Dillon's #3 race

car, and the biofuel mobile education center. Each of these elements opened the opportunity for farmer volunteers and staff to visit with fans about the importance of agriculture and American Ethanol, as well as bust many of the myths and misinformation these consumers are bombarded with every day.

Beyond the Midway, farmers went out to the campgrounds and infield to have one on one conversations with the campers throughout the race weekend. The group gave away 2,000 American Ethanol green starter flags - making it a sea of green and opening the opportunity to talk about the renewable fuel, its American roots, and its importance to the rural economy.

Through this weekend's promotion, American Ethanol was the sponsor of the Loud & Proud Pre-race concert featuring Jake Owen. This sponsorship opportunity gave Texas Corn Producers and American Ethanol considerable presence not only on the track, but in the entire metroplex - reaching the

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From the Texas Corn Producers Board
and the Corn Producers Association of Texas

January 2017

the kernel



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CORNER Comments



David Gibson

**TCPB Executive Director
CPAT Exec. Vice President**

2016 certainly has gone by very fast for all agricultural producers. It was a very challenging year for producers: as excessive rains at

planting time turned into a very dry and hot period for some parts of the state, and record-setting high temperatures rose on the High Plains during July. With the wild swings in weather this past year, Texas as a whole produced a near-normal corn crop with final numbers still coming in.

The market for corn has not been good to producers in 2016. A national corn crop coming in at about 15 billion bushels is more corn than needed to meet the demand – leaving us with a very large carryover. We have seen prices decline for most of the year to levels not seen in eight years, while the cost of producing the crop exceeded the sale value of the crop.

Good marketing plans allowed many producers to sell on some

rallies in the market during the year that allowed them to get better prices than were available at harvest. Hopefully many producers were able to market on some of those rallies. Opportunities for marketing the 2017 crop will surely come as we move toward planting time and during the growing season; producers need to be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities.

I look forward to discussing the issues you see as the most important for 2017 at our regional meetings noted in this newsletter. It is time to begin giving our input on the 2018 Farm Bill, so we plan to have that discussion to hear from producers across the state. I encourage corn producers to attend one of the meetings near you. 🌽

In August of 2016, Texas Corn Producers Board (TCPB) received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for an Experimental Use Permit for the Aflatoxin bio-control product FourSure™. This product is the result of multiple years of ongoing research conducted by Peter Coty, Ph.D., with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service based at the University of Arizona in Tucson. This research effort has been supported with Texas corn farmers’ checkoff revenue and by cooperators throughout the use area. In 2017, research will be conducted on whole field treatments in 10 Texas counties: gathering data to support an application for a full Section 3 label.

Often times when “advocating” for technology and modern pro-

duction practices we refer to science-based data supporting our position, while increasingly our critics rely on “societal norms.” This reminds me of a quote, “a nation with an ample food supply has many problems, while a nation without food has only one.”

TCPB recently became members of the U.S. Meat Export Federation and U.S.A. Poultry and Egg Export Council. These organizations, like U.S. Grains Council, increase demand for U.S. corn through increased exports of corn and corn products. While little Texas corn is sold direct for export, we do export considerable red meat and poultry products.

I hope you and your family have a joyous holiday season. As always, please make us aware of any concerns, thoughts or com-



Scott Averhoff
TCPB Chairman
Waxahachie, Texas

ments. TCPB’s mission is to increase the profitability of Texas corn farmers. 🌽

Corn farmer town halls coming to your area

Opportunity to offer feedback for next farm bill, issues

What would you like to see in the next farm bill?

Are farmers in your area experiencing issues with farm bill implementation, crop insurance or other regulations?

What issues are top priorities for you and your checkoff dollars?

Texas Corn Producers (TCP) will be hosting a series of town hall meetings for corn farmers across the state in coming months. These meetings will provide the platform for farmers to offer their thoughts and feedback to TCP directors and staff, as well as the

elected officials and staff that have been invited to gain insight into their constituents' needs.

"It's very important for TCP to gain insight from farmers across the state and in a variety of regions to ensure we have a good snapshot of our fellow farmers' needs," TCP Executive Director David Gibson said.

TCP also will visit with attendees about the work the state corn checkoff and association on doing on their behalf.

"I hope farmers will take this valuable opportunity to engage

with us so we have the information we need to represent them," Gibson reiterated.

TCP is working with area Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agents to coordinate these town halls, which will also include meal. The complete agenda and information for individual gatherings will be released closer to each event locally, and on the TCP website at www.TexasCorn.org.

If you have any questions about these town halls, please contact TCP at 806.763.CORN (2676).

Texas Corn Town Hall Schedule

Please visit www.TexasCorn.org for updates and details

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	CITY
Jan. 10	12 p.m. - 3 p.m.	Uvalde County Fairplex	Uvalde
Jan. 17	Following Rio Grande Valley Cotton & Grain Pre-Plant conference	Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show and Rodeo Center	Mercedes
Jan. 26	12 p.m. - 3 p.m.	Oscar Store	Temple
Jan. 31	9 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Victoria County 4-H Activity Center	Victoria
Feb. 8	12 p.m. - 2 p.m.	Ochiltree County Extension Office	Perryton
March 6	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Golden Group Building	Hart
March 7	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Carson Co. Ag Barn	Panhandle
March 9	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Deaf Smith County Extension Office	Hereford
March 10	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Rita Blanca Coliseum	Dalhart

THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

As December rolls around, producers have completed another crop cycle and have begun preparations for the next year. Farming is unique in that we only have one chance each year to make or lose money with many challenges throughout the year that affect the outcome. This is the time of year when fieldwork slows down, but office work doesn't. Now it's time to prepare cash flows and financial statements for the coming crop year.

With all that being said, I still

Stay connected with TCP on all your social media!



believe I have the best job in the world. I am thankful and blessed to be involved in production agriculture. I actually enjoy going to work each day.

I also have enjoyed serving as the President of Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT), and attempting to put thoughts to paper for these Kernel comments. I would like to encourage all Texas corn producers to be members and be involved in CPAT. Find us at www.TexasCorn.org.



Bruce Wetzel
CPAT President
Sherman, Texas

New officers elected to association, at-large directors re-elected

Texas corn farmers elected leadership for their association at the recent annual meeting for the Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT).

CPAT is the advocacy arm of Texas corn farmer representation on both a state and national level. CPAT's mission is to build a strong organizational support system for corn that will represent the interests and concerns of farmers from all regions of Texas.

CPAT held its meeting in conjunction with its November board meeting in Amarillo, Texas, on Nov. 29.

At the meeting, the board and members discussed a number of issues impacting Texas corn farmers. Discussions covered a number of topics from preparing for the 2018 farm bill to the

changing federal administration and its potential impact on regulations to state and regional issues.

Five at-large board members with expiring terms were re-elected to serve the association for another 2-year term. Directors re-elected include:

- Scott Averhoff, Ellis Co.
- Robert Gordon, Dallam Co.
- Mark Howard, Dallam Co.
- Charles Ring, San Patricio Co.
- Max Swinburn, Castro Co.

The board also elected officers for the organization:

- **President**
Joe Reed, Swisher Co.
- **Vice President**
Daniel Berglund, Wharton Co.
- **Secretary/Treasurer**
Charles Ring, San Patricio Co.

Bruce Wetzel of Grayson County, who has served as the association's president for the past two years, rolled off the officer rotation.

These officers and board members work together to advocate for Texas corn farmers in D.C. and Austin. Additionally, they work with elected officials on a variety of issues from farm program implementation to crop insurance to property and water rights.

As many legislators and officials making decisions at this level are farther and farther removed from the farm, it's more important than ever to ensure agricultural interests are expressed to them. Support this effort by joining CPAT at www.TexasCorn.org.

NASCAR race offers opportunity for “agvocacy” *continued from p. 1*

5th largest media market in the U.S. through advertisements and publicity for the concert.

TCP further amplified the weekend's festivities by offering free tickets to Sunday's Sprint Cup race and the Loud and Proud concert to a number of radio stations across the state - asking them to give them away to their listeners, and encouraging agriculture and ethanol trivia on air.

The effort didn't stop there... Going digital, TCP and TFB am-

plified its agricultural message online using #TexasAgIs across social media channels. The organizations used the hashtag with messages on farming's sustainability, innovation and safety - showing the shared values between farmers and consumers.

Additionally, the digital effort amplified the message on the many ways America's corn crop is used and its impact on consumers from a food to a feed to a fuel.

All-in-all, the promotion was a success - reaching hundreds of thousands of people in three short days.

This effort was made possible thanks to the partnership of many groups, including Texas Farm Bureau, Minnesota Corn Growers, Nebraska Corn Growers, North Dakota Corn Growers, ASCO Equipment, Missouri Corn Growers, and of course Growth Energy and National Corn Growers Association through American Ethanol.

TCP appreciates the many farmers that took valuable time away from the field to participate in this large promotion for agriculture and ethanol! 🌽



Volunteers connected with consumers throughout the race weekend - from the Midway to the Infield to the Campgrounds



Country music singer Jake Owen headlined the Loud and Proud Concert Fueled by American Ethanol

LAND program hones skills, offers industry insight to up-and-coming leaders

In September, farm couples from across the state gathered at the Fort Worth Stockyards to learn more about the future of agriculture and how they could help the industry.

Participants in the 2016 class of Leadership, Activism, Networking, Development (LAND) program were:

- Darrell & Lindsey Bowers
Inez, Texas
- Colin & Laura Chopelas
Corpus Christi, Texas
- Casey & Amanda Coley
Hurst, Texas
- Heath & Miranda Hill
Gruver, Texas
- Derrick & Tassi Kahlig
Temple, Texas
- John & Julie Reznik
Dumas, Texas
- Quentin & Kristin Shield-
knight
Spearman, Texas
- Michael & Christine Skala
Rosebud, Texas
- Shane & Susan Smith
Sandia, Texas

LAND brought together up-and-coming farmer leaders with



2016 LAND participants

expert industry advocates and professionals to work together to better the corn industry.

The program was designed 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.

This is the third year Texas Corn Producers has coordinated this program.

The organization is continually accruing a list of potential participants for future LAND programs. If you or someone you know is interested, email info@texascorn.org.

Advocacy high priority for 2017

The Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT) has its eyes on many moving issues facing the state's corn farmers this coming year.

Preparations are being made as work begins on the foundation for the 2018 farm bill. CPAT is developing a survey for its membership to offer insight, in addition to the

town hall meetings mentioned in this newsletter.

As new administration rises to leadership in D.C. - and thus the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other relevant agencies - CPAT is actively working with other agricultural groups to build relations.

By taking steps now, CPAT is

working to ensure Texas corn farmers have an open door to express their concerns and feedback on matters impacting the men and women who work tirelessly to ensure consumers have quality food, feed and fiber from American-grown crops.

ODDS *AND* ENDS



Averhoff completes term on national USDA committee

Texas Corn Producers Board (TCPB) Chairman Scott Averhoff, a Waxahachie farmer, recently completed his term on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Grain Inspection Advisory Committee (GIAC).

Averhoff has served on the committee since being appointed by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in 2014. He served the committee as both chairman and vice chairman since his appointment.

The committee, which is comprised of 15 representatives of exporters, commodities and non-governmental grain inspection companies, meets biannually to advise USDA on the establishment of programs and services under the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

"To ensure continued excellence in grain inspection, it's important for farmers to participate in roles such as this," Averhoff said.

He continued, noting the positive reputation of the Federal Grain Inspection Service in being an excellent neutral service in the export market.

TCPB appreciates Averhoff for his commitment to the industry in this capacity.



Scott Averhoff, a Waxahachie farmer, with fellow members of the USDA's GIAC at a recent meeting.

Cruz harvests agricultural experience, knowledge in Texas Panhandle

Taking a step out of the more familiar stomping grounds of the state's big cities, Senator Ted Cruz spent time last fall getting a firsthand look at Texas agriculture - including a visit to the Gordon family farm near Dalhart.

"Agriculture is a staple of Texas that reaches every corner of the state and offers tremendous opportunities for economic growth," Sen. Cruz said in a release on the visit.

The visit was more than just a stop in a field to admire the view: the U.S. senator got to experience Texas corn harvest from the cab of the Gordons' combine. From this perspective, Sen. Cruz saw the importance of advanced technology in sustainably and ef-

ficiently bringing in a crop, as well as the hard work each member of the farm puts into the day-to-day operation of the family farm.

The visit also offered the opportunity to visit with the legislator about issues impacting Texas farmers. CPAT appreciates the senator and his staff taking the time to visit this important part of his constituency.



Robert and Patty Gordon, who farm alongside their sons Jared and Kent, visited with Sen. Cruz at their corn farm near Dalhart.

(Not pictured: Jared Gordon)

Directors

Scott Averhoff, *Ellis Co.*

Daniel Berglund, *Wharton Co.*

Robert Gordon, *Dallam Co.*

Braden Gruhlkey, *Randall Co.*

Mark Howard, *Dallam Co.*

Aaron Martinka, *Milam 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.*

Steve Yoder, *Dallam Co.*

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Upcoming Events

Texas Corn Producers board meetings will be held
March 28-30 in Austin, Texas.

It's a busy time of year, and we have many town hall meetings
happening across the state!

Visit www.TexasCorn.org for the most up-to-date list of events.

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