

OPINION

Are We Entitled To Farm Payments?

BY RITA BRHEL
P&D Correspondent

We all know that agriculture will get hit with the budget ax as Congress continues its deficit reduction talks. Heck, no one is safe now, whether we're talking agriculture or environmental conservation. There is just too much money that needs to be cut.



Rita
BRHEL

One of the areas that the House and Senate ag committees is looking to reduce national spending is in farm payments. Billions of dollars are paid out every year to farmers, some receiving millions just by themselves. It's really kind of outrageous: No other for-profit business owners outside of agricultural production are eligible to receive this kind of governmental pay-out.

While farm payments were designed to secure the nation's food supply, this program misses the mark. This is evident in the feedback that House Ag ranking member Collin Peterson is hearing from constituents: producers believe they're entitled to that money. Farmers don't view farm payments as what they are, a safety net, but as a guaranteed part of their annual income. Peterson explained: "In this climate, we can't justify a program that's going to pay people when they don't need it. That's gotten us in a lot of trouble — and we have to get away from it."

It really irks me that farmers feel entitled to that money. How about you earn your money like everyone else?

If you're nervous about a storm wiping out your crop, buy some insurance.

If you're anxious about the market, learn to weather the ups and downs like everyone else.

And if you can't make a living on your commodity without a government hand-out, learn to how to better manage your finances so you can — just like any other business has to.

And if it turns out that the government does hand you a check, be grateful and then don't you dare complain about government oversight into how you produce your commodities — the government earned that right when it basically paid for a share of your farm through that payment.

I know there are lots of different sides to every issue, but can America justify this program?

I agree with Peterson that while there needs to be a safety net in case of some sort of major, widespread disaster, the government — our taxpayer dollars — shouldn't be going to supplement some guy's income whose commodities didn't just get wiped out by a storm, drought, or market bottoming out. Let's just have farm payments available when it's really needed.

Drainage Research Forum Set For Okoboji Nov. 22

BROOKINGS — SDSU Extension invites those interested in agricultural drainage and water management research in the Upper Midwest to the 12th Annual Drainage Research Forum held Nov. 22 in Okoboji, Iowa.

Registration will begin at 8 a.m., and the forum will run from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. The forum will be held at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center in Okoboji, Iowa.

The program will feature results and updates on drainage research and on-farm projects by university and agency research leaders from Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota. Topics will include: discussion of biomass production strategies and the impacts on drained lands; two-stage ditch design; saturated buffers; phosphorous losses from tile drains; pumped outlets; as well as, farmer and stakeholder perspectives.

Information about the forum including the program, registration, and location is available at the forum website which is located at <http://www.aep.iastate.edu/drif/homepage.html>. Lunch is included in the registration fee.

The forum is jointly sponsored



METRO GRAPHICS

Environmental Training Session For CAFO Operators Nov. 16

BROOKINGS — SDSU Extension offers an environmental training session for operators of concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, is set for Nov. 16 in Huron.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Crossroads Convention Center, 100 Fourth St. S.W. in Huron. The cost includes lunch, breaks and training materials. The program begins at 8:50 a.m. and concludes at approximately 4:45 p.m. To register for the training, call Candy Willms at (605) 688-5141.

Specialists from South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are offering the training.

This training fulfills the environmental and manure-management training requirement to obtain a livestock permit for CAFOs from the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Producers, and any other interested individuals who are not currently applying for a permit, can also benefit from the information and are encouraged to attend. Current federal (EPA and USDA) and state water pollution control programs encourage livestock producers, even those who do not need

permits, to voluntarily adopt livestock production and manure management practices that protect water quality.

During the morning session, SDSU Extension air quality and waste management specialist, Erin Cortus, will discuss water quality. SDSU Extension beef specialist, Julie Walker, will lead a session on livestock nutrition options for reducing nitrogen and phosphorus content of manure. Jason Roggow, a natural resources engineer with the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, will give an overview of the South Dakota DENR Livestock Permit program.

In the afternoon, NRCS soil quality specialist, Jeff Hemenway, will discuss managing nitrogen and phosphorus in land applications of manure. Joel Poore, state conservation agronomist with the NRCS, will talk about practices for reducing soil and manure loss from fields and will also host a session on using worksheets for land application of manure. Cortus will conclude the day's training with a session on air quality and odor.

Certified Crop Advisor credits are available for attending this program.

S.D. Farm Bureau Meeting Set For S.F.

SIOUX FALLS — South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation (SDFBF) will be celebrating an all-time high membership, surpassing 12,000 families, as members of the state's largest general farm and ranch organization gather at the Ramkota in Sioux Falls for their 94th annual meeting. This year's meeting, which runs Nov. 18-20, will focus on "Sharing Ag's Story."

The convention will include updates on state, national, and international agricultural issues, as well as a time for Farm Bureau producer members to set the organization's policy for the coming year. The agenda includes an overview of Farm Bureau activities in the 112th Congress, changes at the SDSU College of Agriculture, including research and Extension, and a chance to

hear from State Ag Secretary Walt Bones and State Veterinarian Dr. Dustin Oedekoven. Speakers will also give an update on international marketing issues, with briefings from the U.S. Meat Export Federation and the US Grains Council.

The Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee is sponsoring three competitions for young producers, to determine who will represent South Dakota at the American Farm Bureau Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii, in January. The Women's Leadership Team will be showcasing this year's "Accurate Ag Books" for elementary students, as well as

Tuberculosis In Cattle: What You Should Know

BROOKINGS — The recent confirmation of bovine tuberculosis in a beef herd in Hutchinson County by the South Dakota Animal Industry Board presents an opportunity for cattle producers and others to review important aspects of this uncommon animal disease, according to SDSU Extension Veterinarian Russ Daly.

"While tuberculosis in U.S. cattle is very uncommon now compared to when eradication efforts began in 1917, the disease still shows up periodically. State officials investigated tuberculosis in two South Dakota herds in early 2010. As will be done with the current case, the 2010 cases were extensively investigated by the South Dakota Animal Industry Board," said Daly. "Because of quick, effective action on the part of state and federal officials, South Dakota was allowed to keep its 'TB-Accredited-Free' status."

"Bovine tuberculosis is a long-term, slowly developing disease of cattle. Its incubation time ranges from months to years. Most often, infected cattle will show little to no outward signs of infection," Daly said. "When signs are present, they will often be vague, such as weight loss, depression, and sluggishness."

"Transmission of tuberculosis between animals occurs when susceptible animals are in close contact with respiratory secretions or aerosols from infected animals. Close contact is necessary for transmission; the infection is not considered to spread easily between cattle separated by any distance," he said.

Cases of bovine tuberculosis are usually diagnosed on the basis of tell-tale abnormalities found on slaughter inspection. Tuberculosis in live cattle is diagnosed using the caudal fold test, where a small dose of tuberculin is injected into the skin around the tail and subsequent swelling around the injection site indicates infection.

When infected animals are identified, state and federal officials trace them back to their herd of origin and work to identify other infected herds that may be associated with the infected animal. Tuberculosis also

occurs in people, however the bacteria that usually infects humans is Mycobacterium tuberculosis, which is different than the bacteria causing bovine tuberculosis (Mycobacterium bovis).

"Every year there are cases of human tuberculosis reported in South Dakota — an average of 15 cases per year over the past five years. But these cases are due to the human bacteria, Mycobacterium tuberculosis, and have nothing to do with tuberculosis in animals," said Daly, who also serves as State Public Health Veterinarian.

Bovine tuberculosis can be transmitted to other species such as wildlife and humans, and as such, does present a slight public health concern. However, people would have to be in very close contact with infectious animals in order for transmission to occur.

"The general public is protected from bovine tuberculosis by the federal and state meat inspection system identifying TB in slaughtered animals. In addition, cooking and pasteurization will easily kill the bovine tuberculosis bacteria in meat and milk," he said.

"Transmission of bovine tuberculosis to and among wildlife has been significant to the ecology of the disease in certain areas. For example, in Michigan, white-tailed deer are considered to be significant in the persistence of bovine tuberculosis in certain areas of that state. As with people and cattle, close contact is necessary for transmission," Daly said.

Although surveillance for tuberculosis in wildlife in South Dakota has not shown the disease to be a problem in the state, hunters are always encouraged to look for abscesses or other suspicious lesions and report unusual findings to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department.

For more details about tuberculosis, refer to SDSU Veterinary Extension at www.sdstate.edu/vs/extension, or the South Dakota Animal Industry Board at <http://aib.sd.gov>.

Congratulations



Riverfront Event Center Ground Breaking Ceremony

The Yankton Area Chamber Ambassadors held a wall breaking ceremony at the Riverfront Event Center. The Riverfront announced they will be adding 9 more upscale hotel suites to their rooms. These suites will be located on 3rd floor of the event center and café and will capture many of the wonderful views of the historic downtown. 2 of these suites will have twin fireplaces, full kitchens, living rooms and decks to look out onto the Meridian Bridge and river. Construction has begun and is expected to be completed by April/May. These rooms are part of an overall phased project, the latest being the completion of the Marketplace Café and meeting space.

The Riverfront can seat up to 1500 people at once and already has 15 upscale hotel suites located in the downtown area. Advance bookings can be made by calling 605.664.0120 or visiting their website at www.riverfronteventcenter.com <<http://www.riverfronteventcenter.com>.

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