

Newsheat

Volume 3 • Issue 1 • Spring 2013

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While some areas of Nebraska received much needed snowfall this winter, USDA reports have 50 percent of Nebraska's wheat classified in poor or very poor condition. The success of this year's wheat crop will depend largely on whether or not farmers receive timely spring rains.

Triumph of Ag
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Dayton Christensen
President
Big Springs

In the Southeastern part of the Panhandle, we have received three snow storms in the past month and a half, and two of them came with the wind. But at least we have seen some precipitation in our area. The wheat is starting to come out of dormancy and is looking a little better at this time. The drought is not over, but hopefully we are seeing trends to receive more moisture. Wheat prices have dropped over a dollar per bushel in the past month with sluggish exports and moisture throughout the Corn Belt partially to blame.

Since the winter meetings of the National Association of Wheat Growers in Washington DC, the CEO Dana Peterson has resigned, and applications are being taken to replace her position. Resumes have been received by NAWG and the interview process will begin in April. A member from each state organization will participate in the initial discussion, with the final selection determined by the executive board of NAWG and members of the national Wheat Foundation Board. If anyone has recommendations for this position, feel free to contact me. I would happily forward this information on to NAWG President and Montana wheat farmer Bing Von Bergen.

I hope your spring goes well and we begin to see a return to more normal conditions.

jdchristensen@atcjet.net



Scott Osler
Executive Board
Elsie

I hope where you are some moisture has come and maybe there is hope the drought is easing. Here in southwest Nebraska, we have missed some nice chances for moisture, so I continue to be concerned about the wheat crop.

It seems the commodity title continues to be looked at by some in the administration to be a source of funds to reduce the deficits which continue to grow and grow.

In reality, if the entire Federal government had the same percentage of cuts as the commodity title of the Farm Bills over the last decade, the deficit would be many billions of dollars less than today.

Through our affiliation with the National Association of Wheat Growers, we will continue to advocate for the continuation of crop insurance with affordable premiums. I'm sure the direct payments and counter-cyclical payments will no longer be part of the safety net, but in reality, they play such a small part of our margins that they are not significant in this time of high crop prices.

Your Nebraska Wheat Growers played a vocal part in stopping Governor Heineman's ill-thought out attempt to reform the Nebraska tax code. Dropping the state income tax in favor of a sales tax on many ag inputs would have resulted in a huge tax increase for all farmers and most businesses in the state. We will continue to monitor this and many other issues.

I wish all of you a successful and safe 2013.

scott3y@gmail.com



Michael Thomas Jr.
Executive Board
Ogallala

Biotech wheat researchers around the world continue to make slow but steady progress. There is a considerable amount of biotech research being done in China. The general consensus is that we are still a few years away from having biotech wheat seed available for producers.

Various pro-biotech trade groups are working with countries that do not allow the importation of GMO crops, including Japan and the European Union. There is a good deal of information available at www.uswheat.org and at www.wheatworld.org.

MTJRFarms@gmail.com



Mark Daum
Executive Board
Dix

Hello wheat growers from the Sahara Desert of the Nebraska Panhandle. Yes, we are dry out here as most all of us growers already know. It has been a tough winter as far as moisture goes.

The wheat price is a sore subject for me also right now with these conditions out west. Weather forecasting has not been accurate at all for the Nebraska Panhandle -- Initially they build our hopes up about getting snow and then it disappears. Let's keep our heads up. We have all been through tough conditions before. After all, we are farmers.

markdaum@daltontel.net.



Randon Peters
Executive Board
McCook

We have had several snows here in SW Nebraska, giving an accumulated precipitation of 3.62” since November first. This has been one winter that I have personally enjoyed shoveling the snow and would welcome more. The wheat here seems to look healthy with a good stand in most areas. I am optimistic, hoping for a wet spring and the possibility for yet another bountiful harvest. If you watch the markets, you would think we are set up for ample production as well, since we have seen a \$2.40 decline since the beginning of November.

I have been quite busy these past months, beginning with our annual meeting in Sidney. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve on the board another year, and thanks to those who attended the meeting. Discussions were held regarding the Growers schedule and the most efficient manner to get our trailer to varying venues. If you have an event you would like to see the Mobile Baking Lab at, please contact one of the board members.

The NAWG winter wheat conference was held in January at Washington DC. In conjunction with the meeting, I also had the opportunity to visit with both Senators Johanns and Fischer. Both seemed to be in touch with our concerns regarding the Farm Bill and had this as a top priority. We also visited with the staff for the Representatives Terry and Fortenberry; I felt as if our group of wheat producers were heard by these staffers; they were receptive to our concerns and positive dialogue followed. These hill visits were a first for me, and I now truly understand why it is essential the farmer groups need to inform our lawmakers about issues that are being faced on our family farms.

I also had the chance to attend the NAWG annual meeting. This was a very active meeting with many issues being discussed. One of my interests would be the obvious Farm Bill situation; we heard from the Majority Chief Economists from both the House and the Senate Ag Committees. These men were both very passionate about the Farm Bill and its contents. It appeared to me, compromise is achievable this year and a Bill may be passed.

Most recently I helped staff our baking lab during the Triumph of Ag show in Omaha. This was an enjoyable experience as usual. We visited with a predominant Iowa and Eastern Nebraska crowd. “We used to raise wheat,” was a common reply when asked about the crops on their farm, although, many realized wheat could provide many benefits for their operation.

I hope all goes well on your operation in the coming months. I would enjoy hearing your comments/concerns regarding the wheat industry and farming in general. I am easily accessible at:

randonpeters@gmail.com.



LB 405 & 406 Killed



Early in the year, at the request of Governor Heineman, Sen. McCoy presented two bills to the Unicameral appropriations committee regarding tax revisions. The bills, LB405 and LB406 essentially would have eliminated the state income tax in exchange for removing several sales tax exemptions, including those on several major agricultural production inputs.

NWGA worked with several other commodity organizations and the Nebraska Farm Bureau to communicate the negative impact the bills would have had on Nebraska agriculture. In addition to visiting with the governor during the Governor’s Ag Conference, NWGA submitted written testimony opposing the bills during the appropriations committee hearings.

Governor Heineman stated during a breakfast meeting with commodity groups at the Governor’s Ag Conference,

that the purpose of the bills was to initiate conversation about tax reform. On February 20, at the governor’s request, the revenue committee voted to indefinitely postpone both bills.

Instead Sen. Schumacher has introduced LB 613, which would create a Tax Modernization Commission. The purpose of the Commission would be to evaluate Nebraska’s tax structure, with an eye toward potential reform. A preliminary report would be due to the Governor and the Unicameral by December 15, 2013, with a final report due by November 15, 2014.

A full copy of the language for LB 613 can be found at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/Current/PDF/Intro/LB613.pdf>.

House and Senate release proposed FY 2014 budgets

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) released his budget proposal this past Tuesday calling for cuts to farm programs by \$31 billion over the next 10 years, but leaves it up to the House Agriculture Committee to decide how to make the needed cuts. This is a big change from the House's budget resolution last year, which specifically targeted crop insurance for reduction. The Ryan budget was written in order to balance the budget in 10 years, and was passed by the committee late Wednesday night with a party line vote of 22-17. The budget is expected to come to the House floor for a vote sometime next week.

Senate Budget Committee Chairwoman Patty Murray (D-Wash.) also released the Senate budget plan this week, and would provide the Senate Agriculture Committee with flexibility to write a five-year farm bill. The budget would assume \$23 billion in savings by reforming agriculture programs. The committee is on day two of their markup and hopes to pass the budget through the committee by the end of the week. The Administration on the other hand has yet to release their FY2014 budget and is set to do so on April 8.

To read House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas' (R-Okla.) statement on the House budget proposal go to: <http://agriculture.house.gov/press-release/lucas-statement-ryans-proposed-budget-plan-1>.

Wheat research fly-in

Wheat farmers, researchers and industry partners will be in Washington, D.C. next month for the annual Wheat Research Fly-In. The event is an opportunity to educate stakeholders on Capitol Hill and at USDA about the importance of wheat research projects around the country.

It also emphasizes the need for consistent, adequate funding even in tough budget times. This event is planned in collaboration with NAWG, the National Wheat Improvement Committee, North American Millers' Association and the American Bakers' Association.

NWGA may send a delegate from the executive board to participate in this event.

NWGA visits Capitol Hill

Four members of the NWGA executive board attended the joint winter meeting of US Wheat Associates and the National Association of Wheat Growers in Washington DC. While there, members participated in meetings on issues ranging from trade to research to the budgets of USW and NAWG.

Members also took time to visit Capitol Hill to discuss issues facing the wheat industry. Board members visited with staff in the offices of Adrian Smith, Lee Terry and Jeff Fortenberry. However, members were able to visit with both Senators Mike Johanns and Deb Fischer in person. During these meetings, topics of discussion included the need for a Farm Bill, wheat's impact on Nebraska, continued support for the Federal Market Development and Market Access Programs that drive international purchases of wheat, support for research and environmental issues.

As talks in Washington DC currently focus around and on national budget issues, NWGA will continue to work with the NAWG to be a voice reminding Congress about agriculture's importance to the country and our need for a Farm Bill.



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New Magazine Promotes Nebraska Agriculture

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) unveiled the “Nebraska Agriculture and You” magazine last week. The magazine is designed to share information about the Nebraska agriculture industry with general consumers. The magazine is free and will be produced annually. NDA has partnered with FFA chapters in 20 of the largest communities in Nebraska to deliver the magazines to places where consumers experience wait times, such as doctors and dentists lobbies, hair salons and automotive repair businesses. Magazines will also be distributed to public libraries, UNL’s Cooperative Extension offices and chambers of commerce. If you’d like to help distribute magazines in your community, please contact Christin Kamm with NDA at (402) 471-6856 or christin.kamm@nebraska.gov. An online version of the magazine is available for you to view at www.neagriculture.com.

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New Dean Hired at Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture

IANR Update, by Dan Moser – The current provost of Southeast Missouri State University will be the new dean of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis. Ronald Rosati will assume the position this summer.

“We are most excited to have a person of Dr. Rosati’s talent, skills and experience to be our next dean of NCTA,” said Ronnie Green, vice president of agriculture and natural resources for the University of Nebraska.

Rosati has been provost of Southeast Missouri State since 2010. Previously, he served in a number of roles at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, including dean of the College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences.

Rosati received his associate’s degree in agriculture from Farmingdale Agricultural and Technical College, his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agricultural education from Cornell University and his doctorate in agricultural education from Iowa State university.

Rosati replaces Weldon Sleight, who retired last year.

“I appreciate the opportunity to join the team at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. I studied the institution extensively and I’ve been very impressed by the quality and dedication of its faculty and staff, and the support NCTA receives from the University of Nebraska, state legislators, Nebraska’s agricultural community, and the town of Curtis,” said Rosati. “NCTA offers some creative and visionary academic programs that are very high quality and serve the needs of its students very well. I look forward to working with the NCTA community to continue to grow the institution, including its enrollment, programs, and service to Nebraska’s agricultural community.”

“With the foundation that has been established, NCTA is poised to move to the next level under Dr. Rosati’s vision, leadership and management capabilities,” said Green, who also serves as the Harlan vice chancellor of the university’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Rosati also has experience at Illinois State University, Ohio State University, Iowa State University and Alfred State College, where he also served as provost.

NCTA is a two-year college that offers associate of science and applied science degrees in agriculture fields. It includes a 600-acre land and livestock laboratory.

Rosati’s appointment is pending NU Board of Regents approval.

Bake & Take

March is Bake & Take month. Bake & Take has been celebrated by wheat organizations around the country for more than 40 years. The event encourages participants to bake a wheat food and share it with friends, family, neighbors or shut-ins. Not only is the event a great community service project, but sharing a wheat food is a great way to continue sharing wheat's story.

NWGA operates the Mobile Baking Lab with the belief that sharing wheat foods with the public helps open the door for conversations and the opportunity to tell our story — how our farmers are working to produce a safe, abundant food supply to feed the world.

It doesn't need to be March for you to bake and take wheat foods and your story to others, and you don't have to have a fancy kitchen or a Mobile Baking Lab to do it. To help you get started, we're sharing this year's Bake & Take recipes.



Low-fat Apple Spice Bars

Makes 16 bars

Ingredients:

1 c. all-purpose flour (we use Ultragrain)
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
1/2 c. sugar
1/4 c. brown sugar
1/4 c. non-fat dry milk
1 egg white
1 c. unsweetened applesauce
1 tsp. vanilla

Directions:

Sift together flour, salt baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. In separate bowl, beat sugar, brown sugar, dry milk, egg white, applesauce and vanilla. Slowly add the dry mix of ingredients to the bowl, stirring just until combined. Spray the bottom of an 8x8 inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. Pour batter into the pan and bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes. Do not overbake. If desired, dust with powdered sugar.

Serving size: 1 bar. 78 calories, 1.7g protein, 19g carbohydrates, 0g fat, 0.3mg cholesterol, 134.5mg sodium, 13.3g sugar, 0.7g fiber

Dark Chocolate Drop Cookies

Makes 4 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

1 c. all-purpose flour (we use Ultragrain)
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1 c. dark chocolate chips
1 c. brown sugar
1/3 c. canola oil
2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. powdered sugar

Directions:

Slowly melt chocolate chips in microwave safe bowl, stirring occasionally. Let cool for five minutes. Mix brown sugar, oil, eggs and vanilla. Add melted chocolate. In separate bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. Add to the chocolate mixture. It should look like a thick brownie batter. Chill in fridge for 20 minutes to make dough more manageable. With a teaspoon, make walnut-sized balls. Roll balls until completely coated in powdered sugar and place on a cookie sheet. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes. Cool on a flat surface. *Note: Add 2 tsp. instant coffee to flour mixture for a mocha-flavored cookie.*

Serving size: 2 cookies. 143 calories, 6.5g fat, 15.5mg cholesterol, 81.6mg sodium, 24.5g carbs, 1g fiber, 19.5g sugar, 1.2g protein

National Ag Week

Nebraska Wheat celebrated National Ag Week by participating in an event with several other commodity organizations and local radio station KX96.9 at a Super Saver grocery store in Lincoln.

Due to space restrictions, Nebraska Wheat used a portable tabletop convection oven instead of the Mobile Baking Lab to bake and serve fresh chocolate chip cookie samples.

Additional food samples were also provided by the other commodity organizations present. Together, the organizations educated grocery shoppers about where the food they were purchasing came from. KX96.9 provided a live, remote broadcast from the store during the event.

Shoppers stopping at the Nebraska Wheat table were able to get cookies, recipes and factual information about the role of wheat and gluten in their diet.

Von Bergen Installed as NAWG President at Commodity Classic

Montana wheat and barley farmer Bing Von Bergen was elected and installed as the new president of the National Association of Wheat Growers at the Association's Board of Directors meeting Thursday.

Von Bergen is a native of Moccasin, Mont., in the center part of the state. Prior to becoming a NAWG officer, he served in the officer corps of the Montana Grain Growers Association for five years and on the NAWG Board, chairing the Domestic and Trade Policy Committee in 2008 and 2009.

In addition to running his farm, Von Bergen is the co-owner of Heartland Seed Company, which specializes in small grain seeds as well as grass and alfalfa seed. He has also served in several leadership roles in his community, including on a local co-op board, bank board and school board.

After serving in the U.S. Army, Von Bergen attended Montana State University. He and his wife Lois have two college-age children.

As president, Von Bergen will also be serving as acting chief executive officer while the Association undertakes a search process for a new staff lead.

"I am entering this new role during what some may consider a challenging time for our Association and our industry, but I see a lot of opportunity for us to grow and improve," Von Bergen said. "I appreciate my fellow growers entrusting me with these duties and responsibilities, and I will work diligently to ensure I live up to them."

Other NAWG officers elected and installed at the meeting included:

- Paul Penner, Kansas, first vice president
- Brett Blankenship, Washington, second vice president
- Gordon Stoner, Montana, secretary-treasurer
- Erik Younggren, Minnesota, immediate past president

Members of NAWG's Executive Committee, known as officers, commit to serve five years when they first run for the role of secretary-treasurer. The NAWG Nominating Committee and NAWG Board reaffirms their selection each year as they move into new roles on the officer team.

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UNL IANR Position Announcement: Dryland Cropping Systems Specialist Panhandle Research and Extension Center

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska, is accepting applications for a Dryland Cropping Systems Specialist, a 50% research, 50% extension, 12-month, tenure-leading or tenured appointment at the Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor rank, located at the Panhandle Research and Extension Center (PHREC), Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Tenure home for this position is the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, with administrative assignment to the PHREC. Rank and tenure will be based on experience and credentials of the successful applicant. If filled at the rank of Professor, the position is eligible for the endowed Fenster Professorship of Dryland Agriculture. Focus of this position will be developing and conducting relevant and responsive research and extension programs for the unique crops and cropping systems of the Central High Plains region and, in particular, the Nebraska Panhandle.

The successful candidate will be expected to develop a nationally and internationally recognized program in dryland cropping systems in a semi-arid, High Plains region, with a focus on efficiency, profitability and environmental management of dryland cropping systems with emphasis on appropriate cropping rotations, water management, weed control and soil conservation. The incumbent will participate in multi-disciplinary teams in alternative crops, pest and soil management, and livestock grazing programs; maintain a vigorous program supported through external grants and contracts, publish research results in peer-reviewed journals; and conduct relevant research and extension programs to convey research findings to clientele.

Requires Ph.D. degree or Ph.D. in place by date of hire, in Agronomy or closely related field.

To review the complete position details and apply for this position, go to: <http://employment.unl.edu>, search for requisition number F_130078. Click on "Apply to this Job." Attach a letter of application, an overview of research and extension experience and interests, and a curriculum vitae. Arrange for 3 letters of reference to be sent via e-mail to: sholman1@unl.edu. Review of applications will begin on April 22, 2013 and continue until the position is filled or the search is closed.

The University of Nebraska has an active National Science Foundation ADVANCE gender equity program, and is committed to a pluralistic campus community through affirmative action, equal opportunity, work-life balance, and dual careers.

About the Panhandle Research and Extension Center

The University of Nebraska Panhandle Research and Extension Center is located on the northern outskirts of Scottsbluff. This unit serves as the District Headquarters for the Agricultural Research Division and the Cooperative Extension Division and other Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources activities and functions.

The Panhandle Research and Extension Center is headquartered in the 70,000 ft Elliott Building which provides faculty offices, research laboratories, greenhouses, a multimedia computer lab, a multimedia development center and numerous meeting rooms. Communication technology includes both Ethernet and wireless networks, extensive server capacity and interactive videoconferencing and satellite technology.

Land resources for research and extension programs include the Scotts Bluff Ag Lab (425 acres of irrigated crop land) and the Panhandle Research Feedlot (expanded to 102 pens in 2006) located northwest of Scottsbluff and the High Plains Ag Lab located near Sidney, NE (710 acres of rain-fed crop land and 1,600 acres of crested wheatgrass pasture).

The Panhandle Research and Extension Center is staffed with 18 District Specialists (most with joint research and extension appointments) who hold academic appointments in their appropriate campus departments. These Specialists represent 18 different discipline areas making teamwork the platform for many of our most effective programs. The unit is also served by 45 support staff providing clerical and technical assistance to the Specialists.

Extension programming is delivered to the 17 counties of the District by 28 Extension professionals. Extension Educators and Assistants are distributed across the region and work collaboratively with other county, district and state personnel to provide timely and innovative extension education programming. Additional information about the Panhandle Research & Extension Center is available at www.panhandle.unl.edu.

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NAWG CEO resigns

NAWG update – A statement from NAWG President Erik Younggren, a farmer from northwestern Minnesota:

“National Association of Wheat Growers Chief Executive Officer Dana Peterson has voluntarily resigned due to personal circumstances, effective Friday, Feb. 8, 2013.

I have formed a search committee to find a new CEO. In the interim, NAWG policy calls for the president of the Association to serve as CEO, and I am fulfilling that role.

In her resignation letter, Peterson thanked the NAWG Board for the opportunity to serve the nation’s wheat growers and wheat industry and described her time as the Association working with the NAWG staff, Board and state staff as ‘one of my life’s greatest pleasures.’

Dana served us well for the three years she was in the CEO position, and we thank her for her tireless, passionate work for the Association and the nation’s wheat growers on Capitol Hill and beyond.”

NWGA update: Resumes are currently being accepted by NAWG for the position of CEO. An initial discussion will occur in April regarding the position. NWGA president, Dayton Christensen will participate in those discussions as Nebraska’s representative.

A final decision will be made by the NAWG Executive Board, consisting of representatives from each of the NAWG member states, of which Nebraska is one, as well as members of the National Wheat Foundation board.

Those with questions regarding this issue may contact NWGA’s office at 402-471-2358 or by e-mailing newheatgrowers@gmail.com.



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Congratulations Dr. Baenziger and UNL wheat breeding team

At the 2013 Wheat Quality Council annual meeting, Dr. P. Stephen Baenziger was given the Millers Award for Best Set of Lines.

Fifty-two different lines of wheat were submitted by various public and private institutions for evaluation by the WQC. Three were submitted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. These varieties were so well liked by the millers, that they voted to give Baenziger the Best Set of Lines award.

Baenziger is the Wheat Growers Presidential Chair and the primary small grains breeder at the University of Nebraska. His research focuses on cultivar and germplasm development, developing improved breeding methods and biotechnology.

The hard work of Baenziger and his team to develop wheat varieties plays a large role in the success of wheat production in Nebraska. Congratulations Dr. Baenziger and team. This is a well-deserved honor.



THE NEBRASKA WHEAT GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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Thank you for your commitment to the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association! NWGA frequently needs help from its members to influence issues. Sometimes that help is a simple letter or phone call to a legislator; sometime it involves representing NWGA at a meeting, simply sharing your opinion on an issue, help with an NWGA committee or meeting consumers when helping in the Mobile Baking Lab.

Please check below the issue area (s) you would be interested in assisting NWGA in its mission of enhancing profitability for grain producers. Thank you!

State Affairs

International Policy

Membership

Educational Events

Research/Value Added

Environmental Policy

Baking Lab Events

Domestic Policy (Transportation/Basis/Federal Farm Policy/Risk Management/Taxes)

Return Service Requested



TRIUMPH OF AG EXPO

Members of the executive board of NWGA, along with members of the Nebraska Wheat Board and their spouses, participated in the Triumph of Ag Expo in Omaha with the Mobile Baking Lab.

The expo is an annual trade show with over 200,000 square feet of ag displays. Members used the Mobile Baking Lab to bake fresh cinnamon rolls to serve to guests. Volunteers served more than 7,000 samples over the course of two days.

The majority of visitors were producers from eastern Nebraska and parts of Kansas and Iowa, regions typically known to be corn producing areas. Board members discussed current crop trends with visitors, asked about visitors' thoughts on wheat, and explained the benefits of using wheat in the crop rotation.

In addition to participating in the Triumph of Ag Expo, NWB members celebrated their annual Bake & Take event. Board members delivered cinnamon rolls to the Unicameral, UNL's ag representatives on East Campus, the Department of Agriculture and other members of the agriculture community and commodity organizations in Lincoln.

