# AGNOTES

Connie Strunk, who helped to organize the event, said it will help raise awareness of agriculture in the Midwest.

"Part of our focus is to help students understand how crops are raised, and how plant-based foods and byproducts come from crops like soybeans and corn," Strunk said. "We reflect the hands-on, ag-school nature of South Dakota State University with programs like this. Students do not just watch and listen, they get up close and truly experience this educational opportunity."

Strunk said the support of the Piraks and sponsors made the opportunity available for students, and gives them true interactive lessons about agriculture's role in our region. Students from four counties near Gayville will interact with Extension educators from the areas of agronomy, 4-H, family and consumer sciences, and horticulture.

Sponsors for "Field to Table" include Clay Rural Water System, Herren-Schempp Building Supply, and Monsanto.

For more information or to confirm media appearances for this event, call Strunk at (605) 297-3112, or e-mail her at Connie.Strunk@sdstate.edu.

## Cow Common Sense Forum & Coffee Time To Be Held In Center

A two-hour Cow Common Sense Forum will be held in Center at the Courthouse Annex Meeting Room from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, Oct. 19.

To reserve a roll and a cup of coffee, call the extension office at (402) 288-5611 by Oct. 18.

Topics for the forum will be EPD's, Bonsma Type, and Mineral Use. Terry Gompert, UNL Extension Educator in Knox County, will lead the discussion but expect points-of-view from participants who attend the forum. The goal with this forum (coffee time) is to learn, share, have fun, and feel the use of your time was valuable.

This is a no-fee meeting.

## Extension-Led Grassfed Exchange Producer Tours Coming Up

As part of The Grassfed Exchange to be held Sept. 30-Oct. 2, two tours have been scheduled. These tour stops are free of charge and are scheduled for September 30.

The first tour stop will be held at Gordan Dvorak's Ranch near Atkinson, Nebraska. The tour will begin at 9 a.m. You will see: red and black angus beef cows; grass-fed genetics; experienced marketer; long-term, relatively large ranch; 160 red angus steers at 1,200-1,250 pounds that are grass-finished; wet meadow grazing/Sandhills pasture - finishing steers weighing over 1000 pounds.

Gordan finishes all his cattle prior to the second winter of their life.

Directions to Dvorak's Tour: When entering Atkinson from the east on Highway 20, turn on Pearl Street that is on the north side of the Roadrunner Gas Station. Go west for 5 1/4 miles on Pearl Street which turns into 876 Road. The tour is on the south side of the road.

The second tour stop will be held at Wayne Rasmussen's Ranch near Plainview, Nebraska. The tour will begin at 2 p.m. You will see: brassica mix; turnips and kale; turnips, kale and radishes; peas and barley; 1,000-pound finishing cattle; brown-rib sorghum; male-sterile corn; grass genetics cow/calf pairs.

Directions to Rasmussen Tour: Meet at Green Line Equipment (John Deere Dealership in Plainview) located on the west side of Plainview. Their address is West Highway 20.

These are no-fee tours. If you plan to attend one or both of the tours, call (402) 288-5611. Lunch is on your own. Bring lawn chairs if you need to sit at each tour's starting point. Dress for all types of weather.

## UNL Extension In Knox County Fall Calendar Of Events Set As Follows:

- **Sept. 13:** Parents Forever Class, 3 p.m., Norfolk
- **Sept. 14,15:** Holistic Management Gathering, Creighton
- **Sept. 20:** Knox County 4-H Council, Center, 7 p.m.
- **Sept. 27:** Knox County Extension Board Meeting, Center, 7:30 p.m.
- **Sept. 30:** Grassfed Exchange Tours, Atkinson and Plainview Areas
- **Oct. 1, 2:** Grassfed Exchange, Norfolk
- **Oct. 4:** Parents Forever Class, 3:00 p.m., Norfolk
- **Oct. 11:** Office Closed
- **Oct. 19:** Career Day, Wayne
- **Oct. 19:** Cow Common Sense Forum, 10 a.m., Center
- **Oct. 25:** Knox County Extension Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- **Oct. 27-28:** Stockmanship School, Center

# NDA Alerts Horse Owners To Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis

LINCOLN — Nebraska Agriculture Director Greg Ibach is encouraging horse owners to visit with their veterinarian about vaccinating their animals against Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis. A case of the mosquito-borne virus was diagnosed last week in a Keith County horse.

Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE) is a viral disease of the equine species that is transmitted primarily by infected mosquitoes. It affects an animal's central nervous system.

"This case serves as a reminder to equine owners to visit with their veterinarian regarding measures that can protect their animals from disease," Ibach said.

State Veterinarian Dennis Hughes said vaccines are available to protect against EEE, and it is not too late in the season to consider this option. "Vaccination will help prevent the horse from contracting the virus, and if they do get it, improve their chances of survival," Hughes said.

Some clinical symptoms of EEE-infected horses include fever, loss of appetite, weakness, lack of coordination, irritability and abnormal sensitivity to light and sound.

Horse owners are encouraged to take general mosquito-control measures, such as eliminating pools of standing water. Hughes said owners also may consider moving animals indoors during dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active. Other preventative measures include: avoid turning on lights inside the stable during evening and overnight; remove birds that are in, or close to, the stable; and use mosquito repellants.

Humans also can contract the EEE virus through the bite of an infected mosquito. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Veterinarian Annette Bredthauer said human cases are rare, but can be severe causing hospitalization and even death. People should take general precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites, such as wearing insect repellant, wearing protective clothing, especially during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active, and eliminating standing water to reduce mosquito breeding sites.

More information on EEE can be found at www.agr.ne.gov under the Animal Health section.

To report suspected cases of EEE, contact a local veterinarian, NDA's Bureau of Animal at (402) 471-2351, or United States Department of Agriculture/APHIS/Veterinary Services at (402) 434-2300.

## Hay To Be Removed From State Highway Right Of Way

PIERRE– The South Dakota Department of Transportation requests the cooperation of all farmers and ranchers in removing processed hay from the highway right of way. State regulations require that hay be removed from the right of way within 30 days of being processed, but no later than Oct. 1.

Removing hay bales from the highway right of way is an important safety consideration for motorists. The bales or stacks can be a safety hazard for vehicles forced to leave the road and, in some cases, can restrict a driver's sight distance. Hay left in the road ditches late in the year can also cause snowdrifts across the highway.

For more information, contact Jason Humphrey at (605) 773-3571.

## Corn Growers Have Forage Options For Hail-Damaged Corn

BROOKINGS— Producers growing corn that has suffered hail damage can consider alternative harvesting options.

That's according to South Dakota Cooperative Extension Beef Specialist Cody Wright, who suggested producers look at the possibilities when facing this challenge.

Wright said two South Dakota State University publications are available that spell out options for producers.

Extension Extra 8150, "Ensiling Immature and Frost Damaged Corn," is available at this link: http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ExEx8150.pdf. Extension Extra 8151, "Frost Damaged or Immature Corn: Forage Options," is available at this link: http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ExEx8151.pdf. Or you can ask for either publication at your county Extension office.

# FAIR

From Page 1B

this year, Lammers said. "They said the one building where they had the static 4-H exhibits wasn't quite finished, and they also had commercial vendors in it, so they compacted things," she said.

The fair was also school-friendly, as students missed as few classes and activities as possible, Steffen said.

"The livestock exhibits, and the presentations and style reviews, were held on the weekends," she said.

Wilken also found the fair offering a family-friendly schedule. The 4-H and FFA shows were held on Saturday and Sunday, allowing his family to go down to Grand Island last Friday and return on Labor Day.

State Fair officials discussed holding 4-H, FFA and open class events on different weekends, Wilken said. However, he hopes the activities remain at the same time to avoid duplicate trips to Grand Island.

"The barns were jammed up a little, so they may need some tweaking of the schedule a little bit," he said.

Wilken and Steffen noted that Grand Island lies 30 miles closer for them than Lincoln. For Wilken, this year's trek was 150 miles, while Steffen clocked in with 158 miles.

Wilken said he found no problems with the flow on and around the fairgrounds. "We were concerned it would be harder to get in and out (of the fairgrounds), but they did a good job with traffic control," he said.

The State Fair strategic planning committee, led by Kathleen Lodl, created a smooth transition to the new location, Steffen said.

"This was in the works for more than 18 months, and it was organized so well. They had so many planning meetings beforehand, and there was a Webinar that made it much easier," Steffen said. "When you pulled up on the property (at Grand Island), you felt as if you had already been there."

Steffen was amazed how quickly the Fonner Park complex came together once the announcement was made of the State Fair relocation.

"The State Fair had brand new buildings that didn't exist (about) 400 days ago. These are spacious, climate controlled and filled with state-of-the-art technology," she said. "One other plus, the 4-H and FFA buildings are all on one level. In the past, they were on two levels at Lincoln."

Judging ran for two solid days because of the large number of exhibits, she said.

"Cedar County took 109 exhibits. Alexis Arens had 24 exhibits (winning 14 purple ribbons), the most for us. The entire State Fair had more than 16,000 exhibits," she said.

"There were outstanding displays of youth development, FFA and 4-H. The buildings were packed, and they are working on how to accommodate everything next year."

The State Fair's new location, and its strong ties to agriculture, helped draw more people from western and central Nebraska, Steffen said.

"It was a great atmosphere and reflected Nebraska well," she said. "The State Fair remains important so the youth can display their projects. It's also positive for youth development."

While the location has changed, the family tradition continues at the State Fair, Lammers said.

"We have been doing this for 22 years. We have had seven kids in 4-H, and now we have just our last daughter, Sarah, who is 12," she said. "We have been doing this a long time."

Wilken predicts the start of a new State Fair tradition. "Anybody who was there this year and saw how nice it was will return," he said.

**Before eating, always take time to thank the food.**

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USDA REPORT:

## Net Farm Income To Rise 24 Percent In '10

**REP. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN**

U.S. Representative Herseth Sandlin released the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent release of the 2010 Farm Income Forecast and Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade.

Herseth Sandlin

"The forecast shows strong recovery in the agricultural sector and reinforces the importance of the 2008 Farm Bill, helping producers to capitalize on market conditions and significantly increase agricultural exports this year and next," Representative Herseth Sandlin said.

Herseth Sandlin spoke with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack last week regarding the encouraging news and how to build on the success of the bipartisan 2008 Food, Conservation and Energy Act, more commonly referred to as the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill plays an instrumental role in shaping agriculture policy and practice — and is the most important single piece of legislation affecting South Dakota producers, families and businesses. Herseth Sandlin helped craft the Farm Bill as a member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Overall, USDA projects net farm income will reach $77.1 billion in 2010, a rise of 24 percent from 2009. The 2010 forecast is also $12.3 billion more than the average of $64.8 billion in net farm income earned each year over the previous decade. In addition, average farm household income is projected to reach $81,670, a 5.8 percent rise from 2009. Regarding agricultural exports, USDA forecasts that in the current fiscal year, which ends this month, exports will be $107.5 billion, a rise of $11.1 billion. Moreover, USDA forecasts that in the coming fiscal year starting October 1st agricultural exports will reach $113 billion, a rise of $5.5 billion, mostly related to larger grain and feed shipments, which are projected to increase by $4.3 billion.

The USDA Farm Income Forecast can be found at http://www.ers.usda.gov/Features/FarmIncome and the Agricultural Trade Outlook at http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/AES/AES-08-31-2010.pdf.

YOUR NEWS! THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

POLICY PENNINGS:

## Problems Dealing With 'Bad Actors' In Agriculture

**BY DARYLL RAY AND HARWOOD D. SCHAFFER**
Ag Policy analysts

If there is one topic we wish would disappear from our column topic radar, it would be food safety. Every time a food recall is activated, farmers end up with egg on their face — we couldn't resist the line — even though most had nothing to do with it.

All it takes is a few bad actors to make everyone look bad. There was a time before the widespread availability of refrigeration that rancid butter was a problem. This problem gave an opening for the development of "oleomargarine." And so to protect their markets and profitability, cooperative creameries began educate and monitor their members so they could consistently provide the public with a quality product. The monitoring was necessary, because rancid cream from a few careless producers would ruin the quality cream delivered by the rest.

While we would be reluctant to classify the industrial-style producers of most of the eggs sold in the U.S. as farmers, there is little doubt that the general public does not make that distinction. Eggs come from chickens and farmers raise chickens; case closed.

As we write this column the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have found the strain in the current salmonella outbreak in the feed of the two egg operations in Iowa that have connections to the DeCoster family.

Since we have ties to Iowa and southern Minnesota, the DeCoster name is familiar to us. They made headlines in the 1990s as they sought to become the dominant integrator in the Iowa hog industry. In doing this, it appears that they cut corners on their handling of hog manure allowing it to spew into the waterways of Iowa.

In her Associated Press news article titled "A supplier in egg recall has history of violations," Mary Clare Jalonick writes, "In 2000, Iowa designated DeCoster a 'habitual violator' of environmental regulations for problems that included hog manure runoff into waterways. The label made him subject to increased penalties and prevented him from building new [hog] farms."

That AP article, one in the *Washington Post*, and an *NPR* interview by Melissa Block with Philip Brasher of the *Des Moines Register* describe a decade and a half of violations and penalties involving DeCoster operations in Maine, Iowa, and Ohio.

During the 1990s, "three strike" provisions were adopted by many states to take repeat offenders off the streets. In Las Vegas, those with ties to organized crime are not allowed to sponsor boxing matches or own casinos. Pete Rose was banished from Major League Baseball for betting on games. What about agriculture?

Setting DeCoster aside, how should agriculture handle the bad actors in its midst? Economic theory suggests that regulations are not needed because consumers will see the problems, quit doing business with the offender, and the bad actor will either change or be put out of business. That can work well as long as the customer can trace the product to a given company—witness the problem U.S. auto manufacturers have as they now work to shed their reputation for inattention to quality.

But in the case of certain agricultural products, the production of a single facility can be distributed under a number of different brand names. Even if the consumer could identify the code numbers on various brands, the name of the original producer remains difficult to identify, making it nearly impossible for consumers to single-out bad actors for economic punishment.

That is where legislation and regulation can play an important role. Not only are farmers protected from the actions of repeat bad actors, consumers are better protected from food-borne illnesses.

But to be effective in bad-actor cases, the regulation procedures need to include the authority to shut down operations in the face of repeated, flagrant safety and health code violations and to require its principals to show cause as to why they should be allowed to engage in agricultural production and processing in the future.

*Daryll E. Ray holds the Blasingame Chair of Excellence in Agricultural Policy, Institute of Agriculture, University of Tennessee, and is the Director of UT's Agricultural Policy Analysis Center (APAC). Harwood D. Schaffer is a Research Assistant Professor at APAC.*

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