

Nebraska Sorghum



The quarterly newsletter of the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board, the Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association, and the Sorghum

Army

www.nebraskasorghum.org



NGSB/NeSPA Events: Winter 2020

**2020 Sorghum Symposium and NeSPA Annual Meeting:
January 30 - NCTA, Curtis Nebraska**

**2020 Nebraska LEAD Alumni Annual Conference:
February 1st, Case IH Plant, Grand Island**

National Sorghum Producers D.C. Fly-In: February 2 - 6

2020 Commodity Classic: February 25 - 29, San Antonio

Governor's Ag Conference: March 9 - 10, Kearney

Quarterly NeSPA Meeting:

March 19, Ramada Midtown Conference Center, Grand Island

NeSPA Annual Appreciation Banquet:

March 19, Ramada Midtown Conference Center, Grand Island

Quarterly NGSB Meeting:

March 20, Ramada Midtown Conference Center, Grand Island

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Consider Sorghum in 2020:

[Click Here](#)

US Drought Monitor:

[Click Here](#)

Grain Basis Maps:

[Click Here](#)



New NE/SD Field Guides have arrived!

Email: sorghum.board@nebraska.gov for your copy

Calling on the Sorghum Army!

With Demi Striglos



Are you passionate about Nebraska's ancient grain? If so, Demi Striglos, Communications Intern at Nebraska Sorghum would like to speak with you.

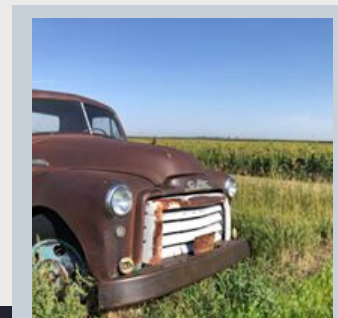
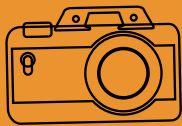
Demi is working on a mixed media production about the myriad attributes and uses for sorghum, and why producers and consumers alike are excited to join the Sorghum Army!

Demi would love to come photograph your planting process and fields as the grow and hear your thoughts on sorghum.

If you are interested in sharing your story and being interviewed for this project please send her a message.



demistriglos@gmail.com
or **(217) 412-6725**



An old GMC sits near the sorghum variety plot at Grant Nebraska in August

Don't Miss the 2020 Nebraska Sorghum Symposium!

The Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association (NeSPA) together with the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board (NGSB) and Nebraska Extension announce the 2020 Sorghum Symposium to be held January 30, 2019 at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, 404 E 7th Street, Curtis, NE 69025. Registration begins at 9:00 AM.

Program presentations include Al Dutcher UNL, Climatologist, with a weather outlook; Dr. Brent Bean, Agronomy Director for the National Checkoff, will focus on sorghum production and management. A D.C. /Farm Bill implementation update will be provided by the Office of Congressman Adrian Smith. Strahinja Stepanovic from the Stumpf Research Center will discuss performance and row spacing. Nate Blum, Executive Director of NGSB and NeSPA will discuss leveraging digital media to meet consumers. Zach Simon, Regional Marketer at the National Checkoff will provide a markets update. Chuck Burr, West Central Research and Extension Center will share the latest results of the Sorghum TAPS Program.

Conference registration can be done by emailing sorghum.board@nebraska.gov or by registering on www.eventbrite.com, keyword: "2020 sorghum symposium" There is no charge to attend and lunch is included. Registration begins at 9:00 am with coffee and rolls and commercial exhibits to showcase new products and production/management information. CCA credits have been applied for.

[Click Here to Register!](#)



Sustainability, Sorghum, and Nebraska's Leaders of Tomorrow

Written by Nate Blum

Sorghum is often referred to as a sustainable crop. Rightly so. Modern sorghum uses an average of only 22" of water, 1/3-1/2 of nitrogen as other comparable cash crops, and increases soil biomass due to a large root system. In Ag, those traits mean lower input costs and increased yields for other crops following sorghum in rotation. To many consumers, sustainability is equated to social and environmental responsibility. Both of these interpretations of the word are good for sorghum...but what about sustainability in agriculture as a whole?

We believe that true sustainability in Ag refers to more than the proper stewardship of our finite resources. For farm operations to be sustainable, we need the next generation to be fluent in leadership and diversification as well. Strong leadership is important if we are to effectively share the grower's story with policy-makers and consumers whom are unfamiliar with practical modern agriculture. Diversification is important if those young people are to ensure economic vibrancy of their family farms in the future.

Through our internship program, visiting with high school FFA classes, and participating in programs like the Nebraska Ag Youth Institute (NAYI) and the Nebraska LEAD Program, Nebraska Sorghum takes an active role in encouraging and mentoring Nebraska's young people and future leaders.

If you know of a college-aged student in Lincoln who would benefit from our internship program, or to schedule a visit with your local FFA chapter, reach out to Nebraska Sorghum at: sorghum.board@nebraska.gov.



NGSB Executive Director, Nate Blum speaks with future Nebraska Ag leaders at NAYI in July



Business Specialist Intern Kristine Dvoracek



Communications Specialist Intern
Demi Striglos

Nebraska Sorghum Works to Develop Value-Added Markets at Home, and Around the World



Blum and Sra. Salazar at the Mexican Independence Day Celebration in Omaha

Written by Nate Blum

Without a doubt, the most important priority for Nebraska Sorghum is the development of value-added markets. Nebraska held the unfortunate distinction of being home to some of the lowest grain bids for sorghum in the region in 2019. While that is not a distinction we are proud of, it is one that we cannot ignore. Interestingly, South Dakota boasted one of the highest grain bids for sorghum in 2019, thanks to direct contracts with local bird seed processors.

NGSB has built relationships with our international trading partners in Mexico, Canada, and Vietnam. Nebraska Sorghum may also have representation at a trade mission to Japan in March of 2020. The announcement of a Phase 1 trade deal with China is promising as well, though until a full trade agreement with China is passed through Congress, we will remain only cautiously optimistic. Expanding markets in Spain, Morocco, and potentially, India will help to revitalize sorghum revenues in the future.

International markets are undoubtedly important. They always will be. However, a focus on markets overseas must not come at the expense of ignoring the wealthiest economy in the world; Our own. NGSB is committed to developing markets for culinary sorghum, aquaculture, bioplastics, industrial uses, ethanol, and livestock feeding in 2020.

Sorghum uniquely works in both the commodity and specialty markets. Attributes of the grain, such as being gluten-free, a non-gmo crop, low on the glycemic index, high in antioxidants, domestically grown, and sustainable in regard to water usage and soil health are important to modern American consumers. Sorghum has a fantastic story to tell. NGSB believes that telling that story to consumers and suppliers will bolster domestic demand.

Nebraska producers need those specialty product producers to be located here. Frankly, so do the processors. Nebraska is geographically well-situated to reach nearly all of the continental US by truck within two days. This location, coupled with processing facilities in proximity to crop production reduces transportation and logistics costs to the processor while also creating an environment in which producers can grow specific varieties under contract. This model increases revenues for both parties.

NGSB is working with the Department of Economic Development, and local economic development teams to build proposals that can be shared with industry leaders. At the same time, NGSB is meeting with companies like Milex 2.0, a Texas-based company producing blown insulation from sorghum, to identify opportunities that can be handed over to local entrepreneurs in Nebraska.

If you know of an individual, or team of individuals looking for entrepreneurial enterprises, please share this news with them. Nebraska needs these future business leaders to remain within our borders, growing Nebraska's economy. Sorghum offers many opportunities in that regard.

NGSB can uncover the opportunities. We need your help to transition those opportunities into reality.



Governor Ricketts, and the Nebraska Trade Delegation Meet with Officials in Hanoi



Blum visits Neovia, a Feed Mill operation with USGC staff in Hanoi

NeSPA Gives Back with "Sorghum Cares" Initiative



The Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association (NeSPA) exists to be your policy voice in Washington D.C. and Lincoln. NeSPA strives to build relationships with policy-makers, and to inform our members on issues that impact their farms and businesses. It is that is uniquely positioned to connect industry with elected officials, as well as the general public.

As a membership-based organization, NeSPA wanted to find a meaningful way to serve those who have given so much in service to our state and nation. In July, NeSPA partnered with the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project, the Nebraska Department of Veteran's Affairs, and Humanities Nebraska to create the "Sorghum Cares: Preserving our Heritage. Building our Future." initiative. This first-of-its-kind partnership seeks to build a network of volunteers across the state in order to record veterans stories for inclusion in the Library of Congress collection where they will be accessible to future generations of students and the public.

To date, the Sorghum Cares initiative has recorded approximately one dozen veterans stories. Many more wait to be told.

The initiative creates a space in which our members and friends can give back in a meaningful and impactful way. Nearly 100,000 Nebraska veterans stories have not been recorded as of this writing. By engaging passionate Nebraskans around this noble mission, we also create opportunities to tell the sorghum story. This is particularly important considering many producers and consumers are unfamiliar with the industry.

In July, Governor Ricketts announced the Sorghum Cares initiative alongside John Hilgert, NDVA Director, Chris Sommerich, Humanities Nebraska Director, and Nate Blum, Executive Director of NeSPA. You can see video of that announcement here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOFdAObqeXc&feature=share>

If you would like to participate as a volunteer, or to be interviewed, please email: sorghum.board@nebraska.gov

Share your voice in state and federal policy, and get involved with initiatives like "Sorghum Cares". Join NeSPA and the National Sorghum Producers Today!

Click here to become a member:



2019 NeSPA Hybrid Plot Features Nearly 30 Sorghum Varieties

Written by NGSB Chairman, Mike Baker

The hybrid plot this year turned out very well considering it was a struggle with Mother Nature from the beginning. With lots of rainfall starting prior to planting there was a nice window to get it planted. Thanks to plenty of helping hand, it was planted the first part of June. Chemicals were sprayed prior to planting and on another pass all the fertilizer was applied with a dry applicator prior to planting.

The growing season consisted with above trend line precipitation all growing season. Along with all the precipitation heat units were below normal. There were two hail events in August. The plot received large hail for a sustained amount of time but minimal wind for the first event. Ten days later there was a similar storm with large hail and a lot of wind. There were a few hybrids that lodged but for the most part it all stood well against the strong winds. Overall damage was estimated at 20-30%.

Harvest went well. Test weight was better than the prior year because the crop was harvested soon after it had reached maturity and reached a suitable dryness. The lowest hybrid test weight was 39 lbs/bushel on an experimental number and the best was just shy of 60 lbs/bushel. There was minimal rain on it after it had reached maturity. Overall there were 27 different hybrids represented by 7 different companies.

*Results from Mike Baker's plot near Trenton are included in this issue, following the Message from the Director

Check out the sorghum results from TAPS and the Hybrid Plot at the Stumpf Research Center

TAPS Banquet Presentation:

[Click Here](#)

Henry J. Stumpf International Wheat Center Plot Results:

[Click Here](#)



NGSB Chairman, Mike Baker visits with Sra. Guadalupe Salazar, Mexican Consul to Iowa and Nebraska



More than 60 people participated in the field day near Trenton in September



Field Day participants inspect the Hybrid Sorghum Plot at Henry J. Stumpf International Wheat Center near Grant, NE in August

Remembering "The Milo Man", John Dvoracek

Written by NeSPA Chairman, Lynn Belitz

About 15 years ago I had the privilege of meeting a man from Farwell, Ne., John Dvoracek. I was serving on the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and John accepted an open seat on the board. Since we were from the same general area, I called him and asked if he'd like to ride to the meeting with me. He accepted and so we met and we talked the whole way to Lincoln and the whole way back. A friendship was born.

I quickly learned his family was most important to him with supporting sorghum and Nebraska farmers close behind. John quickly caught on to the workings of the board and jumped in leadership roles and volunteered to do anything we needed. John planted a sorghum test plot for many years and held a tour every fall. He saw the opportunity to promote sorghum, from planting to the end use and worked steadfast and methodically towards making sorghum a viable crop for Nebraska farmers.

John was active in his community also. He served on many different boards and worked closely with the Elba school and especially the FFA kids. He saw someone who needed a little help or nudge and followed thru to see that the person was set off on the right track. He never stopped giving or caring.

John passed away on December 13, 2019, after a long struggle with Parkinson's and complications from a surgery to help relieve the symptoms of the disease. He leaves behind a wife, Robyn, three daughters, Michelle (Tyler), Amanda, and Kristine. One granddaughter, Sydney, and one grandson, Jace. John will be greatly missed and long remembered by all those who knew him.



Message from the Director

Change: Life's Only Constant



The advent of a new decade seems like as good of a time as any to talk about change. New year, new you and all. To the resolution-makers; We wish you the best of luck.

The Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and the Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association experienced some of the biggest changes in the 38 year history of the organizations in 2019. Long-time Executive Director, Barb Kliment, retired in January and remained on contract to teach me the ropes as I was brought on board shortly thereafter. Nebraska Sorghum can't thank Barb enough for her leadership of nearly four decades.

NGSB and NeSPA also thanked several board members as they retired from service. Mr. Duane Sugden and Mr. John Dolnicek, both of whom served with distinction on the NGSB board, retired in the summer. Mr. Don Bloss, who also serves as the Past President of the National Sorghum Producers board, retired from the NeSPA board beginning in January 2020. NGSB and NeSPA thank these fine gentlemen for their leadership and guidance in support of Nebraska agriculture.

NGSB and NeSPA also undertook several new initiatives, such as regular, monthly producer and consumer outreach, the internship program, and increased partnerships with local and state economic development entities. Other partnerships, such as NGSB's partnership with the UNL Dairy Store, provided unique opportunities to re-introduce sorghum to the general public. Further enhancing the Nebraska Sorghum website, and robustly leveraging social media platforms has also produced a growing interest in our amazing crop.

It has been said that the only constant in life is change. While change can be difficult, it also gives us moments to re-evaluate and re-assess. After nearly a year of getting to know these organizations, I'd say that NGSB and NeSPA remain on a strong course for growth in Nebraska.

New and emerging international markets are set to increase demand for sorghum overseas in 2020 and beyond. Domestically, sorghum has great advantages in culinary, biofuels, bioplastics, aquaculture, industrial, and pet food markets. I am optimistic about the upside potential for sorghum revenues as we proactively work to develop these value-added opportunities.

It is a privilege to work on your behalf. Please contact me at any time to share your thoughts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nate Blum'.

Executive Director

Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association



Ms. Barb Kliment



Mr. Duane Sugden



Mr. John Dolnicek



Mr. Don Bloss

2019 Sorghum Lookback

From the retirement of long-time Executive Director, Barb Kliment and the hiring of new Executive Director, Nate Blum to new initiatives and markets development strategies, 2019 was an eventful year for the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and the Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association.

Check out a summary of our 2019 activities here:

[Click](#)

2019 Sorghum Field Days

Demonstration Plot Observation Sheet



Nebraska Grain Sorghum Producers Association

Affiliate of National Grain Sorghum Producers Association
301 Centennial Mall South, P.O. Box 94982, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509 Telephone:
402/471-3552 Fax: 402/471-3040

2019 SORGHUM FIELD DAYS DEMONSTRATION PLOT OBSERVATION SHEET

(Located on the Mike Baker Farm at Trenton, NE)

Plot Coordinator: Mike Baker, Trenton, NE

Non-Irrigated Sorghum Program

Planting Date: June 6, 2019 – East to West
Harvest Date: October 18, 2019
Previous Crop: Winter Wheat
Population: 105,000
Fertilizer: Preplant: 115#N, 30#P, 10#S, 3#Z
Herbicide: 12.5 oz. Verdict, 1 qt. Parallel Plus
Tillage: No-Till
Irrigation: No
Rainfall: (3.1.18 to 10.1.19) *
Notes: Major hail/wind events August 13th and August 22nd. Loss estimated 20%

Variety	Weight	Moisture	Length	Width	Rows	Test Wt.	Yield	Rank
Dekalb DKS28-05	1914	12.2	687	30	8	54.1	110.62	18
Dekalb DKS33-07	2268	14.9	687	30	8	51.8	127.05	2
Dekalb DKS38-16	2242	14.1	687	30	8	57.4	126.78	4
Dekalb DKS45-23	1894	14.6	687	30	8	54.7	106.48	22
Sorghum Partners SP25C10	1588	10.9	687	30	8	54.0	93.14	27
Sorghum Partners SP43M80	1686	14.8	687	30	8	56.5	94.56	26
Sorghum Partners SP33S40	1818	12.0	687	30	8	57.2	105.32	23
Pioneer 87P09	1904	12.3	687	30	8	59.9	109.92	19
Pioneer 86P20	1874	13.3	687	30	8	54.9	106.96	21
Pioneer 87P10	1790	13.0	687	30	8	58.1	100.98	24
Pioneer 86P33	1992	13.5	687	30	8	54.7	113.43	16
Arrow AS212	1754	13.0	687	30	8	58.7	100.45	25
Arrow ASX12	1976	12.5	687	30	8	56.4	113.82	15
Dekalb DKS28-05 (Check)	1914	11.4	687	30	8	53.9	111.63	17
Arrow AS262	2040	13.2	687	30	8	58.6	116.56	13
Arrow AS248FG	2046	12.8	687	30	8	58.2	117.45	12
Hoegemeyer H6037	2074	13.2	687	30	8	57.4	118.51	10
Hoegemeyer H6064	2064	15.0	687	30	8	56.6	115.49	14
Hoegemeyer HXP3669	1648	14.4	687	30	8	54.7	92.86	28
Hoegemeyer HXP4720	1622	18.3	687	30	8	39.2	87.23	29
Fontanelle G3802	2284	13.7	687	30	8	53.7	129.75	1
Fontanelle G4550	2168	14.2	687	30	8	55.7	122.45	7

Fontanelle G4815	2186	14.4	687	30	8	51.4	123.18	5
Fontanelle G6008	2122	15.1	687	30	8	54.6	118.60	9
Channel 6B02	2234	13.7	687	30	8	56.6	126.91	3
Channel 5R45	2158	13.5	687	30	8	56.7	122.88	6
Channel 6B55	2080	13.0	687	30	8	53.9	119.12	8
Channel 6B60	2070	13.8	687	30	8	56.1	117.46	11
Dekalb DKS28-05 (Check)	1856	11.6	687	30	8	54.4	108.01	20