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INSIDE TODAY



American Profile

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Farmers Making Up For Lost Time

BY JIM SUHR
AP Business Writer

ST. LOUIS — U.S. farmers who could only watch helplessly this spring as storm after storm left their fields a muddy mess took to their tractors en masse last week and planted a record amount of corn acreage, even in areas where conditions are still far from perfect.

Until last week, Corn Belt farmers were enduring their slowest planting season in decades because of the wet weather. But the U.S. Department of Agriculture said in its weekly crop progress update that 71 percent of the corn crop in key grain states had been sown as of Sunday. That's up from just 28 percent a week earlier, and it brought the figure closer in line to the 79 percent average that farmers had planted by this point in the season over the previous five years.

Huge strides are being made in Iowa, the nation's leading corn-producing state, where 71 percent of the state's corn crop is in the ground. That's more than quadruple what had been planted just a week earlier. Three-quarters of Illinois corn crop is sown, as is 70 percent of the crop in Missouri, Kansas and Minnesota.

That one-week rally — 43 percent of the nation's corn crop planted over seven days — was only outdone by a week in 1992, when farmers had significantly fewer acres to plant, according to Tuesday's Daily Livestock Report. But "when accounting for the increase in corn acres that are expected to be planted this year, (last week) is by far the biggest number of acres ever planted in a one-week

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Oklahoma

Search After Tornado Nears End

Officials Confident All Bodies Found; Death Toll At 24

BY SEAN MURPHY AND CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN
Associated Press

MOORE, Okla. — Helmeted rescue workers raced Tuesday to complete the search for survivors and the dead in the Oklahoma City suburb where a mammoth tornado destroyed countless homes, cleared lots down to bare red earth and claimed 24 lives, including those of nine children.

Scientists concluded the storm was a rare and extraordinarily powerful type of twister known as an EF5, ranking it at the top of the scale used to measure tornado strength. Those twisters are capable of lifting reinforced buildings off the ground, hurling cars like missiles and stripping trees completely free of bark.

Residents of Moore began returning to their homes a day after the tornado smashed some neighborhoods

into jagged wood scraps and gnarled pieces of metal. In place of their houses, many families found only empty lots.

After nearly 24 hours of searching, the fire chief said he was confident there were no more bodies or survivors in the rubble.

"I'm 98 percent sure we're good," Gary Bird said at a news conference with the governor, who had just completed an aerial tour of the disaster zone.

Authorities were so focused on the search effort that they had yet to establish the full scope of damage along the storm's long, ruinous path.

They did not know how many homes were gone or how many families had been displaced. Emergency crews had trouble navigating devastated neighborhoods

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GENE BLEVINS/ZUMA PRESS/MCT
An injured person is removed from the rubble in the aftermath of a huge tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma, on Monday. At least 24 people were killed, including at least nine children.

A DRIZZLY CHAMPIONSHIP



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Golfers at the South Dakota Class AA State Girls Golf Tournament in Yankton were forced to break out their umbrellas Tuesday before hitting the links at the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. Drizzle and light rain fell throughout much of Tuesday's final round, which saw Pierre rally past defending champion Sioux Falls O'Gorman to win its first girls' state golf crown. For details, see page 8.

Senate Votes For Cut To Food Stamps

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate voted Tuesday to keep a \$400 million annual cut — or roughly a half of 1 percent — to the food stamp program as part of a major five-year farm bill.

Food stamps now cost almost \$80 billion annually and are used by 1 in 7 Americans. The House and Senate have differed sharply on how much the domestic food aid should be cut, with the House version of the farm bill proposing to cut five times more than the

Senate bill and change eligibility rules for recipients.

The Senate Agriculture Committee included the small cut in its version of the farm bill in an effort to appease the House Republicans and also to end what its chairwoman, Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., said was a misuse of the program. The Senate bill would target states that give people who don't have heating bills very small amounts of heating assistance so they can auto-

matically qualify for higher food stamp benefits.

With Stabenow objecting to both amendments, the chamber rejected, 58-40, a Republican effort to expand the cuts and also rejected, 70-26, a Democratic effort to eliminate them. The amendment by Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., would have expanded the cuts to \$3.5 billion a year; the amendment by Sen. Kristen Gillibrand, D-N.Y., would have eliminated the cuts.

County Mulls Funding Help Line Service

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Should Yankton County join two neighboring counties in purchasing the use of a help line that people could call to get information about things such as child care services, government programs or local support groups?

Yankton County Emergency Management Director Paul Scherschligt told the Yankton County Commission Tuesday that the commissions of Bon Homme and Hutchinson counties have agreed to implement 211 services if Yankton County agrees to join them.

"They won't join up unless the three counties go together, because they need the population base," he said.

By calling 211, which is based in Sioux Falls and was established there in 1974, residents in the three counties could obtain information on community resources, volunteer services, child care resources, suicide and crisis support, and military and family support.

The cost of the service would be 60 cents per person annually, bringing the estimated cost for Yankton County to \$13,462. For all three counties, Scherschligt said the annual



Scherschligt

cost would be \$22,091.

Scherschligt proposed that his office be the administrator for 211 in Yankton County. He said he is particularly interested in the

service because of how it could be used in an emergency.

"When the ice storm came through (Sioux Falls this spring), they don't know what they would have done without 211," Scherschligt said he was told by his counterpart in Minnehaha County.

The 211 operators can get information directly from the county's emergency operations center during an emergency and make sure citizens are getting a consistent message. The service also takes pressure off the 911 system, because fewer people use it for non-emergency calls.

"I see it as a very valuable tool that we could use for our county," Scherschligt said.

Yankton Mayor Nancy Wernande and Lauren Hanson, the executive director for United Way & Volunteer Services of Greater Yankton, were present

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New Owner Helps Keep Tripp Grocery Alive

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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TRIPP — RF Buche wants his customers to feel as if he's always there for them.

With life-sized cut-outs of Buche (pronounced boo-ee) in the store, shoppers at his Tripp grocery may feel that way.

The signs humorously welcome customers and point them to departments or special sales. But Wagner grocer Buche's purchase of the store also carries a serious message — his commitment to keeping a grocery in Tripp.

The Hutchinson County community of about 650 residents was in danger of losing its only supermarket. Long-time owners Jim and Myra Weber were looking to retire and sell the grocery-hardware store.

"I'll be 71 years old in July. I didn't want to go on with the grocery store," Jim Weber said.

However, Weber didn't take lightly the decision to sell, as his family had owned the business for 65 years. He wanted the new owner to show a commitment not only to the business but also to Tripp and the surrounding area.



buying the store), I knew he was a good businessman. RF was a good choice (as the new owner). I'm really pleased."

Buche jokes that he showed his passion for the grocery business at 4 years of age, when he snuck out of the house and walked through blizzard conditions to join his father at work.

RF Buche now owns nine "Buche Foods" locations in six communities — White River, Mission, Lake Andes, Gregory, Wagner and Tripp. He also owns "Gus Stop" gas stations and convenience stores, named after both his great-grandfather and his 4-year-old son.

Buche admits he wasn't necessarily looking to buy an-

"Myra and I have known RF and his family for a number of years. My dad worked for G.F. Buche, RF's great-grandfather," Weber said. "When RF met with me (about



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

A Buche Foods employee places an order inside a customer's car outside the Tripp grocery and convenience store. With the former owner looking to retire, Tripp's only grocery store faced closure if Wagner grocer RF Buche — who owns nine locations in six communities — had not purchased the Tripp store and neighboring gas station in February.

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Obama Opposes GOP Pipeline Bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House says President Barack Obama opposes a House bill that would speed approval of the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada to Texas.

The White House said Tuesday that the bill "seeks to circumvent longstanding and proven processes" by removing a requirement for a presidential permit. The legislation also says no new environmental studies are needed.

House Republicans say the bill is needed to ensure the long-delayed pipeline is built. The project, which first was proposed in 2008, would carry oil extracted from tar sands in western Canada to refineries along the Texas Gulf Coast.

A House vote is expected Wednesday.

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