

## Vaccination: For Health or Profit?

**Part 4**

This is to be my concluding article for this series. I know that the topic of vaccination has been a bit long, but there is

much to say and it is important that parents are made aware so that they can make an informed choice. Did I mention choice? Yes, you do have one.

Did the Health Department omit to tell you this small detail?

If you as a parent have any questions or trepidation concerning the issue of vaccination, I would like to invite you to contact me. We can address any questions you might have, such as:

**Does vaccination really work?**  
**Is it mandatory?**  
**Will my children be allowed in school if I don't vaccinate?**  
**Health risks, benefits, and current research.**  
**Informed Consent.**

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*If you need additional information, please call me personally at 605-665-8228 and visit my website: [www.plathwellness.com](http://www.plathwellness.com)*

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UPCOMING LECTURE'S**  
**November 6th, 2012 at 7pm**  
**ADHD**  
**December 18th, 2012 at 7pm**  
**Infertility**

*Dr. Scott Plath has practiced in Yankton for 33 years. He is a Certified Industrial Consultant, Certified Med X Rehab technician and a fellow of Applied Spinal Biomechanical Engineering and is a member of their advisory board.*

# Harvest

From Page 1

Springfield, where we handle grain."

Despite the drought, Muller said she has seen more grain than expected. "Whether the free storage contributed to it, I don't know," she said.

South Dakota state climatologist Dennis Todey noted the fall harvest has surpassed the normal stage in many areas.

"Harvest is moving along quickly because of early maturity of crops, early removal of crops that were already done — such as corn chopping for silage — and continuing very dry conditions," he told the Press & Dakotan. "Around South Dakota, some people have reported corn becoming brittle and dropping ears. That is another reason to move on it early."

## FATAL FACTOR

As another drought by-product, the Yankton region has reported aflatoxin — chemicals produced by fungi on corn that can, in sufficient concentration, kill livestock.

According to the National Corn Growers Association, fungus growth can continue in storage under certain environmental conditions. Aflatoxin is most commonly related to drought-stressed corn, followed by periods of high humidity.

Muller said her facilities don't own the equipment for aflatoxin testing. However, the elevators test by blacklighting the grain for signs of mold. Samples with high concentrations are sent away for further inspection.

"We haven't seen real extremes," she said. "We haven't seen it get to the dangerous levels, where we don't buy it."

South Dakota corn, dairy and livestock producers are advised to test for aflatoxin levels in their corn, dried distillers grain (DDG) and silage piles due to this year's drought when selling, purchasing and feeding, according to South Dakota Ag News.

Feed refusal, reduced growth rate and decreased feed efficiency are the predominant signs of chronic aflatoxin poisoning in livestock, according to the South Dakota State University (SDSU) Cooperative Extension Service. High levels of aflatoxin fed to dairy cows can lead to contamination of the milk that is produced.

Nebraska is the latest major corn-producing state that is allowed to blend aflatoxin-tainted corn in animal feed, according to The Associated Press. The federal decision to allow such blending follows a long, hot summer with perfect conditions for the poisonous mold to grow.

Several states have sought an exception to U.S. Food and Drug Administration rules regarding aflatoxin.

Nebraska grain testers were notified Wednesday about the federal decision.

Experts say the most abundant aflatoxin could produce cancer, raising concerns for humans because aflatoxin can be found in milk from dairy cows fed contaminated corn, according to The Associated Press. In Iowa, which already had federal permission to mix aflatoxin-tainted corn into animal feed, the state Department of Agriculture has required testing for the poison in all milk since August.

Under federal safety standards, corn with more than 20 parts per billion testing positive for aflatoxin must not be used for human consumption or as feed for dairy animals. The threshold for other cattle varies depending on the animal's age and other factors, but 300 parts

per billion is the maximum.

According to the Lincoln Journal Star, almost 70 percent of nearly 2,000 samples from the early stages of the Nebraska corn harvest tested positive for aflatoxin. More than 500 of those tested above the federal safety standard.

Much of the corn harvested so far comes from dry fields whose crops were more likely to have suffered drought stress and resulting mold. Kelly Brunkhorst of the Nebraska Corn Board said he expected no problems with the mold on corn from irrigated fields.

Michael Carlson, a veterinary toxicologist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said ethanol plants must be careful about the corn they buy if they intend to sell grain by-product to cattle feedlots. Corn starch is removed as part of the ethanol production process, but removing the starch increases the concentration of aflatoxin that would end up in the distillers grain and, ultimately, in cattle.

"So I would think ethanol producers would be very sensitive to what's coming into their process to protect the distillers grain that they want to sell afterwards," Carlson said.

POET spokesman Matt Merritt said the energy company, which includes a Scotland ethanol plant, already screens for aflatoxin.

"We do test for that as part of our regular operations," he told the Press & Dakotan in an email.

## HIGH AND DRY

Drought conditions continue to worsen across South Dakota, according to Thursday's report from the U.S. Drought Monitor.

All of southeast South Dakota remains in exceptional drought, the most severe level. The entire southeast region registered at least 1.5 inches below normal for precipitation from Aug. 25 to Sept. 23.

The South Dakota weekly crop report reflects the drought conditions. Yankton has received only 8.5 inches of precipitation since April 1 — nearly 11 inches below normal and less than half of average.

For the growing season from April 1 to Sept. 23, most of the region remains more than 7 inches below normal for precipitation. That portion includes

most of Charles Mix County; southeast Hutchinson County; all of Bon Homme, Yankton and Clay counties; southern Turner County; southwest Lincoln County and western Union County.

Other parts of the region falling 5-7 inches below normal includes Douglas County, most of Hutchinson County, northern Turner County, most of Lincoln County and eastern Union County.

The South Dakota weekly crop report contains the following precipitation readings from reporting stations in the southeast part of the state:

- Academy: 15.80 inches since Oct. 1, or 7.64 inches below normal; 11.07 inches since April 1, or 7.14 inches below normal;
- Centerville: 12.23 inches since Oct. 1, or 12.74 inches below normal; 8.51 inches since April 1, or 10.24 inches below normal;
- Pickstown: 12.87 inches since Oct. 1, or 11.66 inches below normal; 9.21 inches since April 1, or 9.50 inches below normal;
- Vermillion: 15.95 inches since Oct. 1, or 11.87 inches below normal; 11.57 inches since April 1, or 9.67 inches below normal;
- Yankton: 14.53 inches since Oct. 1, or 11.16 inches below normal; 8.50 inches since April 1, or 10.88 inches below normal.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Any precipitation from here on will do little or no good for crops, said SDSU Extension climate field specialist Laura Edwards.

"Most of the major impacts of the summer have come and gone with the damage done to crops," she said in a press release. "There are some current concerns with planting winter wheat."

She said other issues include low streamflows and limited water for non-agricultural purposes.

Edwards said the main ongoing issue in the state is the soil moisture and lack of recovery in soil moisture.

"Without changes to improve soil moisture conditions across the state, we will be at higher risk for dryness impacts next year," she said. "Some time to re-

cover exists this fall. But time is running out climatologically to get much precipitation."

The conditions are similar in Nebraska. The Husker State's weekly crop report contains reports of drought stress conditions for the northeast region.

In Knox County, conditions are very dusty. Corn and soybean harvests have started, and both are very dry. Cattle are being moved from pastures.

In Dixon County, dry conditions continue. Harvest is progressing rapidly, with several producers finishing up on dryland corn harvest and moving toward soybean harvest.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC) released its latest seasonal drought outlook last week.

"The updated drought outlook is significantly less optimistic from that of a few weeks ago," Todey said in a press release. "For the rest of the year, drought conditions are expected to persist across South Dakota."

CPC officials state they have high confidence in this forecast.

The fall season is typically a transition time to a drier time of the year, Todey said in the press release.

"Climate models are also projecting warmer-than-average temperatures continuing through the rest of the year. There is a lower probability that the state will be any wetter than average," he said. "As a result, drought conditions are expected to continue for the next three months."

Todey told the Press & Dakotan on Friday that the long-range forecast hasn't changed since last week.

"Still the same outlook — dry for now. There are hints of a pattern change toward the second week of October," he said. "Right now, I'm not holding my breath. We're losing ground on the chance to recover much this fall. The later we go in to fall, the less opportunity we have for precipitation amounts."

In the face of such dire predictions, Muller advises looking to a higher power for help.

"All we can do is pray for rain and hope it helps get things better for next year," she said.

*You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at [twitter.com/RDockendorf](https://twitter.com/RDockendorf)*

# Kerrey Challenges Fischer's Views In Neb. Senate Debate

BY MARGERY A. BECK  
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — U.S. Senate candidates Deb Fischer and Bob Kerrey agreed in their second debate Friday that the government must transform its entitlement programs, including scaling back Social Security, but Kerrey charged that Fischer's plan for cutting federal spending was impractical and would cause serious damage to the economy.

Kerrey, a Democrat, aggressively questioned Fischer's views on fiscal issues during the hour-long event at the Omaha Community Playhouse as he presses to make up ground in the six weeks before the November election. Recent polls have Fischer, a Republican, leading by 10 points in the race to replace Democratic Sen. Ben Nelson, who is retiring.

It has been more than a month since the pair first debated at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island, when they took up issues such as immigration and the route of the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline. Friday's debate took on a tougher tone as the pair aimed to sharply define their differences.

Kerrey — a former Nebraska governor and two-term U.S. Senator — all but ridiculed Fischer's backing of a balanced-budget amendment to address the nation's debt, saying such an approach was overly simplistic.

"I've looked at your plan," Kerrey said. "Your balanced budget amendment would double unemployment in this state. It's a fact. This is not me exaggerating here."

Fischer, a rancher from rural Valentine and a two-term state senator, shot back that without controls on congressional spending, politicians "will spend every dime they can get their hands on," adding that Nebraska has a constitutional requirement to balance its budget every year.

"First of all, you balanced the budget in 2009 and 2010 with Nebraska's (share) of federal stimulus money," Kerrey retorted. "That was the second highest use of stimulus money to balance the budget of any state in the nation. The federal government would not have that flexibility under the Fischer plan, under her constitutional amendment."

The two also disagreed on how to reform federal programs like Social Security and Medicare.

Kerrey's plan would expand the payroll tax to higher income levels and would gradually increase the age of eligibility for benefits to 69 in 2075. Fischer's plan would increase the retirement age for people who are now younger than 40 and would limit benefits for the wealthy.

Fischer distanced herself from Romney's words, saying that gove

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