

## NFU President, Leaders Set For Trade Committees

WASHINGTON — National Farmers Union (NFU) President Roger Johnson has been appointed by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee for Trade (APAC). APAC provides trade policy advice regarding all agricultural trade issues.

"This is a tremendous honor, and ensures that family farmers and ranchers will have a voice at the table when it comes to trade issues," said Johnson. "Trade is very important to agriculture and agriculture is important to U.S. trade, being one of the few sectors to routinely post a trade surplus in the face of a very large U.S. trade deficit. U.S. trade considerations need to include the impacts of trade surpluses and deficits. We also need to consider the impact on hunger, human rights, the environment, and development goals around the world. Too often our trade policies discount these other important international goals."

North Dakota Farmers Union Vice President Elwood "Woody" Barth has been appointed by Secretary Vilsack to the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade (ATAC) on animals and animal products. George Davis, vice president of California Farmers Union, was appointed to the ATAC on fruits and vegetables. Harvey Schroeder, executive director of the Oklahoma Cotton Council and member of Oklahoma Farmers Union, was appointed to the ATAC on tobacco, cotton, and peanuts.

"It is a tremendous opportunity for Farmers Union to have an impact on trade issues, sharing their expertise and experiences," said Johnson. "Each of the selected members have unique insight into trade issues and will work to ensure rural Americans are getting a fair deal in free trade agreements."

The APAC and the six ATACs consult with, advise and make recommendations to the secretary of agriculture and to the U.S. Trade Representative on a wide range of agricultural trade issues. The committees provide information and advice on U.S. negotiating objectives and bargaining positions before the United States enters into trade agreements; on the operation of existing trade agreements; and on other matters related to the development, implementation, and administration of U.S. agricultural trade policy.



KELLY HERTZ/P&amp;D

## Sheriffs: Tall Corn Creates Hazard On Rural Roads

BY MICHAEL J. CRUMB  
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Tall stalks obstructing drivers' views are a fall hazard in the Corn Belt, but the danger could be greater as farmers seek to cash in on higher prices by expanding their fields closer to the edge of roads.

With corn commanding twice what it did last year, farmers from Pennsylvania to the Dakotas have tried to plant as much as possible. The federal government has estimated this year's planting at 92.2 million acres, up 5 percent from last year.

In some cases, that means farmers have planted right up to the gravel in remote areas, a practice that can have deadly consequences at unmarked intersections. A Nebraska man was killed last week when a pickup truck struck the four-wheeler he was driving on a rural road near his home.

York County Sheriff Dale Radcliff said he believes tall corn that blocked the view contributed to the crash that killed Steven Siebert, 61, of Henderson, Neb.

"You wouldn't be able to see him coming," the sheriff said. Chad Siebert, of Colorado

"Those corners used to all be open when prices were terrible, but they're worse now with corn prices being good."

CHAD SIEBERT

Springs, Colo., said his father's death was an unfortunate accident and he didn't blame anyone. He said his father had driven the roads around his home for 40 years and the visibility at the intersection wasn't any worse than usual this time of year.

"From what I understand, my father slowed down, looked one way and I'm guessing as he looked the other way he was kind of rolling through and taking off and the unexpected happened," Chad Siebert said.

His father used to hire kids to cut down corn near intersections to improve visibility, he said. But he understands why some farmers might plant closer to the road.

"Those corners used to all be open when prices were terrible, but they're worse now with corn prices being good," Siebert said.

Radcliff said the problem is more worrisome now that more people are on the roads.

"This time of year, they are

going to start harvesting so there are a lot more trucks and equipment and the kids are back in school so a lot of rural kids are traveling on those roads," the sheriff said.

Officials in neighboring Iowa, the top corn-growing state, said they also were concerned about visibility. Twenty-eight people have died since 2001 at rural intersections where vision was obstructed, according to the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The department's data doesn't differentiate between tall corn and other vegetation, but IDOT spokesman Dena Gray-Fisher said the crashes tend to occur in the late summer and early fall when corn is high.

"Drivers need to be aware, and they have to slow down and stop and proceed with caution," said Doug Miller, the county engineer in Kossuth County, which includes 1,600 miles of roads around Algona. Illinois and Indiana don't track

accidents where tall corn was a factor, but Indiana officials said visibility problems have become more common as more corn is planted. State crews have cut corn in some spots where it was planted in the right-of-way — the area between the farmer's field and the road.

A telephone message left for Nebraska road officials wasn't immediately returned.

With fences becoming less common, farmers don't always know where property lines are, Gray-Fisher said. And, farmers are using larger equipment that needs more space to turn and is more likely to cross over into right-of-ways.

"We definitely have a problem and we try to stake it out, show the producer where the road right-of-way is and inform them they're not supposed to farm there and when they do it creates an obstruction for motorists," said Miller, the county engineer.

Once farmers are aware of the problem, they usually don't plant in the right-of-way again, he said.

Corn farmer Bruce Rowher, 59, said farmers can plant too close to the road in an effort to "maximize a

person's return."

"Not having as much livestock as we used to, fences are deteriorating and tend to be removed," said Rowher, who lives near Paulina in northwest Iowa. "If nothing is marking the boundary anymore, to maximize production and keep weeds under control, it's a tendency that does happen."

But he also downplayed the issue, saying it's infrequent and farmers fix the problem when they learn they've encroached on a right-of-way.

Radcliff said he'd like to see farmers stop planting about 100 feet from corners to give drivers time to react, but Kossuth County Sheriff Steve Kollasch said he thought that would be a hard sell. He advocated more stop and yield signs.

Rowher suggested drivers use common sense and just "treat every intersection as if it has a stop sign."

"If the corn is high," he said, "you're not going to be able to cast your eye out and see a half-mile down the road."

## Cattle Producers' Forum Set For Norfolk Sept. 16-17

With corn prices continuing to rise, many cattle producers are looking at ways to put pounds on cattle without paying the high cost of corn.

As input costs rise, producers must question the overall feasibility of the current model of corn-fed cattle and profitability.

This quandary is the focus of an upcoming seminar for cattle producers in Norfolk, Neb. The event will be held on Sept. 16-17 at the Northeast Community College

Ag Complex. Some of the topics will include:

- Methods for consistent gains on grass
- Genetic expression and the relationship to environmental influences
- Holistic animal health management
- Land & Livestock opportunities

With corn prices at \$7, having the ability to custom graze cattle and get consistent gains will give

every cattle producer an extra potential source of income. In the current economy, this can make a significant impact to our communities, especially in rural areas.

The Grassfed Exchange, www.grassfedexchange.com, was founded in 2009 to promote grassfed beef for the social good of our land, our consumers, and our communities. The GFE provides information for both consumers and producers and encourages the exchange of ideas, as well as works

towards development of strategies to increase the value of the grassfed industry. For more information about the upcoming seminar, visit www.grassfedexchange.com or call Carol Peters at 402-582-4866.

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Dr. Barnes is a graduate of The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. She completed her Internal Medicine residency training at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

Additionally, Dr. Barnes completed internships with the Global AIDS Alliance, the Center for Biosecurity, and the Department of Health and Human Services during her years in medical school.

Please join with us in welcoming Dr. Barnes to the Yankton area. The Clinic is pleased to bring her into our medical community as well as to the many patients she will serve.

Dr. Barnes began seeing patients at the  
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