

Crop production makes huge impact on Texas Panhandle

It's common knowledge within the agricultural industry that our farmers and ranchers have a tremendous impact on the economy - both on a local level and a national one. Now, thanks to an economic analysis conducted by Texas Tech University and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, the industry has the numbers to back up this assertion.

Researchers conducting the study found crop production supported more than 103,000 jobs and generated more than \$12.2 billion in economic activity in 2010 in the Texas High Plains region.

Those findings come from a new, first of its kind economic model that can now be used to measure the economic effects of different policy options such as changes in water regulations, energy costs, and federal farm programs according to one of the leaders of the research, Darren Hudson, Ph.D, the Larry Combest Endowed Chair for Agricultural Competitiveness at Texas Tech.

"We've always known crop production was a huge part of the economy of this region, but now we have a comprehensive model that can measure in dollars and jobs the total amount of economic activity generated by growing, selling and processing crops in the Texas High Plains," Hudson said at a press conference in Lubbock.

The measures in the study reflect the impact of a wide variety of economic activity, including production costs, such as buying seed, fertilizer, fuel, labor and equipment, as well as post-production processing of crops in the area, including livestock and dairy usage, cotton gins, grain elevators and other relevant processing.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program Specialist Bridget Guerrero, Ph.D, a lead researcher on the study, elaborated that the study also includes the effects of the spending by businesses and individuals who earn income from all of these activities.

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From the Texas Corn Producers Board
and the Corn Producers Association of Texas
January 2013

the kernel



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CORNER Comments



David Gibson
TCPB Executive Director
CPAT Exec. Vice President

As a new year begins, producers across our state and country have significant challenges facing them.

Across Texas, all areas are coming off a year with below normal moisture and soil conditions are extremely dry. Without significant rainfall, producers will be facing challenges of what to plant, insurance coverage to purchase, and how much to plant. We can only pray beneficial rain comes soon.

Our friends in the Midwest went through a significant drought in 2012, just as we have, and the Mississippi River is near the level where barge traffic will soon be halted. This will impact corn and DDG shipments to export, halt the movement of fertilizer up the river, and increase the cost for those producers due to the fact rail

and truck freight is higher than barge freight.

I recently attended the Texas Cattle Feeders Association meeting. Hearing their forecast for lower numbers of cattle on feed reflects the impact the extended drought has had on cow numbers. Many lots will operate well below capacity for the upcoming year, as well as years to come, until the cowherd can be replenished to replace all those that have been liquidated during the drought.

All of this points to a potentially very challenging year again for agricultural producers all across Texas and the nation. I know producers will answer the chal-

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At this writing, the voting period is open for the Texas Grain Producer Indemnity Board's referendum on the establishment of a state grain indemnity fund. Our appreciation goes to the members of the TGPIB that spent countless hours designing how the fund will operate if approved by grain producers.

Texas Corn Producers Board met in Amarillo in late November in conjunction with the Texas Commodity Symposium and the Amarillo Farm Show. The board approved funding for research projects that will benefit growers across the state. For a complete list of research

projects past and present, go to www.TexasCorn.org. This investment has had a number of benefits to Texas corn growers. A couple of examples would be real-time pest monitoring and reporting to two atoxigenic products to reduce Aflatoxin coming from USDA ARS being made available to growers.

As the New Year begins, hopefully we will receive adequate rainfall to replenish soil moisture to start the 2013 crop season. TCPB is dedicated to improving the profitability of Texas corn growers. If there is an issue you feel we should address, please make us aware. 🌽



Scott Averhoff
TCPB Chairman
Waxahachie, Texas

Annual symposium another success

Farmers and those in agribusiness gathered once again for the Twelfth Annual Texas Commodity Symposium on Nov. 28, in Amarillo in conjunction with the IdeAg Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show.

The symposium included a number of topics, including irrigation technology, the 2012 Blue Legacy Awards in Agriculture, Sen. Kel Seliger discussed state water and legislative issues, the farm bill and more.

The event concluded with the Annual Ag Appreciation

Luncheon with a keynote address from *The Cook Political Report's* David Wasserman giving an engaging overview of the 2012 election outcomes.

The next symposium will be Dec. 4, 2013.



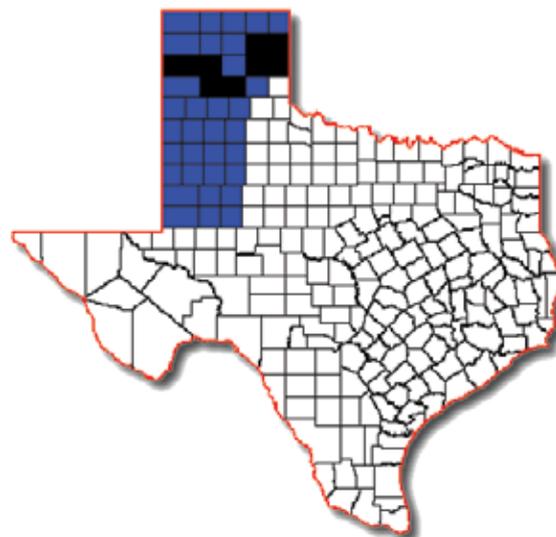
David Wasserman with *The Cook Political Report* was the event's keynote speaker

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"This is a unique approach to this kind of analysis that isn't done anywhere else in the country," Guerrero said. "We're really on the forefront of being able to determine the full impact of agricultural production to the regional economy, and not just a piece of it."

Economists will use this newly developed model to assess the economic impact of potential policy changes, including changes in regulations on using groundwater for irrigating crops.

The study used a five-year average (2006-2010) of crop production in 41 counties in the Texas High Plains. The crops analyzed were alfalfa, corn, corn silage, cotton,



The economic study found crop production in 2010 generated more than \$12.2 billion in economic activity in the blue shaded region.

peanuts, grain sorghum, sorghum silage and wheat.

The research project was launched in April 2010 through financial contributions from Texas commodity groups. Representatives from

five water districts and six commodity groups serve on a steering committee for the project.

Funding for this research was made possible by North Plains Groundwater Conservation District, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Texas Corn Producers Board, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District, Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District, Select Milk Producers, Texas Association of Dairymen, Texas Cattle

Feeders Association, Texas Farm Bureau, Texas Seed Trade Association, Texas Sorghum Producers, Texas Wheat Producers, and Texas Peanut Producers Board.

THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

2013 will likely bring many new challenges for corn growers across the state of Texas. Hopefully as you read this newsletter, a new farm bill will have been passed. However, whether we will be operating under a completely new farm bill, an extension or modifications to the old farm bill, or still waiting for Congress to pass a farm bill, 2013 is shaping up to be a challenging year. CPAT has been actively involved in educating legislators on the priorities of Texas farmers and what is needed in a new farm bill. Hopefully they have listened.

The drought conditions across the state are a great

concern for Texas corn farmers. The High Plains region has now suffered through two consecutive historic droughts with less than 30 percent of annual rainfall. Some areas of Central and Southern Texas had a slight reprieve from drought conditions this past summer, but all regions of Texas are again enduring severe drought conditions.

The Texas legislature is in session this year, and water issues are one of the top stated priorities, particularly funding a state water plan. CPAT will monitor this process and work to defend agriculture's best interests.



Jimmy Wedel
CPAT President
Muleshoe, Texas

CPAT annual meeting, new officers

The Corn Producers Association of Texas members met for the organization's annual meeting on Nov. 28, 2012, in Amarillo, Texas.

Elections for board seats in Districts 1, 4 and 5, as well as two at-large positions were held. All incumbant directors were re-elected to their positions, including Dee Vaughan of Dumas (Dist. 1), Gary Obenhaus of Eagle Lake (Dist. 4), Wesley Valerius of Harlingen (Dist. 5), Wesley Spurlock of Stratford (AL) and Joe Reed (AL) of Kress.

The membership also elected 2013 officers for the association. Jimmy Wedel of Mule-

shoe was elected as president, Bruce Wetzel of Sherman was

was selected to serve as secretary/treasurer.

The association's board of directors met in addition to the annual meeting. During the board meeting, directors discussed a number of issues, including the farm bill, water issues, the Texas Grain Producers Indemnity Board's referendum to establish a state grain indemnity fund, and more.

The board determined a balanced farm bill, groundwater and surface water rights, property rights, regulatory relief and energy costs as some of its key priorities for the upcoming year.

New CPAT Officers

President:
Jimmy Wedel
Muleshoe

Vice President:
Bruce Wetzel
Sherman

Secretary/Treasurer:
Wesley Valerius
Harlingen

elected as vice president, and Wesley Valerius of Harlingen

2013 TCPB research funding

The Texas Corn Producers Board met Nov. 27, 2012, in Amarillo to discuss a number of items, including research funding for the coming year.

TCPB considers research to be a vital part of the charge of the board. By allocating a portion of the check-off funds to research, TCPB is funding efforts to enable producers to profitably continue corn production within the state, as well as better utilize their resources to increase yield potential and minimize impact on each operation's pocket book.

TCPB accepted research proposal in October, and the board's research committee, chaired by Charles Ring of Sinton, reviewed the propos-

als prior to making funding recommendations to the board.

This year, TCPB is funding eight research projects with varying focus subjects, including further efforts in corn breeding, real-time pest detection, management practices, GMO technology and refuge, and further research of mycotoxins such as aflatoxin.

A comprehensive list of research projects funded by



TCPB and available research information is available on the organization's website at www.TexasCorn.org.

Gibson, continued from p. 2

lenge and continue to find ways to feed our country and the world.

Producers need the security of a five year farm bill and that process, at the time of this writing, is moving **VERY** slowly. Producers are dealing with their yearly financial planning, while they have no clear picture of what the upcoming year's policy will be in regard to the farm bill. Our nation is dependent on our American farmers. Our legislators need to finalize at least a five year plan, which will give producers the security needed to continue to

produce our feed and food.

The Texas Corn Producers Board and the Corn Producers Association of Texas are working very hard to assist in all of these areas. At recent board meetings, research was approved to continue looking at improved drought- and heat-tolerant corn lines, insect monitoring, and developing an educational tool for producers once the farm bill is passed. CPAT directors have been very engaged in working with our state legislative delegation to educate them and encourage the passage of a farm bill.

CPAT is already monitoring much discussion about the upcoming Texas legislative session, which begins in January. Funding the state water plan, educational budget shortfalls, transportation issues, and Medicaid expenditures will be some of the top priority issues for the legislature.

If you have issues or concerns, please contact our office or one of the directors of TCPB or CPAT. Information is available at www.texas-corn.org or call our office at 800.647.2676.

High Plains producers featured in PBS series

By Quenna Terry, USDA- NRCS Public Affairs Specialist, Lubbock

Producers of the Public Broadcasting Syndication television series, “This American Land” interviewed farmers David Ford and Harold Grall in Moore County, near Dumas, Texas. “This American Land” is a weekly magazine-style show that covers serious issues that affect America’s landscapes, waters and wildlife.

Through the assistance of USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, “This American Land” is working with producers in rural locations. The episode, “Western Private-Lands Conservation,” will feature Ford and Grall, along with the NRCS’ Ogallala Aquifer Initiative.

For their interview with executive program producer Gary Strieker, Ford and Grall gave personal accounts of soil and water conservation practices they have implemented on their land to help conserve water from the Ogallala Aquifer.

The episode featuring Ford and Grall will depict how agricultural producers are surviving the severe drought and using irrigation water management practices coupled with good conservation measures to conserve water.

Ford, a farmer and cattleman who is a TCPB and CPAT director, is one of several agricultural business owners using conservation strategies to help conserve

resources and decrease input costs.

He showed the implementation of his conservation tillage system in the field and explained how the practice and management has reduced his irrigation, labor and fuel costs. According to Ford, the increased water infiltration with conservation tillage has also resulted in greater soil-water holding capacity, while maintaining crop residues and organic matter to help the soil hold onto water instead of losing it to evaporation or runoff.

“I am going to use any conservation strategy I can to conserve water for the life of my operation,” Ford explained to Strieker.

Grall, the Moore County director for the North Plains Groundwater Conservation District, recognizes water management conservation practices as a primary resource concern in the Texas panhandle. Grall, along with others, works to encourage producers to implement conservation practices and to recognize the importance of water conservation.



Videographer captures producer David Ford and NRCS District Conservationist Mike Caldwell discussing management practices used to improve soil health.

For Grall, conservation is a way of life, to care for the land as it provides for his family. Due to the increased use of conservation practices producers, like Grall, are demonstrating maximum crop production and efficient water saving. According to NRCS, some of the principal benefits of reduced tillage practices include improved water conservation and reduced soil erosion.

Strieker says this water conservation episode will air on PBS in April 2013. For additional information about conservation practices featured in this program, please contact the local NRCS office in your county. 🌱



ODDS *AND* ENDS



Spurlock named Farmer of the Year

Wesley Spurlock of Stratford was name Farmer of the Year by Duncan and Boyd Jewelers during the Annual Ag Appreciation Luncheon on Nov. 28, 2012.

Spurlock currently serves as the TCPB treasurer and is on the CPAT board of directors. Additionally, Spurlock sits on the board for the National Corn Growers Association.

Our congratulations go to Wesley and his family for this tremendous honor. Thank you for your continued commitment to the industry.



TCP Director Wesley Spurlock was named Farmer of the Year. Pictured with his family

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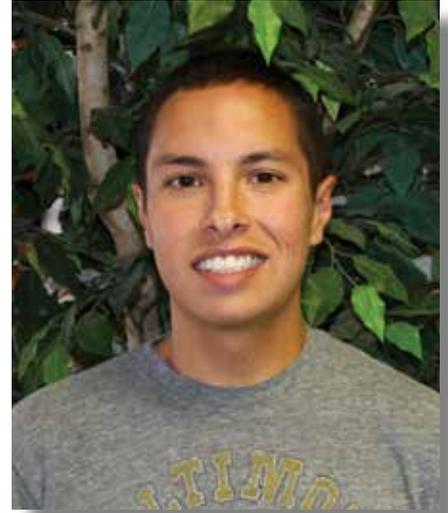
Administrative Intern

New communications intern

Michael Harper is a junior agricultural communications major at Texas Tech University.

He currently serves in the United States Army Reserve, and is active in the Catholic Student's Association at Tech. He was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas, where he attended Lubbock High School, and graduated with honors.

Michael has been around agriculture for most of his life, and it was his early experiences that really instilled a passion in him for the agricultural industry. He is excited to start as communications intern for



Michael Harper
Lubbock, Texas

TCP, and hopes to learn as much as he can in his new position. ●

Upcoming Events

February 4-6, 2013
Mid-Tex Farm Show
Waco, Texas

February 28 - March 2, 2013
Commodity Classic
Kissimmee, Florida



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