

# Pollinators in protection push from EPA

Early in life, people learn about the life cycle of a butterfly and the product produced by bees – delicious honey. But, bees and butterflies are much more. These insects are essential to the environment, as well as the agricultural industry – as pollinators.

According to the USDA – Forest Service, pollination is defined as the act of transferring pollen grains from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma. Pollinators are the animals or insects that transfer pollen from plant to plant.

During the summer of 2014, the White House advised a task force to create a strategy to both increase the population of bees and pollinators across the country.

The main goals of the strategy were to 1) reduce the losses of honeybee populations while preserving the economy, 2) increase monarch butterfly numbers to protect migration of the butterflies, and 3) to restore lands for pollinators

through multiple actions in the public and private sectors.

The Environmental Protection Agency has been pushing to restrict specific pesticide use, including neonicotinoid, in order to protect the pollinators across the country.

Dale Scott, coordinator for pesticide product evaluation and registration for the Texas Department of Agriculture, speaks out about the efforts from TDA to develop a Managed Pollinator Protection Plan (MP<sup>3</sup>) for Texas.

“Texas is in the process of developing a workable MP<sup>3</sup> to ensure growers, applicators, beekeepers, and other agricultural stakeholders are able to continue to produce our nation’s food, fiber, and fuel in a productive and collaborative manner,” Scott says.

The goal of the Texas MP<sup>3</sup> is for farmers and beekeepers to work together in harmony to protect the pollinator populations by increasing communication between local beekeepers and farmers prior to applica-

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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**

Harvest has been underway for a while across South, Central and North Central Texas, with many places having completed the 2015 crop. Widely variable yields have been reported across those areas of Texas. It is still hard to get a handle on yields, with very good yields being reported in some areas and very low in others. As marketing of the crop continues, a more accurate assessment of yields can be done.

I want to take this opportunity to remind growers: when storing and marketing your corn this year, remember that corn in federally and

state licensed warehouses is only protected by the warehouse laws while **YOU** still own the corn. With recent issues in 2014, many producers have again learned this the hard way; meaning they sold their corn and did not receive payment. They then went to the federal and state agencies and learned that once they sold the corn, they were not protected against non-payment. The Grain Warehouse Laws overseen by Texas Department of Agriculture and USDA only cover grain while in storage.

We have a document on our website, [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org).

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Earlier this year, 14 state corn organizations joined together, along with representatives from National Corn Growers Association, U.S. Grains Council, U.S. Meat Export Federation and USA Poultry and Egg Export Council, to develop a strategic plan for the corn industry. The project was titled Vision 2020, implying goals to reach by that year. The project consisted of a steering committee with representatives from each of the participating states and national organizations.

Additionally, six issues committees were assigned specific areas to address, including Customer and Consumer Relations, Domestic Utilization, Ethanol Utilization, Export

Utilization, Production and the Environment and Organizational Issues. There were 108 people who participated in developing this strategic plan.

The top seven “must do” items are:

1. **Ethanol Plan:** Develop and execute a comprehensive plan to expand ethanol usage that includes immediate action steps, as well as some actions that will occur 5 years, 10 years, or even 20 years from now.

2. **Ethanol and DDG Exports:** Promote the export of ethanol and Dried Distiller’s Grains with solubles through USGC.

3. **Funding for Export Promotion:** Secure reliable funding for export promotion of corn in all forms.



**Scott Averhoff**  
**TCPB Chairman**  
**Waxahachie, Texas**

4. **Consumers and Customers:** Make customer and consumer relations a top priority for all corn organizations.

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## Texas corn farmer elected to lead National Corn Growers Association

A corn farmer from Stratford, Texas, is reaching new heights as he was elected as the Vice President for the National Corn Growers Association. Wesley Spurlock will be able to represent Texas corn farmers on a national and global scale for the next fiscal year beginning Oct. 1.

In October 2016, Spurlock becomes the NCGA president based on a three-year rotation from first vice president to president. After Spurlock has served as president, he will then become chairman.

“I feel honored that my colleagues on the board chose to place their trust in my ability and dedication to leading our association



forward as we work to create greater opportunities for corn growers across the country,” Spurlock says.

Spurlock and his wife Suzie have been active members of the agricultural industry on the local, state and national scale for years. For Spurlock, or any Texan, to serve in the national capacity helps benefit the state farmers and the corn industry as a whole.

Spurlock is currently a Texas Corn Producers member, serves on several TCP committees, and contributes to multiple boards within his local community. Additionally, he has served in a variety of roles at a national capacity both as a NCGA member and since being elected to the TCP board, which he has been on for 13 years.

## American Ethanol loud and proud in Texas

Ethanol, homegrown from America’s corn, is taking the world by storm, or at least by fast cars. American Ethanol has partnered with NASCAR since 2011 as a part of NASCAR’s launch for a Green Initiative.

The partnership between the organizations uses 15 percent American ethanol in each lap of every NASCAR race, and helps reduce greenhouse emissions by 59 percent.

For the third year, Texas Corn Producers is teaming up with American Ethanol at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth. The American Ethanol promotion in Texas is

one of the biggest of its kind in the nation, including a large midway exhibit, campground promotion, and sponsorship of the Loud and Proud Pre-Race Show Fueled by American Ethanol for AAA Texas 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Chase Race.

This year’s pre-race show on Nov. 8 is set to feature American rocker Sammy Hagar.

The entire race weekend is packed with American Ethanol promotion, and the opportunity to visit with race fans about Texas agriculture and dispel myths about food, fuel and feed from corn. With

a Biofuels Mobile Education Center, getting up close and personal to the #3 American Ethanol Sprint Cup car, and volunteers distributing green starter flags and other items in the campgrounds, NASCAR fans have the opportunity to interact with volunteers and learn about ethanol and corn production.

Corn farmers interested in attending this event and seeing the American Ethanol activation firsthand, can contact the TCP office for further information about the event or volunteer opportunities.

# THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

## The 2015 Crop Season – One for the Record books!

Here in Northeast Texas, most growers are finishing up the 2015 crop year as the completion of the fall corn harvest approaches. On my farm here in Grayson County, 2015 proved to be a year of extremes!

The season started out with an abnormally wet spring causing major planting delays all across the region. Barns all across the Texas Blacklands were stocked full of seed corn this spring ready to go into the ground – only to be delayed by what seemed to be daily rain showers. Many growers in my region were only able to plant a small fraction of their intended acreages, with some barely turning a wheel. Shortly after, we were able to seed some of our acres, thanks to a brief break in the weather.

The skies opened up again as the area received record-breaking rainfall amounts throughout most of April, May and June. Most growers in the area were even forced to resort to aerial applications to apply their fertilizer and

herbicide due to muddy conditions.

Normally, above average rainfall during these months would mean that area corn growers would be finishing up a corn harvest blessed with above average yields. Unfortunately, too much of a good thing is not always beneficial. The extreme rainfall amounts caused area cornfields to stand in water, cutting off oxygen to the plants, hurting pollination, and severely stunting the plant's growth. This caused short plants, small ears, and poor weed control for most corn in the region. As the combines finally rolled through fields over the last few weeks, yields proved to be disappointing with most fields in my area averaging 30-40 bushels below normal.

As I reflect back on a year of extremes, I am thankful that Texas corn farmers can rely on a sound federal crop insurance system to help us stay in business in times of uncertain weather patterns. The Corn Producers Association of Texas fought hard for the



**Bruce Wetzel**  
**CPAT President**  
**Sherman, Texas**

state's growers during the last farm bill debates in Washington. Even amid an environment of budget cuts and reducing federal spending, CPAT and fellow agricultural association were able to come away with a crop insurance system that works for Texas growers to provide an important safety net during times of unpredictable weather events.

To learn more about how we are working for Texas growers in Austin and in Washington, visit the CPAT website at [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org).

## Gibson, continued from p. 2

org, and have given it out at farm shows and other events across the state that explains this. Once the ownership of the grain changes hands, whether by a deferred payment contract, cash sale, or other means of transfer-

ring ownership, the producer does not have any protection against non-payment by the grain buyer.

Currently and in recent years, we have had some occurrences of this in the state. Some of the most common

statements made by those impacted has been, "I have done business for years with this buyer and they have always paid, but... Sometimes payment has been slow and I had to make many efforts to get money..." etc.

## Be an advocate for your industry!

Corn is becoming an essential part of the fuel scene across America and the world as the key ingredient of conventional ethanol. The Renewable Fuel Standard is the basis for encouraging the nation's energy sector to utilize this renewable, clean-burning fuel to lessen the country's dependence on foreign oil and work toward using a fuel that's more environmentally friendly.

This year, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed Renewable Volume Obligation numbers for 2014-2016. Within these numbers, 3.75 billion gallons was cut from the ethanol obligation

over the two-year span. That is equivalent to nearly a billion and a half bushels of corn lost. These numbers challenge the statutory requirements for ethanol use as set forth by Congress in the RFS.

In conjunction with the EPA's hearing on its proposed RVO, NCGA and the Renewable Fuels Association held a Rally for Rural America in Kansas City, Kan., on June 25. A second Rally for Rural America was held in conjunction with Corn Congress in D.C. July 13-17. These events allowed farmers and industry professionals to come together to advocate for the use of ethanol – a homegrown fuel

that is boosting rural economies and lightening the toll each tank of gasoline takes on American consumers.

More than 40,000 farmers are members of NCGA, and many farmers took the opportunity to speak up for ethanol and corn by submitting comments to the EPA for review. Now we are waiting in anticipation of the official announcement of the rules and regulations from EPA.

Ethanol and corn will always need advocates to stand up for the industry, but with supporters willing to stand for the needs of farmers and industry professionals, there is hope for a fair and educated answer to all issues. ●

## Representation for Texas remains on U.S. Grains Council

Another election is in the books for the U.S. Grains Council. At the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Board of Directors Meeting during July in Montreal, Canada, the 2015-2016 Board of Directors were elected. Among those directors serving this year is Charles Ring, a Texas Corn Producers board member and farmer from

Sinton, Texas.

Charles was re-elected to the U.S. Grains Council Board as an At-Large Director. He is the only Texan and southern corn farmer serving on the board of 14 members.

TCP would like to congratulate Charles on his re-election this year. ●



## *Gibson, continued from p. 4*

Every grain buyer manages their business different, but I encourage you to know your buyer, where they are delivering the grain they purchase, know up front when you are to get your money Be cautious; it is your livelihood on the line. Currently in Texas, the only recourse you have is to legally go after the money in court.

Current laws in Texas provide for the operation of a Grain Indemnity Fund, which would aid in protecting producers when buyers fail in paying producers for their grain. There is a board in place to manage this fund, and soon a grain indemnity program will be presented to producers across the state

to determine if they want to put into place a fund to help recover grain payments. Producers will have a chance to learn more about how this will work and how it would be funded in the very near future. Be alert for opportunities to learn the details. ●

## Pollinator protection, *continued*

tion, especially when applying insecticides or fungicides.

Today, 95 percent of the corn acreage uses neonicotinoids for production nationwide. With a restriction of pesticides such as this by the EPA, the loss could be devastating for corn farmers.

“Corn farmers rely on a number of pesticide products identified by EPA as acutely toxic to bees,” Scott says. “Farmers should incorporate best management practices into their production practices to accomplish the goals of the MP<sup>3</sup>.”

Such best management practices include having an open channel of communication with beekeepers and being aware of pollinators in your area.

The best way to stay on top of these regulations from the EPA is get involved and increase communication with local beekeepers prior to the applica-

tion of insecticides. TDA needs help from all farmers to use best management practices to help



reduce the impact of this act on managed pollinators.

In our state, the Texas Pollinator Protection Advisory Group has been formed to facilitate creation and implementation of the Texas MP<sup>3</sup>. The advisory group consists of stakeholders from different aspects of the

agricultural industry, including farmer commodity groups, beekeeper organizations, professional pest applicators and pollinator advocates.

“TDA supports the Texas Pollinator Protection Advisory Group in the development and implementation of the Texas MP<sup>3</sup> to promote pollinator health and ensure growers have access to essential crop protection tools,” Scott says. “It is important that farmers provide input to their representatives on the TPPAG.”

TDA and pollinators will need your help protecting the insects that help the crops across Texas and the nation blossom and grow. To keep up with pollinator actions and information from the EPA, TDA or the Texas MP<sup>3</sup>, check out the Texas Corn Producers website at [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org).

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### **Averhoff**, *continued from p. 2*

**5. Nutrient Management Plans:** Urge farmers to become deeply engaged in developing and implementing voluntary state Nutrient Management Plans for crop production.

**6. Proprietary Research:** Explore the expansion of proprietary research to develop new corn products to increase corn consumption 10-20 years from now.

**7. Digital Agriculture:** Participate in collaborative ef-

forts to shape the emergence of digital agriculture to ensure it protects the interests of crop farmers.

It will be up to each state and national organization to determine what is useful and what can be implemented. To read the full report, go to [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org).

At this mid-August writing, corn harvest is winding down in the Blackland Prairie. The crop was anywhere from above average yields to sal-

vaged for hay. It all depended on whether it stood in water and if it was fertilized adequately. I have heard reports of some really good non-irrigated corn in portions of the Panhandle that don't usually attempt the practice.

Texas Corn Producers Board works to improve the profitability of Texas corn farmers. Please contact us if there is an area you feel needs to be addressed. Have a safe and successful harvest.

# ODDS *AND* ENDS



## Call for videographers

Do you have excellent video skills? Do you want to earn money for your work? Do you love agriculture and teaching others about the industry? The Corn Producers Association of Texas needs your help.

CPAT is reaching out to collegiate and high school video classes for promotional videos about membership in the or-

ganization. These videos will be used on CPAT social media to help promote the organization and the agricultural industry as a whole.

The top 3-5 videos will be placed on the Facebook page and will be voted on from the farmers and followers of the page. Prizes will consist of \$500 for first place, \$250 for

second place, and third place will receive \$100 based on viewer votes.

Are you interested in the submitting a video? Guidelines and entry forms can be found on the CPAT website, [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org). Video submissions are due Friday, Nov. 20 at 5pm. Get started today!

## Success on the putting greens

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Corn Cob Classic is one for the history books. The Corn Producers Association of Texas hosted the Aug. 15 golf tournament in Dalhart, Texas, to benefit the Texas CornPAC, which supports legislators in D.C. and Austin offering a sound platform for corn farmers and rural Texas.

There were 25 teams that competed in a two-person scramble with various cash prizes lifting spirits all around. The first, second and third

place teams in each of the three flights received a cash prize as well as the longest drive for both men and women and the closest to the pin.

Angie Martin, CPAT industry relations staff member, was very excited about the participation numbers and the industry sponsors.

“Beyond those that came out to participate in this event, we couldn’t accomplish such a wonderful fundraiser without our sponsors,” Martin says. “The support of these local

and regional companies is what made this tournament a tremendous success. We couldn’t do it without them.”

If you were not able to attend this event, you can still support the Texas CornPAC through CPAT by making individual contributions to Texas CornPAC, 4205 N. Interstate 27, Lubbock, Texas 79403.

*According to FEC rules, corporate account contributions cannot be accepted. Texas Corn PAC contributions must be paid for with a personal check. Voluntary contributions may be accepted from any U.S. citizen. However, solicitation for contributions is limited to Corn Producers Association of Texas memberships.*

## Investing in Texas youth

Every year thousands of agricultural youth gather to compete in agriculture-related activities, learn about current events affecting the agricultural industry and how to advocate for those issues, and develop professional skills for a bright future. Texas Corn Producers is a firm believer in investing time and resources into the future of

agriculture – the youth of today.

At the 2015 Texas State FFA Convention and the 2015 Texas 4-H Roundup, attendees were able to converse and interact with TCP and learn about the association’s student scholarship opportunities. Students also had the ability to sign up for a raffle drawing of a Cabela’s gift card, play trivia games

about the corn, and become a youth member of the Corn Producers Association of Texas.

TCP is also launching a youth grant program this year for youth organization-sponsored educational programs. More information about this new opportunity is available on the TCP website at [www.TexasCorn.org](http://www.TexasCorn.org).

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*Administrative Intern*

# Upcoming Events

**Sept. 18-20, 2015**

LAND Program  
*Fort Worth, Texas*

**Oct. 13-15, 2015**

Ag in the Bag  
*Lubbock, Texas*

**Oct. 21-22, 2015**

South Texas Farm and  
Ranch Show  
*Victoria, Texas*

**Nov. 6-8, 2015**

American Ethanol Activation  
*Fort Worth, Texas*

**Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2015**

TCP Board Meetings  
*Amarillo, Texas*

**Dec. 1-3, 2015**

Amarillo Farm and  
Ranch Show  
*Amarillo, Texas*

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