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February 23, 2010

FROM STEVE'S DESK *Taylor*

by Steve



Advocates for Agriculture

As the *Wrap-Up* goes to print, your MO-AG Chairman and I will be in Washington DC. MO-AG Chairman Rex Martin and I will be visiting our Missouri

Congressional delegation and staff regarding some of our industry's top issues. And today, several issues seem to be "top issues." An overarching theme will be the need for Congressional oversight of EPA. On pesticide issues, the agency is proposing guidance that suggests every pesticide application could cause "harm." On nutrient issues, the EPA is poised to take control of state water programs and set nutrient water quality criteria. EPA claims loudly that agriculture is to blame for gulf hypoxia, while remaining silent as the Corps of Engineers dumps more nutrients into the Missouri River and Gulf of Mexico. Transportation, homeland security, and economic issues are all included in the "top" issues, as well.

At the state level, we have our Legislative Days coming up on March 1-2 in Jefferson City. Please, let our office know, by the end of business Thursday, if you can come. The details on the event are below. I sure hope you can make it. We have an enjoyable evening planned March 1, as we kick off with a reception and dinner with our Missouri Department of Agriculture Director, Jon Hagler, along with members of the Missouri General Assembly. We have invited Governor Nixon and I am hopeful he will be able to attend. The next day, we will be at the Capitol talking with legislators.

Rex Meyr
Shawnteetown Feed &
Seed
Jackson

Wayne Orey
Riggins R-Co, LLC
Marshall

Jason Paris
MFA Inc.
Columbia

Duane Simpson
Monsanto
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Deborah Dickens

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Over the next two weeks, we will live our motto ... "advocates of agriculture." I truly hope to see you in Jefferson City next week.

Steve

REMINDERS

Let EPA Hear from You

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing policy that will effectively shut down pesticide applications in the United States and entangle pesticide applicators in a web of lawsuits. The EPA is proposing Pesticide Registration Guidance that threatens our ability to apply pesticides by proposing an unachievable zero-drift mandate. EPA is accepting comments on this proposed policy until March 5, 2010. EPA needs to hear from you. Please, go to the MO-AG website by [clicking here](#), review the information provided, and send your comments to EPA.

2010 MO-AG Legislative Day March 1st & 2nd

MO-AG will be holding its Legislative Days on March 1 and 2 in Jefferson City. This event will provide you the chance to interact with your key legislators, members of the executive branch and agency officials. This will be a great opportunity that you won't want to miss and your participation will be crucial to its success. Please [click here](#), complete the registration form, and return it with \$30 to MO-AG by Thursday, February 25, 2010.

Missouri Agriculture Outlook Conference

FAPRI will be hosting a discussion of the drivers of Missouri agricultural and bio-fuel markets and an introduction to the latest culmination of work from members of the FAPRI research consortium. The results are FAPRI's ten-year baseline outlook, prepared for the U.S. Congress. In addition, they will present a special

session on international issues and policy developments pertaining to agriculture. Registration is \$25 per person which includes lunch and conference materials. You can access online registration by [clicking here](#).

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Missouri Lawmakers Reject Farmland Tax Hike

A recommendation by the State Tax Commission to increase taxes on Missouri's most productive farmland and lower taxes on its least productive ground has been rejected by the state legislature. The Commission recommended a 30% tax hike for the best farmland in the state, mainly cropland in the fertile areas of northern and southeastern Missouri which grabbed the attention of lawmakers and sparked a firestorm at the Capitol. The House passed the Senate resolution aimed at overturning the Commission recommendation.

The House sponsor is Representative Brian Munzlinger of Williamstown, "(I'm) very pleased, very supportive. I think people realize that in tough economic times it's not really a good time to be raising taxes." The Tax Commission based its recommendations on studies completed by the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI). FAPRI, operated by the University of Missouri and Iowa State University, is well respected among legislators. But, Munzlinger says he does not believe recent gains in farm productivity came from an increase in the productivity of the ground, but on the inputs farmers were using. The resolution doesn't have to go to the Governor. Farmland tax rates will remain as is. [Source: *Brownfield*]

Farmers Feed US Campaign Reaching Consumers

Whoever said there's no such thing as a free lunch has never met the farmers of Missouri, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa. That's because hundreds of thousands of consumers have learned that a chance to win free groceries for a year is just a mouse click away.

By accessing the Farmers Feed US program's website ([click here](#)), consumers are allowed the opportunity to meet and engage with the farmers who grow their food. Through short, online video farm tours, consumers learn how farmers produce safe, nutritious and affordable food, while they also have the opportunity to register in a "Free Groceries for a Year" sweepstakes. Two states have now completed 90-day sweepstakes programs, with consumers registering for a chance to win grand prizes of \$5,000 in grocery gift cards from their state's farmers. Many have chosen to "opt-in" for future information from their state's farmers, including recipes, newsletters, and future promotions.

Missouri, along with Indiana and Iowa, launched Farmers Feed US programs on Jan. 11, featuring farmers from each of their states. Through the first 35 days, Missouri had 45,956 consumer registrations and 4,345 consumer opt-ins. "We're exceptionally pleased with the response to the sweepstakes and consumer interest in learning more about the farmers in their states," says Terry Fleck, executive director of the Center for Food Integrity. "It shows that consumers are supportive of the hard working men and women who produce their food, and would like to understand more."
[Source: *Missouri Ruralist*]

Missouri Agribusiness Association is a sponsor of the Farmers Feed US program.

Where's EPA?

So far, the federal government has been slow to investigate the impacts of the Corps' project to create habitat for the endangered pallid sturgeon, which involved dumping massive amounts of phosphorus-laden sediments into the Missouri River. Interestingly, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which has numerous heavily funded efforts to clean up the Gulf hypoxic zone, did nothing to block the Corps' sediment dumping, despite taking enforcement actions against private companies on far lesser erosion threats to the same river basin during the same time period.

The issue and its potential impacts on the Gulf hypoxic zone gained the attention of the nation's top state agricultural officials earlier this month after a presentation by Sen. Christopher Bond's (R.,Mo.) office during the annual meeting of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. It has raised important questions about the common practice of making agriculture the convenient culprit when phosphorus pollution degrades water quality, and it has prompted a call for investigations of all sources of nutrient loading. [Source: Feedstuff]

JOB OPENING

The Missouri Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection and Warehousing Division has an opening for an Agriculture Manager. This is administrative and management work in the direction, planning, analysis and coordination of the Grain Inspection Service of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. This is a broad-banded management position responsible for directing or assisting in the overall planning, direction and coordination of the Grain Inspection Service. Salary is commensurate with experience. For a copy of the entire job announcement, [click here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY, 2010

24 MU Agricultural and Life Sciences
Career Fair 2010;
Reynolds Alumni Center; Columbia,
MO

MARCH, 2010

1-2 **MO-AG Legislative Days; Jefferson
City, MO**

11 FAPRI MO Agriculture Outlook
Conference;
Jefferson City, MO

JULY, 2010

**21-23 MO-AG Summer Meeting; Country Club Hotel;
Lake Ozark, MO**

Note: Items in **red** are new postings since the last Wrap-Up issue.

Letters to the Editor

Do you have a response to the Missouri Agribusiness Wrap Up? Let us know! The Missouri Agribusiness Wrap Up is a bi-weekly publication of the Missouri Agribusiness Association (MO-AG). MO-AG is a member-owned association based in Jefferson City, Mo. which protects members' interests in state legislation and provides educational opportunities.

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