

Farm bill facts for farmers in 2015 and the future

With a farm bill in place, farmers may be able to rest easier knowing the law is now on the books. Though the farm bill is proceeding as planned, a few things have changed for 2015 that farmers need to be made aware of.

Farmers need to know the timeline associated with the program decisions going into 2015 and understand that certain pieces of the farm bill may not take effect until 2016.

“We made a big deal out of the Actual Production History adjustment - where farmers could drop low numbers out of their 10-year history - being included in the farm bill, but it is not going to be in place for 2015,” Joe Outlaw, co-director of the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University, says. “I know there are a lot of people upset about that and they are trying to get it included in the implementation for 2015.”

According to the timeline laid out for the farm bill, decisions need to be made by the end of this year or early next year. This process can be simplified by using the decision-aid tool developed by the AFPC.

“The farm bill is still proceeding pretty much as expected,” Outlaw says. “There have been no surprises working with the USDA’s Farm Service Agency on the rules for the decision aid. The decision aid is in pretty good shape to give people a fairly good answer though it is not finalized yet.”

Though the decision-aid tool is meant to help farmers make informed choices regarding coverage, having information in order before starting the process may help cut down on decision making stress.

“Farmers can better navigate the farm bill by getting data together now and inputting the information,” Outlaw says. “That way, if any questions arise growers can get in contact with someone to troubleshoot.”

Farmers should also be aware that cotton is not covered under the new farm bill. Though this new twist might be a bit confusing, farmers can still use the decision-aid tool with the help of some additional materials.

“As far as the decision-aid tool we’ve developed goes, growers are still going to need FSA form 150EZ, because it still lists the old bases, which would include cotton.” Outlaw says.

Though all corn is covered under the farm bill with Price Loss Coverage and Agricultural Revenue Coverage, farmers should keep in mind that other factors are affecting different commodities. Resources have been produced for growers who would like to see whether their counties will be covered under the Supplemental Coverage Option and Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX) programs in 2015.

“Maps are out and farmers might want to start making

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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

These are busy times for producers statewide. Harvest is well underway or near completion across most of the

state with the exception of the High Plains, where the crop varies greatly due to a broad range of planting dates.

Yield reports from Central and South Texas are very good. Overall, the average yields look to be a bit above normal.

Producers should now have the data from the USDA-Farm Service Agency to proceed with starting the farm bill decision process. Yield and planted acres were sent to producers recently. As you have time, I encourage you to begin entering all the data on the Farm Bill Decision Aid developed by the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University that is available on our website, www.TexasCorn.org.

At the time of this writing, corn harvest is in full swing in the Blackland Prairie. Yields and quality have been excellent! This is the best corn year I have personally experienced since we moved to this area 30 years ago. I've had farmers from this area tell me they have already filled their own storage and are having to hunt places to either sell or store their corn.

Farm bill implementation is continuing to make progress. The USDA-Farm Service Agency mailed base, counter cyclical yield and planting histories for the 2008-2012 crop years in late July, and early August. After reviewing its data go to the farm bill calculator on the Texas Corn Producers website, www.TexasCorn.org,

to enter data from each of your farms. The program will calculate bases should you choose to update them. As rules become finalized by the USDA, the calculator will eventually help you decide whether to update bases, counter cyclical yields and choose either Agricultural Risk Coverage or Price Loss Coverage for each of your farms.

Local control of water continues to be a priority focus of the Texas Corn Producers Board. The board members of High Plains Underground Water District are to be commended for the approach they took in developing and adopting rules for the district. It was accomplished with stakeholder input in a fair and equitable manner. TCPB staff and directors

The data entered on the AFPC calculator will be saved, and as more decisions about choosing Price Loss Coverage or Agricultural Risk Coverage need to be made, you will not have to re-enter information.

Our Texas Corn Producers staff has been trained on the AFPC decision aid and is available to answer questions either by email or phone.

I hope many of you pre-sold some of this year's crop as the prices have certainly retreated to levels not seen in several years. The expectation is for a good crop across the Corn Belt, and I expect to see continued pressure in the market.



Scott Averhoff
TCPB Chairman
Waxahachie, Texas

work on behalf of Texas corn farmers to improve their profitability. Please contact us if there is an issue that you feel needs to be addressed. Have a safe and successful harvest!

Texas corn farmers graduate from DuPont New Leaders Program

Opportunities for personal growth in the agricultural industry are available to those looking for them. Recently, two Texas Corn farmers proved this during their experience as part of the DuPont New Leaders Program. Chad and Elsie Wetzels of Tom Bean graduated from the challenging and educational training program in July in conjunction with the National Corn Growers Association's Corn Congress.

The New Leaders Program was designed by NCGA and DuPont to help state affiliates identify emerging leaders and recruit potential board members. The program is open to one couple or single person per state who wish to participate in a hands-on communications and leadership-training program. The program also allows participants to meet and learn from other new leaders from around the country and expand their

agricultural knowledge. This chance to network with other growers was valued by the Wetzels.

"The best experience, in our opinion, was the opportunity to network with other couples and participate together as a couple," Chad says. "Also advocating to our own Congressman on behalf of our industry."

Now that they've graduated, the Wetzels hope to become more active in industry groups and efforts. Both Chad and Elsie plan to continue their networking with the other couples, while encouraging and supporting all of those in the class.

"The most eye-opening part of the program was the amount of research and science behind everything involved in farm-



Chad and Elsie Wetzels of Tom Bean are presented diploma

ing such as seed and chemicals," Chad says. "DuPont also explained the amount of time and money it takes to get a new product on the market."

The Wetzels praised DuPont for the funding of the program and for the excellent program content. They also expressed appreciation to the NCGA staff that assisted with the program and the Texas Corn Producers for providing the opportunity. 🌽

Strawn named County Agent of the Year

In the agricultural industry, actions are not motivated by the need for recognition, but the desire to make a difference. Scott Strawn, extension agent for Ochiltree County, certainly did not expect any recognition for the work he has done to promote corn production in his area. On July 14, Texas Corn Producers named Strawn the Outstanding Agent for Corn at the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association annual

meeting and awards luncheon in Lufkin.

Corn production continues to be the major commodity for producers in Ochiltree County and a tremendous economic contributor to the overall economy. Strawn and his county agriculture committee of agricultural leaders emphasized in-depth educational programming in areas of pre-plant decisions, variety selection, fertility, and particularly water management.

Because of the efforts of Strawn and his committee, corn farmers can now reap the benefits of the many educational events and water management techniques put on in Ochiltree County. TCP appreciates Strawn's efforts to better the production practices of corn farmers and is proud to present him as the 2014 TCAAA Outstanding Agent for Corn! 🌽

THE VOICE: Association News

A note from the President...

Water is the most important factor when it comes to any farmer's livelihood. Sometimes it can be too much water at the wrong time, but usually it is the lack of water that has the greatest impact on a farmer's bottom line. Fortunately, the drought has subsided in most parts of the state and good crop yields are being reported; however, there are still pockets of drought conditions that are of great concern. Even those areas that have received ample rainfall amounts for this season, are still in need of moisture to replenish the soil.

Groundwater regulation is still the hottest issue among irrigated producers. It is imperative that we keep control of our groundwater resources at the local level. The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District, has recently undergone a premier example of how this can be done efficiently and effectively by utilizing county committees, stakeholder meetings and making themselves personally available to landowners and interested parties. The HPWD adopted new rules that

limit how much water producers may pump. The resulting rules help protect the economic vitality of the region and private property rights, while allowing the local management of a precious resource.

Most farmers in the area have been supportive of these new rules. Although the rules do limit the amount of water that a farmer can pump, they were a bold step in protecting the landowner's right to continue to grow crops such as high yielding corn, cotton and alfalfa. Growers are exempted from reporting requirements if they only produce one irrigated crop on a given acre per year. By eliminating the irrigation of two harvested crops from the same acre in a year, water consumption will be reduced, thus extending the life of the aquifer. This allows the district to meet its Desired Future Conditions, while also eliminating the high cost of installing meters and the expense of burdensome reporting requirements. The HPWD board should be commended for adopting these new rules!



Jimmy Wedel
CPAT President
Muleshoe, Texas

Don't forget that Oct. 20 is the deadline to comment on the Environmental Protection Agency's latest proposed definition of what constitutes water. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA have proposed rules that would give the EPA broad and expansive powers under the Clean Water Act, by redefining what are the "waters of the United States". Please send your comments opposing these new rules to them at www2.epa.gov/uswaters.

Farm bill facts for farmers, *continued*

themselves aware of whether their counties will be covered under the program in 2015." Outlaw says.

With all of the recent changes to insurance and coverage, Texas Corn Producers is here to help answer any questions

that may arise. For maps of SCO corn coverage and more information about the farm bill, visit www.TexasCorn.org.

3rd Annual Corn Cob Classic a success

The 3rd annual Corn Cob Classic Golf Tournament was held Aug. 16 at the Dalhart Country Club in Dalhart. Organized by the Corn Producers Association of Texas, the tournament is an annual fundraiser for the Texas Corn PAC. Many local businesses and industry stakeholders sponsored the event making this tournament one of the most successful since its founding.

Thirty-one teams battled in a two-person scramble on a Saturday afternoon. The teams from near Dalhart and afar had the oppor-



tunity to be awarded first through third place in four flights with cash prizes. Special awards were presented to the longest driver in both the men's and women's categories, closest to the hole, and the longest putt.

CPAT directors Robert Gordon and Larry Mason, both of Dalhart, thanked all the sponsors and players as another Corn Cob Classic came to a close and was recorded as a great success. With plans already underway for next year's event, be sure to watch your CPAT newsletter for further details!

If you would like to support those who defend agriculture, individual contributions can be made to the Texas CornPAC, 4205 N. Interstate 27, Lubbock, Texas 79403.

Time to take action on WOTUS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have released a proposed rule to revise the definition of "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) for all Clean Water Act programs. The public has the opportunity to weigh in on the matter as well. Comments on the proposed rule can be submitted to the EPA until Oct. 20.

For additional information about the proposed rule and to submit comments, visit www2.epa.gov/uswaters. The Corn Producers Association of Texas has further details and key points for farmers available on its website, www.TexasCorn.org, as well.

According to the EPA and the Corps, the purpose of the rule is to "clarify protection under the CWA for streams and wetlands" and that it "will benefit businesses by increasing efficiency in determining coverage of the CWA."

Despite these agencies' stance on the matter, there is a grave concern that the definitional changes contained in the proposed WOTUS rule would significantly expand federal control of land and water resources across the nation, triggering substantial additional permitting and regulatory requirements.

As presented, the proposal provides essentially no limit

to CWA federal jurisdiction. It establishes broader definitions of existing regulatory categories such as tributaries, and regulates new areas that are not jurisdictional under current regulations such as ditches, adjacent non-wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, and other waters.

Additionally, the proposed rule directly contradicts prior U.S. Supreme Court decisions, which imposed limits on the extent of CWA jurisdiction.

CPAT encourages its members and the state's farmers to stay abreast of this issue, and make their voices heard by submitting comments.

Texas corn farmers go to Washington

With agriculture in the media for a multitude of reasons, it's more important now than ever for our industry to have a positive presence in Washington. In July, a group of Texas corn farmers and Corn Producers Association of Texas staff traveled to our nation's capitol to visit with legislators and participate in the National Corn Growers Association's Corn Congress.

During the event, growers had the opportunity to visit with elected officials as well as agency personnel to discuss issues and concerns relevant to Texas corn farmers.

"During Corn Congress, growers have the opportunity to be right in the midst of what is happening in Washington," Wesley Spurlock, a NCGA and CPAT

board member from Stratford, says.

"Not only do we get to hear from our representation in Washington, but we have the opportunity to make them aware of our concerns as well."

Along with all of the opportunities to meet various representatives of our state, Corn Congress also serves as the setting for policies that will govern how NCGA conducts its work.

"When you present resolutions at Corn Congress, you're helping set policy for the rest of the year," Spurlock says. "Adjusting policy allows NCGA to better serve their producer members."

One of the opportunities available at Corn Congress is to become involved in action teams through NCGA. Though

there are several action teams that vary in their purposes, all teams share the same desire to further the continued success of the corn industry.

"During the first couple of days at Corn Congress, I attended trade and biotechnology action team meetings where we discussed shipments being rejected in China," Robert Gordon, a CPAT member from Dalhart, says. "We also met with a lot of industry people about some of the new products that have been approved in the U.S., but rejected in China."

No matter the role at Corn Congress, one thing is clear: the corn industry is in good hands when growers have the opportunity to be present in Washington. 🌽

A harvest against hunger

Eleven dollars a month. For what many people may spend on one meal, Amarillo-based hunger relief organization Snack Pak 4 Kids can feed a child for a month. The mission of Snack Pak 4 Kids is to end weekend hunger for children living in the Texas Panhandle and they are tackling this goal with the help of some Texas corn farmers.

In addition to their much-loved weekend backpack program, the Amarillo branch of Snack Pak 4 Kids recently went a little further

in their quest to feed hungry children. Early in the morning on Saturday, Aug. 16, volunteers gathered in Wildorado at the farms of David Cleavinger and his wife, Jackie, as well as Bill Gruhlkey and his wife, Timma, who generously gifted in-the-field sweet corn to the organization. Volunteers worked from 8 to 11 a.m. harvesting the corn for families in need.

Finding healthy and fresh food for Snack Pak 4 Kids can be challenging and

these farmers are helping to meet those challenges by contributing their time and resources to help kids in need. Cleavinger said the 2 acres would yield about 40,000 ears of corn. With 10 ears per bag, that's enough bags for 4,000 families.

If you're looking for a way to give back to your community like these farmers did, Snack Pak 4 Kids might be just the way to do it! Visit www.snackpak4kids.org for more information on how you can help children in need. 🌽

ODDS *AND* ENDS



Texas Corn to promote American Ethanol

Get ready to start your engines! Texas Corn Producers is once again taking part in race weekend at Texas Motor Speedway to promote American Ethanol.

Set for Oct. 31-Nov. 2, TCP will play an important part in the weekend, which includes the Camping World Truck, NASCAR Nationwide and

NASCAR Sprint Cup races. TCP will be interacting with the public — on the midway and in the campgrounds — throughout the weekend. An informational ethanol exhibit will be on site for race attendees to explore, while TCP volunteers and staff answer any questions about corn and ethanol production that the public may have.

This event is a great opportunity to reach out to the public to promote both corn production and ethanol use. Be sure to stop by the midway exhibit if you can make it, and watch out for the American Ethanol green starter flags displayed around the track!

Texas Corn congratulates 2013 scholarship winners

Each year, the Corn Producers Association of Texas selects two deserving students to receive scholarships meant to help them pursue their college degree. Last year's recipients were Braden McInnis of Montalba and Jesse Terry of New Home.

With many issues facing agriculturalists, the future of our industry lies heavily on future generations of farmers and how they communicate our story.

"Corn is a vital factor in our everyday lives! Although corn is a necessity to everyone,

there are several challenges that hinder corn producers across the nation," McInnis says. "I feel that the main problem facing corn producers is the lack of support by the public and government."

Other difficulties may present themselves in less obvious ways.

"Keeping up with technological advancements is a constant issue for corn producers and others working in the agriculture industry," Terry says. "Although a growing number of U.S. farmers use smart phones

and other mobile devices, there are still farmers that have not yet discovered the value of technology."

Regardless of the challenge, CPAT is in good hands with quality youth members to continue into the future. Entries are now being accepted for the 2014 CPAT scholarship program. All entries must be submitted electronically by 5 p.m. on Nov. 30 or mailed to the CPAT office and postmarked by Nov. 30. Visit www.TexasCorn.org for more information on the CPAT scholarship program!

NCGA names new Chief Executive Officer

After a comprehensive recruitment process with many strong candidates, the National Corn Growers Association announced Sept. 2 that Chris Novak will become the organization's next chief executive officer. Novak is taking the place of 14-year veteran Rick Tolman, who earlier this year

announced his intention to retire from the organization.

"We're thrilled to have Chris join us at NCGA," NCGA President Martin Barbre, a corn grower from Illinois, says. "He has all the right qualifications to take the reins of this growing organization and keep it

moving in the right direction, continuing the tradition of success we saw under Rick Tolman."

Novak's first day as NCGA CEO will be Monday, Oct. 13. He currently serves as chief executive officer of the National Pork Board, a position he has held since October 2008.

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Upcoming Events

It's a busy time of year! Visit www.TexasCorn.org for the most up-to-date list of events.

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