

AGNOTES

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ICON To Host Charter Bus Trip To USDA/DOJ Meeting In Colo.

On June 24, the Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska (ICON) hosted a meeting for producers with the Organization of Competitive Markets in Valentine, NE. ICON was encouraged to see close to 100 producers in attendance interested in listening to the OCM representatives.

The presenters included OCM board members, Mike Callicrate, Randy Stephenson and Executive Director Fred Stokes. A question and answer period allowed producers to gain information which otherwise would not be available. ICON members learned about the lack of a competitive market and the recently released proposed rule changes to the Packer and Stockers Act.

McVain Trading was also present and gave a market forecast. With the current forecast, the cattlemen were forced to face hard facts about the current condition of the calf market, which predict it is not sustainable.

ICON encourages producers to get involved and make sure the proposed rules in the Packers and Stockers act are upheld. As producers today, there is a golden opportunity to have everyone's voice heard. By logging onto the Federal Registry site, the proposed rules can be read and comments made as an individual or group.

Besides commenting, which is very important, ICON also encourages members and cattlemen across the state of Nebraska to mark their calendars for August 27. At 8:00 a.m., in Fort Collins, CO, a scheduled meeting will be conducted with the Department of Justice and USDA to hear comments on the Packers and Stockers Act.

“We as producers need to take this opportunity to help shape the future of our industry,” said ICON Executive Director Destry Brown. “The time to be proactive and get involved is now.”

Realizing the importance of this meeting and what a tremendous opportunity this is for cattlemen to speak up, ICON is organizing a charter bus to take producers to Fort Collins. Many details will be ironed out but it is possible more than one bus will be chartered and more than one route planned. ICON is already contacting sponsors to reduce the price of the bus. Producers would be responsible for the overnight stay and meals. ICON will reserve a block of rooms in advance.

Each charter bus holds 56 passengers and ICON is asking for advance registration in order to determine number and routes of buses. Brown is taking registrations at 308-458-2244. Sign-up deadline is August 6th. ICON Communications Director Linda Wuebben can be contacted also for more information at 402-357-3778.

Livestock Seminar To Be Offered To Potential Feeders

SIoux FALLS— A livestock seminar is scheduled to be held Wednesday, July 21, for those interested in expanding or building a cattle barn. The seminar will feature a tour of the Opportunities Farm of Lennox, presentations and tours of other barns in the area. Registration will open at 8:30am with tours starting at 9:30a.m.

Presentation topics to include animal performance, barns vs. open lots, what makes a good barn and manure storage options. Speakers Dr. Holland, Beef feedlot specialist, and Dr. Pohl, ag engineer, from the South Dakota Extension service. Brett Pettigrew, ag engineer with the Natural Resources conservation Service (NRCS), will also present.

A free lunch will be available for attendees. Those interested in attending can RSVP by July 13 to the Ag United office at: info@agunited.org or 336-3622.

Directions to the Opportunities Farm from Lennox: South on 466th Avenue, turn East onto 286th street. Address: 46633 286th St. Lennox, S.D. Watch for signs!

The event is sponsored in part by: Ag United for South Dakota, South Dakota Cooperative Extension service, Natural Resources conservation Service (NRCS) and South Dakota Research and Promotion Council.

Shaping How Americans Eat: The Debate Rages

BY MELISSA HEALY
McClatchy News Service

The U.S. government has just served up a heaping mouthful to people who eat — the Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010.

It not only squarely addresses the undeniable — that two-thirds of American adults are either overweight or obese and that our children are on a similar trajectory — it also recasts some advice we have heard before: urging Americans, for instance, to shift their diets away from meat and animal protein and fats — foods such as red meat, cheese and butter — toward a more “plant-based diet,” a term that includes not just fresh fruits and vegetables but also foods such as nuts and lentils and olive or canola oil.

Then the report goes further. It recommends that we slash our salt intake by almost a third. It makes clear that people put their health at risk when they, on a weekly basis, do less than 2 hours of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of high-intensity exercise. And it discusses at length the social and economic forces at work that have made good diets and adequate exercise easy for Americans to achieve.

The report — 677 pages long and two years in the drafting — is the first step in the federal government's effort to (again) shape what, and how, Americans should eat to optimize their well-being. It has embarked on this effort every five years since 1980.

The bland title belies a history of controversy. In the last two decades, clinical nutrition researchers have generated tomes of maddeningly contradictory advice for healthful eating. At the same time, nutrition watchdogs have charged that the food and restaurant industries and American farmers — in short, sectors with powerful financial interests at stake — have effectively hijacked the dietary guidelines.

Meanwhile, Americans have grown fatter and sicker.

With its latest report, an

advisory panel of 13 independent experts in health and nutrition has tried to (again) lay to rest these controversies and lay the groundwork for dietary guidelines based on research evidence.

Released June 15, the report (available online at www.cnpp.usda.gov) will be open for public comment until July 15. It's a joint product of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY ABOUT THE DIETARY GUIDELINES REPORT

Some see sound advice and applaud the suggestions for a more plant-based diet. But others say the new guidelines can be confusing or don't go far enough in combating obesity.

MARGO WOOTAN, director of nutrition policy, Center for Science in the Public Interest (Washington)

The dietary guidelines provide sound advice for the majority of Americans. Basic nutrition advice hasn't changed much over the 30 years that the dietary guidelines for Americans has been published. It has long advised people to eat less unhealthy fats, salt and added sugars and more fruits, vegetables and whole grains — and, for the most part, that advice has been ignored by individuals and institutions.

The new Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee report, at long last, recognizes that what is most needed is an unprecedented effort to help people follow the dietary guidelines, including changes in policy and the food environment. The report wisely recommends that USDA and HHS develop a national strategy to help people eat better, including ramping up nutrition education, expanding access to fruits and vegetables, and getting industry to provide more healthful products.

The refinement of the advice to reduce unhealthy fat intake is a good step toward better health; i.e., limiting saturated fat intake to less than 7 percent of

total calories and avoiding artificial trans fat. But I do think the advice to limit cholesterol-raising fats (saturated fats exclusive of stearate and trans fat) to less than 5 percent to 7 percent of energy is misguided. Stearate may not raise cholesterol levels, but it is still not clear whether it contributes to heart disease in other ways. The advice is too complicated, and impossible for people to follow, since stearate is not listed on food labels.

DONALD HENSRUD, medical editor in chief, “The Mayo Clinic Diet,” The Mayo Clinic (Rochester, Minn.)

In the past, the dietary guidelines were for “all healthy Americans.” That didn't place enough emphasis on the increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity over the past few decades, along with other chronic diseases related to diet, nutrition and physical activity.

Currently 1 in 3 adult Americans is obese and 2 in 3 are overweight or obese. These guidelines have been updated to provide the strongest recommendations to date from the dietary guidelines to help Americans deal with this significant public health problem.

They have expanded their recommendations to include the best dietary advice to help prevent and treat cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes mellitus, and also include broadened recommendations for children.

They have also added chapters on the total diet and practical recommendations for people to follow, and on the environmental and societal aspects of implementing the guidelines, both of which are very important.

They summarize four major findings that are very appropriate (reduce obesity, increase plant-based foods, decrease sugar and solid fats, and increase physical activity). But there is so much information here, it is challenging to summarize these recommendations into easy-to-understand distinct points, so it will be challenging for most people to read and understand. The final document

is extremely comprehensive, well thought out, up to date and practical. Whether this will change the way Americans eat will depend on other aspects of implementation.

MARLENE SCHWARTZ, deputy director, Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, Yale University (New Haven, Conn.)

They acknowledged several things that I had not seen before. First, there was a clear acknowledgment that obesity and overweight are major health problems among Americans. Second, they identified elements of the environment that promote poor nutrition. Finally, they noted that to change the American diet, we need a change in the whole food system — not just a greater emphasis on personal responsibility.

My favorite sentence was from the conclusion of the executive summary, where they encourage all stakeholders to help “make every choice available to Americans a healthy choice.” So often, people who sell unhealthy foods say that they are only “providing choices,” as if promoting foods high in sugar, salt and fat is some type of patriotic gesture. Choice does not have to be choosing between apple slices and French fries; it could be choosing among apples, oranges and pears. I would be thrilled if we could get to the point where people realize that an array of healthy, delicious foods still provides choices.

I was also very pleased to see the guidelines name specific types of foods as foods that we need to limit. The label SoFAS (shorthand for solid fats and added sugars) will be useful if people can really understand what it means. Last time, the USDA talked about “discretionary calories,” which seem to now be called SoFAS. I never felt that the American public figured out what discretionary calories were and how few they were supposed to eat in a day. My worry with SoFAS is that foods don't come labeled with their calories from SoFAS specified. So, some foods are all SoFAS (candy, cake, sugar sweetened

beverages and butter), but most SoFAS are consumed along with other types of calories (like pizza, high-fat cheeses), so it will be hard for people to know how many SoFAS calories they have used up. I would like to see some educational materials that show exactly where these calories come from and how few you can consume within a day and still stay within these guidelines.

DR. DEAN ORNISH, president, The Preventive Medicine Research Institute (Sausalito, Calif.)

This report is an improvement over the previous guidelines. There seems to be a convergence about what constitutes a healthy way of eating for most people that is reflected in the new dietary guidelines. That's encouraging. There's a growing awareness that a healthy diet is plant-based, low in red meat and higher in seafood; low in refined carbohydrates, such as refined sugar and white flour; lower in sodium, trans fats, saturated fat and processed foods; and higher in unrefined carbohydrates, such as whole grains, fruits and vegetables in natural forms.

Although it recommends seafood in general, it doesn't distinguish between types of seafood in particular. For example, it would have been helpful to distinguish between seafood such as salmon that is rich in beneficial omega-3 fatty acids from seafood such as tuna and swordfish that is higher in harmful mercury.

Finally, it would have been helpful to discuss more fully that what we include in our diet is as important as what we exclude. There are literally hundreds of thousands of protective substances that are found primarily in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and soy products. Instead of thinking about diet primarily in terms of reducing risk of illness and premature death, I find it much more useful to talk about how much better you look and feel when you eat and live more healthfully. Joy of living is much more sustainable than fear of dying.

Johnson Announces Funding For Colonial Collapse Disorder

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) today announced that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide more than \$6 million in national disaster assistance for honeybee producers who suffered losses in 2008 primarily because of Colonial Collapse Disorder (CCD). South Dakota ranked second in the country in honey production in 2009. This assistance is part of a release of \$10 million total nationally from the USDA's Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

This funding is much-needed for South Dakota honeybee producers, who have faced a number of challenges in recent years,” Johnson said. “Honeybee producers play a vital role in our state's agriculture sector and I will continue to work in the Senate to dis-

cover the causes of Colonial Collapse Disorder and ensure that the producers are able to stay in business.”

As a member of the Senate Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee, Johnson has continually fought for funding to research CCD. From 2007 through 2010, Johnson secured more than \$37 million nationally for CCD research.

Under ELAP, producers are compensated for losses that are not covered under other Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Payment programs established by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, specifically Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

FLAX

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benefits to a family's food menu. The nutty flavor can add a crunch appeal to a morning bowl of cereal or give that favorite cookie a healthy boost.

For the flax farmer, there are a few things to remember when growing the small-seeded grain. It is planted in early spring, April to May, not very deep and usually harvested in late August. The crop is normally cut in windrows and then combined which are characteristics similar to oats. But the flax is typically not an organic crop because it does not compete well with weeds. Herbicides will be needed. It is also a crop which will need to be rotated in order to avoid the spread of disease.

The flax plant grows to about 50-60 centimeters or about 20 inches and has to be combined very carefully. Since the seed is so small, the combine and trucks or wagons must be well-sealed with tape or caulked or the seed will fall through and leak out on the trip to the elevator. Market price is based on a nine percent moisture test and the flaxseed will not keep well if the moisture is over 11 percent.

The flax flower has five petals and a boll or capsule which contains the seed. As many as ten seeds can be contained in the boll but usually the number is six-eight. The flax stems are high fiber and a straw by-product for the crop which is used in paper and linen production.

“Flax is more common further north around Watertown in an area where the climate is more suitable for shorter season crops,” said Grady. It is too cool an area for the traditional corn or soybeans grown here in southeast South Dakota.

There seems to be an upswing in the demand for flaxseed as linen in the U.S. and now with the healthy advantage the flax adds to so many food stuffs in the diet, it may increase even more in popularity.

FARMS

From Page 1B

replenish the fertility in the soil and Wilken took them and Burlin to the oat field to explain how he keeps weeds out by planting alfalfa between the oat plants in the spring when the ground is freezing and unfreezing.

For the boys, it was a trip into a world they knew little about. They walked past a 1930s Sears house made from a kit that sat across from a field of soybeans. They watched a cow feed its calf. Keeping his distance, Axel wondered if the milk the calf was drinking tasted like the milk he drinks at home.

Hans wanted to know what farmers do with cows. “Do they shoot them?” he asked. “No, they don't shoot them,” Burlin said and smiled.

The tour ended on a dirt road dividing the cornfield from the oat

field. The boys spotted round bales of hay and climbed on top of them.

“I'm pretending this is a train and I'm a giant,” said 8-year-old Hans, the younger of the two boys.

As the boys played, Miller and Burlin talked about raising turkeys and adding cows. The animal waste could help fertilize the soil, they said. As they walked toward the cornfield, they noted the weeds that grew because synthetic pesticides weren't used. Weeds take nutrients from the soil that otherwise would nurture the corn plants, the farmers explained.

Miller bent down and started pulling weeds. Burlin followed suit. If a conventional farmer had seen them pulling weeds from a cornfield by hand, Burlin said, they would become the town's laughingstock. They laughed at themselves.

Standing on a dirt road, Miller fixed his gaze on the horizon.

“Now you have been down the road less traveled,” Miller said to Burlin.

“I'm traveling,” Burlin said.

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THE PERIPHERAL VASCULAR LAB at Avera Sacred Heart recently performed its 500th vascular procedure.

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PICTURED: Cath Lab Team, including Emily Shurman, CVT; Dr. Luke Serck, Yankton Medical Clinic, PC.; and Lisa Miller, RRT, RDSC

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Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.

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