

Texas legislative roundup

The Texas Legislature ended its regular session on May 29 after five months of drama and conflict over high profile controversial issues. Fortunately, most of the issues directly affecting agriculture stayed out of the line of fire and out of the headline news.

Board members and representatives of the Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT) provided testimony on critical bills, including over-reaching changes to groundwater management, the interference with pesticide approvals embodied in the feral hog bill, and supporting farmers' legal avenues for recovering what is owed for crops delivered or sold.

Among the beneficial bills passed this session, one will have a wide-spread impact across all of Texas agriculture. HB 572 by Rep. Phil Stephenson of Wharton will create a statewide program to collect and safely dispose of unwanted, unused or expired pesticides. Disposal of these pesticides and pesticide containers is both difficult and extremely expensive to the individual farmer or rancher.

Using a small portion of the fees the state collects from pesticide manufacturers, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, in conjunction with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, will contract

with vendors to set up disposal sites around the state.

Another high priority bill involved agricultural liens. HB 3063 by Rep. Kyle Kacal of Bryan will protect agricultural producers who take their crop to licensed and bonded warehouses and farmers who have their crop in open storage. Current law allows farmers to obtain a lien only if their crop is under contract with a purchaser, as long as the purchaser is not a licensed and bonded facility. Passage of this bill was part of the ongoing effort to provide some protection for farmers when storage facilities go into bankruptcy.

A bill by Sen. Charles Perry of Lubbock concerning the regulation of seeds was approved in the final week of the legislative session. SB 1172 will prohibit cities, counties and other political subdivisions from regulating agricultural seeds and the cultivation of plants from seeds. While this has not been a problem so far in Texas, local governments in other parts of the country have considered bans on bio-engineered seeds.

A widely publicized issue this year was the proposed use of pesticides for controlling the destructive feral hog population in Texas. Several bills were introduced in the legislature to impose state testing and regulations on pesticides that

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



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CORNER Comments



David Gibson
TCPB Executive Director
CPAT Exec. Vice President

The 2017 corn growing season is presenting many challenges to farmers. The severe dryness in

some parts of far South Texas and other areas to adequate moisture and very good crop in other sections of the state are normal challenges; however, one of the largest challenges for the year is the potential demand and yield forecast for the U.S. corn crop.

Much of the significant growing areas have had excessive moisture. While the old saying is, “rain makes corn,” this may be an exceptional year as many areas continue to receive moisture that has really kept the crop wet. Some farmers across the Midwest I have visited with are concerned the crop is not rooted well, and the excess moisture and cool weather may have taken the top yield off of this year’s crop.

All of this will make for a challenging marketing year as every week the crop progress reports and the monthly crop reports could

cause some swings in the market. This is shaping up to be one of those years where farmers will have to be very detailed and strategic in making decisions on marketing. Close monitoring of the weather – both moisture and heat – will be critical in making decisions on when to lock in some or all of your production.

Other critical factors will be playing into this marketing year as well, including the world demand, discussions on renegotiating NAFTA, South America selling corn into Mexico, China’s demand for corn, etc.

All of our farmers are playing into the world market and it has never been truer than now. Utilization of all of the marketing tools available will be important to farmers as we move through the 2017 crop year. 🌽

At a time when modern production agriculture is being denigrated by marketing gimmicks and fear mongers, it is even more important that crop and livestock producers become involved in representing their industry.

There are endless opportunities for you to serve in a leadership role as a board member for commodity or general agricultural organizations. A first step might be to attend a short course for media and leadership training. TCPB hosts a Leadership, Activism, Networking and Development (LAND) program in September. It is designed as a starting point for couples and single farmers wanting to take an active role in representing our industry; contact the office for specific details. If you are a member of CPAT

or subject to the corn assessment, there are a number of positions to serve on Action Teams or committees with National Corn Growers Association (NCGA).

Late this fall, TCPB will be conducting elections for five of its 15-member board. If you don’t feel you are ready to serve at this time, I would certainly encourage you to participate in the election process.

A comment I hear often is “I don’t see how you can afford to be gone from your farm.” My answer is simple; I don’t see how you can afford not to. In today’s world of connectivity, you learn to better manage your time.

TCPB’s goal is to improve the profitability of Texas corn farmers. Let us know of your thoughts, comments or concerns. Stay safe. 🌽



Scott Averhoff
TCPB Chairman
Waxahachie, Texas

Next generation in Aflatoxin prevention in the works

In an age where smart phones, computers and other technology used every day gets upgraded to “bigger and better” on seemingly a yearly – if not daily – basis, advancements in the farmer’s toolbox are few and farther between. However, thanks to the dedication of board members and researchers through Texas Corn Producers Board (TCPB), farmers may soon have access to a “next generation” bio-control for displacing Aflatoxin-producing fungi in corn – FourSure™.

This revolutionary tool contains four strains of *Aspergillus flavus* (*A. flavus*), whereas comparable products currently on the market contain one strain. FourSure’s multi-pronged approach to prevent Aflatoxin development has the potential to secure corn farmer’s investment in their crop – preventing considerable loss due to Aflatoxin contamination in their production when they pull up to the elevator.

Farmer losses to Aflatoxin contamination can range from minor discounts at time of sale to complete destruction of the crop. Corn is the most widely grown crop that can be affected by Aflatoxin contamination in the U.S. Heat, drought, high humidity and insect infestation predispose corn grain to contamination by Aflatoxin of the grain.

“For more than a decade, TCPB has funded research that has

FourSure™
Developed & Supported by



brought bio-controls for Aflatoxin to the market for Texas corn farmers,” TCPB Chairman Scott Averhoff said. “This next generation product is a continuation of efforts from the board to alleviate a considerable burden to our farmers.”

In August of last year, TCPB was granted an Experimental Use Permit (EUP) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for 2017-2019. This has allowed TCPB to bring FourSure to the state for whole field trials that are currently underway with farmer cooperators from the Lower Rio Grande Valley to the Red River.

“FourSure is being tested on approximately 3,000 acres,” Averhoff continued. “TCPB appreciates the

farmers who are assisting with this trial effort. Many of them were involved in the process we went through in gaining a label for one of the currently available bio-controls for Aflatoxin on the market. These farmers have firsthand experience with using bio-controls, and a vital interest in advancing the efficacy of this technology.”

Peter Cotty, Ph.D. and researcher with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS), is leading the research on FourSure. He will compile the data to support TCPB’s application for a Section 3 label with the EPA – allowing the product to be purchased and distributed statewide.

While there are still substantial steps to make in getting FourSure to the market, TCPB’s hope is this effort will prove fruitful for farmers across the state. With the state’s checkoff leading the way for this product, the hope is to keep the cost for it reasonable for farmers.

“Serving on TCPB for 18 years has been a rewarding investment in time,” Averhoff concluded. “I would encourage other farmers to seek opportunities to serve for the betterment of our industry. Making bio-controls available to Texas corn farmers has been one of the best returns on their checkoff investment.”

Stay connected with TCP on all your social media!



THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

With another Texas legislative session behind us, I'm again reminded of the critical role of member associations such as Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT).

As CPAT board members, staff, and members visited with our state legislators in Austin this spring, our voice made a difference – not only because we were there giving farmers a voice, but because we had the strength of a membership of hundreds of farmers we brought to the table.

The relationships CPAT has built with lawmakers in Austin is one part of the equation when it comes to getting the legislative “wins” referenced in this newsletter. However, it's also a strong membership and our CPAT repre-

sentatives being able to reference the many corn farmers who are constituents of these lawmakers that make an impact on their decision making as well.

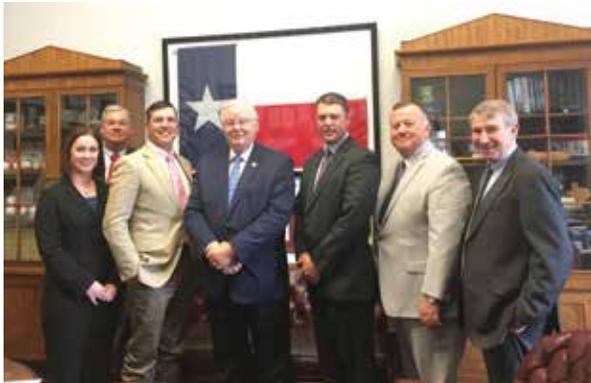
If you, your spouse, children, farm managers, and anyone else involved in your farm are not already CPAT members, I encourage you to visit www.TexasCorn.org to join today. Each of these individuals can become members (and reap the membership benefits such as FREE corn seed), while supporting an association working to ensure the future of Texas corn farms.

The 85th Texas Legislature Regular Session may be closed, but there continues to be a need for the corn farmer's voice at the table in Austin and in D.C. 🌽



Joe Reed
CPAT President
Kress, Texas

The farmer's voice on The Hill



CPAT members visited with legislators, including Rep. Joe Barton (center), in D.C.

Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT) members made visits to Washington, D.C., this spring to visit with lawmakers and agencies about a number of issues pertinent to Texas corn farmers and agriculture as a whole.

regulations that impact our state's farmers,” Gibson said.

While in D.C. on separate visits, CPAT discussed key issues, including trade (particularly with North American partners), the 2018 farm bill, EPA regulations, health care, and more.

CPAT Executive Vice President David Gibson said the trips were essential for the organization to continue strengthening existing relationships, as well as building a foundation for success with new legislators, administration, and staff.

“It's vital that CPAT open the door to be a resource to those making lasting legislation and

CPAT thanks the farmer members that took time to participate in these crucial visits:

- Lindsey Bowers, Inez
- Heath Hill, Gruver
- Aaron Martinka, Buckholts
- Joe Reed, Kress
- Dee Vaughan, Dumas
- Jimmy Wedel, Lubbock

CPAT representatives went to D.C. twice: on its own fly in, and as a part of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness (SWCA).

This month, CPAT will join corn farmers across the nation in D.C. for National Corn Growers Association's Corn Congress, and will make another round of visits with lawmakers from Texas and other key decision makers.

Contact the CPAT office if you're interested in legislative visits and policy priorities. 🌽

CPAT active in Austin this legislative session

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had already been tested and approved at the federal level. CPAT joined nearly every other agricultural organization in the state to defeat these bills, which would have set a dangerous precedent of unnecessary and burdensome state testing for materials that have been certified as safe by federal agencies.

Water is always a contentious issue when the Texas Legislature meets every two years. This year, dozens of bills concerning the ownership and regulation of water were introduced and debated, but only a handful of them survived to final passage. HB 2377 by Rep. Lyle Larson of San Antonio creates a process for groundwater conservation districts to adopt rules and issue

permits for brackish groundwater in designated Brackish Production Zones. Desalination of brackish water is seen as a potential source of additional water for cities and electric generating plants in the future.

CPAT worked closely with other agricultural organizations and legislators to amend or defeat bills that would have had the unintended consequence of adversely affecting irrigation. Most of the debate over groundwater regulation focuses on Central Texas where water suppliers and landowners who want to sell water to expanding urban areas have come into conflict with groundwater conservation districts that make it difficult to export water from their districts. Farmers

must be vigilant in every legislative session to ensure that bills to resolve the conflicts in Central Texas do not have the unintended consequence of eroding local control of groundwater throughout the state.

Overall, it was a successful session for agriculture, and much of the credit goes to the chairs of the agriculture committees: Sen. Charles Perry, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs, and Rep. Tracy King, chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock. Their doors were always open to CPAT representatives and they were always responsive to the concerns of farmers. 🍌

Texas hosts 2017 Commodity Classic, reception

Farmers from across the country strapped on their Texas-size boot for this year's Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas, March 2-4. The event is the nation's largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show.

Attendees had the opportunity to explore the trade show, attend a myriad of educational sessions covering production agriculture, advocacy and regulatory issues, and participate in national organization meetings such as the National Corn Growers Association's (NCGA) Corn Congress.

Texas Corn Producers (TCP) hosted attendees at a reception in honor of current NCGA President Wesley Spurlock of Stratford, Texas.

It's customary for the home state of the NCGA president to host a reception for the national leader with the conference attendees, but seldom do they have the honor of doing so in

their home state.

The event boasted a Taste of Texas, serving food and beverages produced exclusively in the Lone Star State - playing homage to Texas as the event was on Texas Independence Day, March 2.

In lieu of the traditional gifts for attendees to remember the year's national leader, TCP opted to distribute protein-packed Beef Sticks from Snack Pak 4 Kids. For each guest receiving the Beef Stick, one hungry child will receive one as well. This community-centered effort was made to honor Spurlock's heart for his community. In addition to the contribution to Snack Pak 4 Kids made by the reception hosts, guests even put in additional funds to support this great cause!

TCP thanks the sponsors that made the evening possible, including Bayer CropScience, BNSF Railway, Dow AgroSciences, John

Deere, Illinois Corn Growers, Indiana Corn Growers, Iowa Corn Growers, Minnesota Corn Growers, Monsanto, Nebraska Corn Growers, Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers, Pioneer, Syngenta, Ag Producers Co-op, First State Bank, Western Equipment, and Wilbur-Ellis.

Also, a Texas-sized thanks to the companies that made the Taste of Texas possible: Blue Bell, Culinary Cowgirls, Dom's Chop Salsa, Go Texan, H-E-B, Humble House Foods, Picosos Peanuts, Pioneer Brand, Riccos, and Texas Gulf Shrimp.

Established in 1996, Commodity Classic is presented by the American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Sorghum Producers, National Association of Wheat Growers and Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

Save the date for next year's Commodity Classic Feb. 27 to March 1 in Anaheim, Calif.! 🍌

E15: Moving into the marketplace

You may not think of it often, but what you put in your car matters.

What if one tiny switch could keep your car running longer, keep the air that you breathe cleaner, put more money back in your bank account? The choice would be easy. E15 – gasoline blended with 15 percent ethanol – is that choice.

As an industry, corn farmers and ethanol producers have been working to further expand the ethanol market – as it is one avenue to broaden market opportunities for U.S. corn.

There are an increasing num-

ber of fuel stations working with the industry to offer their customers expanded fuel choices at the pump, including Casey's, Family Express, Kum & Go, Kwik Trip, MAPCO, Minnoco, Murphy USA, Protec Fuels, QuikTrip, RaceTrac, Sheetz, and Thorntons.

Currently, there are 37 stations in Texas with E15 available as an option, and that number continues to grow.

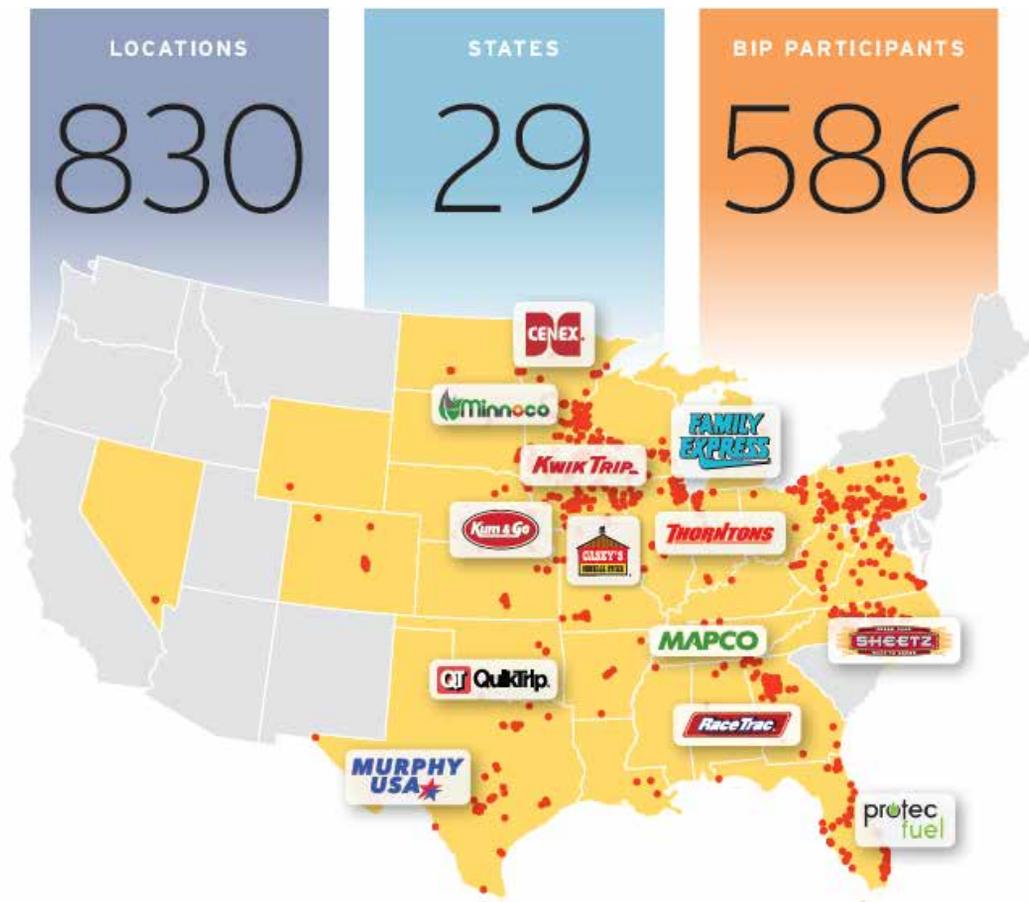
Today, there are 830 retail locations in 29 states selling E15 – usually 3-10 cents below regular gasoline. The vast majority of these

locations are selling E15 along with E85 at blender pumps and making both available at nearly every dispensing location.

Of these locations, 586 are partnered in the Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership (BIP) program, and many more high-volume retailers are on the way.

This fuel is approved for use in all vehicles 2001 and newer, and is the most tested fuel in history.

Looking for a station offering E15 near you? Simply visit www.GetEthanol.com.



ODDS *AND* ENDS



New faces, experience join Texas Corn Producers

Texas Corn Producers welcomed several new staff members in recent months: Finance and Compliance Director Shannon Neuenschwander, and Education and Producer Relations Director Lauren Prine, as well as Morgan Havelka as the communications intern.

Neuenschwander (pictured top left) brought career experience as a finance controller, office manager and other administrative positions with A Tumbling T Ranches in Arizona and the Degroot Dairy Group in Kansas. She holds a bachelor's degree in management and a Master of Business Administration in finance from University of the Southwest. An Arizona native, Neuenschwander was raised in a farming and ranching family, instilling an appreciation for the industry and the agricultural tradition.

"I have spent my life working in the agricultural field (pun intended)," Neuenschwander said. "I have always enjoyed agriculture and seeing the advancements made over the years."

In her role, Neuenschwander manages TCP's finances, state and federal compliance, and research.

Prine (pictured middle right) joined the team with experience as an agricultural sciences teacher. She has a bachelor's degree in ag-

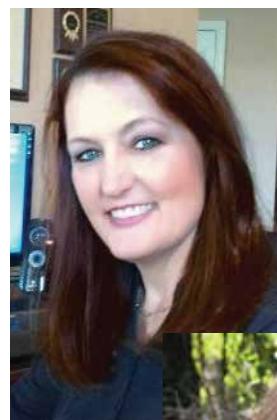
ricultural education with a minor horticulture from Tarleton State University, as well as multiple education certifications. Agriculture has always been a central part of Prine's life, as she was active on her family's ranch near Yorktown.

"Agriculture has been a major fixture in my upbringing, thanks to my family's long agricultural background," Prine said. "I followed in their footsteps by being a part of our family ranch, 4-H, and FFA."

Prine guides the producer and youth educational efforts of the organization, including attending many industry trade shows and ag days.

Havelka, a student at Texas Tech University, (pictured bottom left) is a Robstown native. She grew up in the farming and ranching industry – raising corn, grain sorghum, cotton, as well as pigs and steers. Havelka is a junior agricultural communications major. She is active in several student organizations, including Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, Kappa Alpha Theta, and is the scribe for Ag Council.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to intern at Texas Corn Producers," Havelka said. "Not only am I passionate about this industry, but I can't wait to gain more knowledge and experience within it."



Summer brings many field days across state

As fields in southern parts of the state reach peak times in the growing season, and nearing harvest, many field days are being held in Texas.

Texas Corn Producers (TCP) is making efforts to attend many of these events to capture the opportunity to visit with farmers about the issues, concerns, and opportunities

for the industry from both a check-off and association standpoint.

Know of an upcoming event TCP should know about? Email details to info@texascorn.org.

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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.*

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Bart Thoreson, *Hansford Co.*

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Jimmy Wedel, *Bailey Co.*

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Education & Producer Relations Director

Stephanie Pruitt
Communications & Public Affairs Director

Savanna Barksdale
Communications Assistant

Morgan Havelka
Communications Assistant

Upcoming Events

Texas Corn Producers board meetings will be held
August 22-23 in Lubbock, Texas.

With the growing season in full swing, there are a number of
events across the state.

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

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