

Iowa Farmer Today



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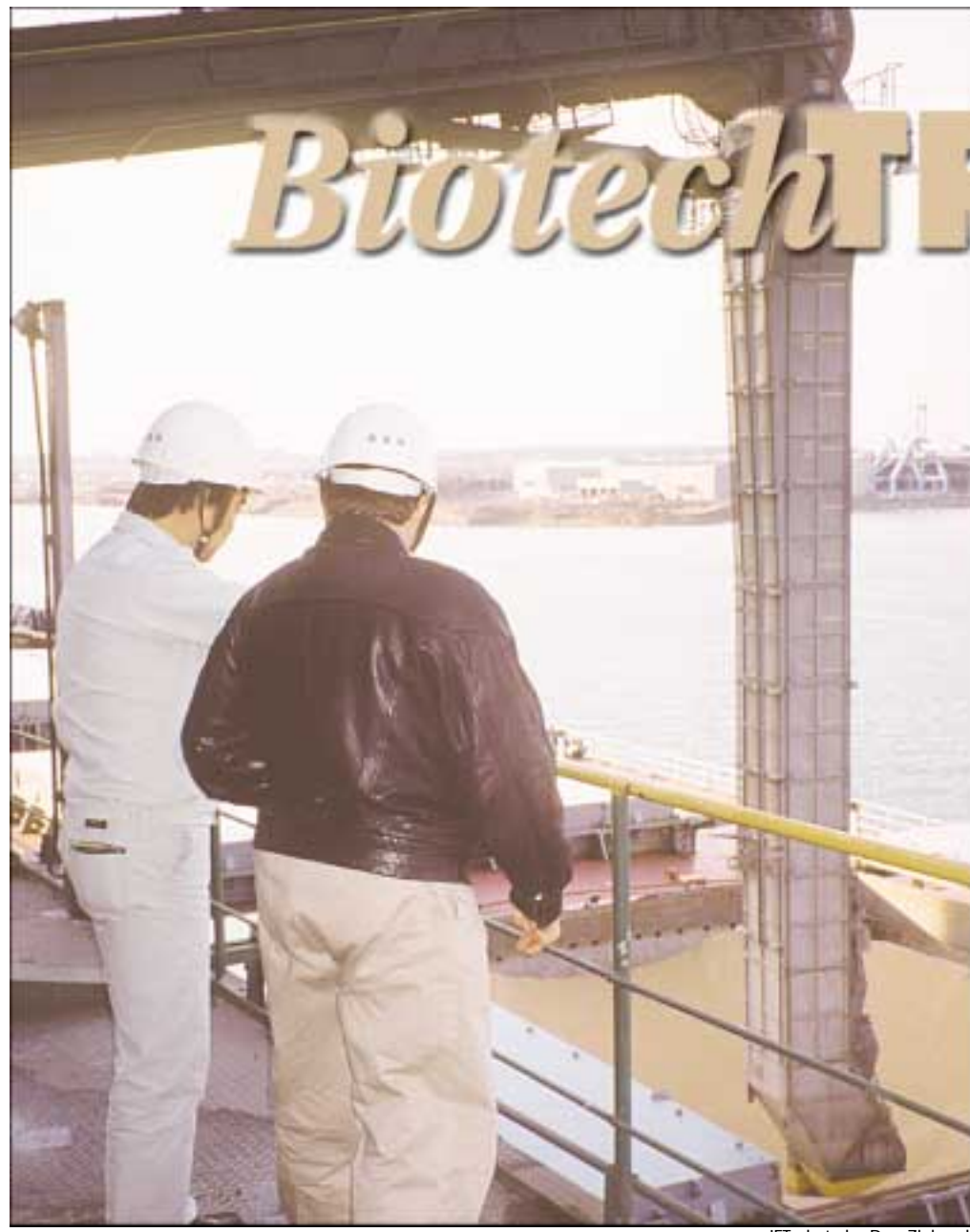
What's Inside



Tasty TREATS
Farm cook's baking skills a hit at the office
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Nose KNOWS
Animal ID system goes into effect for fairs
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U.S. corn gets unloaded from a ship at Kanto Grain Terminal Co. at Kashima, Japan. Watching the corn being unloaded in March 2001, are, left, Hironori Ohmori, then with Kanto Grain, and Dennis Kitch, then U.S. Grains Council's Japan country director.

Biotech TREND

Use of GMOs continues strong

By Dan Zinkand
Iowa Farmer Today

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Almost 60 percent of farmers will plant "genetically modified" (GMO) corn hybrids this year, according to results of the second Iowa Farmer Today Buying Intentions Survey.

Younger farmers in Northern Iowa who manage 500 acres or more are most likely to plant the biotech hybrids.

Fifty-eight percent said they would plant the "biotech" hybrids, 37 percent said they would not and 5 percent said they did not know or did not answer the question.

"The trend toward purchasing GMO-related products is predicted to continue in 2003, based on the results of our 2003 Buying Intentions Survey," says Steve DeWitt, Iowa Farmer Today vice president and publisher.

See page 4: Survey

"The economics of using GMOs helps drive increased farmer use."

Steve DeWitt
Publisher
Iowa Farmer Today

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Renewable energy best path forward

By Mark Muller

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

The United States has spent billions of dollars over the past 20 years subsidizing agricultural exports and international market development.

What has been the result? Grain and oilseed exports have been flat since 1980, commodity prices remain well below costs and the farm crisis continues.

It wasn't supposed to happen this way.

The technology and expertise of U.S. farmers

were going to overwhelm the competitors, drive them out of business and subsequently increase demand for our exports, and eventually raise prices.

Unfortunately, Brazil, Argentina, China and other countries didn't read the script.

BRAZIL IS opening up a region of newly cropped land larger than our Cornbelt.

This year, it is believed the combined soybean production of Brazil and Argentina will exceed that of the United States.

U.S. farm policy is at a crossroads. The first — and most likely — path is a continuation of our search for elusive export markets. This is coupled with our determination to grow the crops and crop varieties, regardless of consumer demand.

If Europeans continue to object to GMO crops, hormones in beef and other controversial practices, we'll simply bring more cases to the World Trade Organization and try to force them to accept our products.



Mark Muller

It is time to think outside of the commodity box. U.S. agriculture can do much more than simply provide low-value, unprocessed commodities for export.

These policies have not only been unsuccessful, they have come with the cost of missed opportunities.

The money spent trying to expand export markets would much better serve farmers if it was spent on fostering local value-added production.

RENEWABLE ENERGY production in particular, which is harvested and utilized locally, has tremendous potential to revitalize the farm economy.

Ethanol cooperatives, for example, have been one of the surest ways to increase the local price of corn. The National Corn Growers Association reports corn prices in markets near ethanol plants increase 5 to 8 cents per bushel.

This alternate path, based on renewable energy production and other unexploited domestic markets, provides the greatest opportunity for the farm economy.

Everyone consumes fuel and electricity, predominantly from fossil fuels. However, for reasons of price volatility, geopolitical conflict and environmental concerns, cheap fossil fuels can no longer be taken for granted.

Midwest farmers have already been reducing their dependence on fossil fuels. It takes much less fossil fuel for each bushel of Midwest corn produced than it did 20 years ago.

At the same time, the cost of producing renewable energy, particularly wind energy, has dropped dramatically. The wind turbines that are popping up throughout Iowa attest to the economic potential.

A recent report by the Environmental Law and Policy Center provides some numbers. In "Job Jolt — The Economic Impacts of Re-powering the Midwest," researchers found increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency could provide Iowa with a 12,500 net increase in jobs and almost \$1 billion in additional economic output by 2020.

Farmers, as producers of many of the renewable energies and the landowners for other projects, would benefit enormously from this investment.

Of course, one of the primary benefits of renewable

energy is it fosters small-scale, decentralized energy production.

If wind and biomass simply become another component of the petrochemical companies' portfolio, the benefits to local Iowa economies are substantially reduced.

Local businesses and cooperatives need to own these energy-producing sites, and policies should ensure this diverse ownership. This is also important for energy consumers in Iowa as the price volatility of fossil fuels is expected to increase in coming years. Less reliance on fossil fuels will reduce the economic impact of this volatility.

This new direction in farm policy provides other benefits through diversification.

When the price of corn and soybeans plummeted in recent years, Iowa farmers had few alternative markets. So, in spite of the low prices, corn and soybean production increased, putting further pressure on prices.

Having other viable options, such as switchgrass for biomass production and other supplemental income — such as wind turbines and manure digestion — will reduce the financial risks in agriculture.

For the first time ever, last year's farm bill contained an energy title that will provide funds for energy efficiency and renewable energy production.

THIS IS just the beginning of a gradual public policy shift that needs to take place at all levels of government emphasizing renewable energies in agriculture.

Additional incentives are needed to foster this emerging market that is competing with the well-funded petrochemical industry. Perhaps the best policy tool would be a national renewable energy standard, mandating 20 percent of our country's energy be produced from renewable sources.

Iowa has tremendous potential to transform itself from a fossil-fuel consumer to a fossil-fuel competitor. Let's take advantage of this opportunity.

Muller directs the Environment and Agriculture Program of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy in Minneapolis.

AT A GLANCE

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Also

THE APPARENT MYSTERY continues over discovery of the StarLink Bt gene in U.S. corn shipped to Japan in December. page 9

Grassley back on Senate ag committee

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

Supporters of a ban on packers owning livestock or of stricter farm program payment limitations will have more support in the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee, thanks to a move by the Republican Senate leadership to allow Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, to rejoin that committee.

Grassley, a vocal supporter of those two items, lost his seat on the Agriculture Committee when he became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee two years ago.

Senate rules did not allow him to be a chairman while remaining a member of three "A" level committees. However, a

change in those rules allowed Grassley to get permission from the Senate majority leader to rejoin agriculture.

Grassley told reporters Tuesday he approached former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and new Majority Leader Bill Frist in the past month with his request and it was granted this week "by the good grace of the Senate majority leader."

While Grassley says his priority will remain with his work on the Finance Committee, he will use the ag post to push value-added agriculture, as well as his packer ban proposal and payment-limit legislation.

Farm programs should target medium and small farmers, he says. Grassley argues any program sending two-thirds of the payments to only 10 percent of the farmers, as the present one does, is in for trouble in the long run.

He says he doesn't know how his move will affect legislation regarding payment limitations or the packer ban, conceding the GOP committee chairman, Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi, and several Southern Democrats on that committee have opposed such legislation.

"It's very tough," he says of the effort.

He joined forces Tuesday with Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., and Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., in re-introducing the bill to ban packer ownership of livestock.

He was also joined by Harkin and Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., in re-introducing legislation to ban mandatory arbitration clauses in contracts.

Grassley said his biggest concern in the area of payment limitations is the use of generic certificates, items used much more in the South than in Iowa.



IFT photo by Jeff DeYoung

Dr. Duane Warden checks over a group of young bulls on his farm near Council Bluffs in Pottawattamie County. Warden, a retired doctor, participated in Iowa State University's Beef Tenderness Study.

Tender TRAITS

ISU study
targets
sires with
best meat
quality

By Jennifer Bremer

Iowa Farmer Today

The Iowa Beef Center is closer to identifying beef sires that will produce tender-eating progeny.

After three years of collecting data, the center's Iowa Beef Tenderness Project has ended.

"Complete carcass data was collected on all steers, which included the Warner Bratzler Shear force values which was used to evaluate the tenderness of various animals and then in turn the sire summary was produced," says Daryl Strohhahn, Extension beef specialist for the center and project coordinator.

Strohhahn says information collected the past three years on about 450 head will help identify sires that not only produce productive progeny, but also have acceptable eating characteristics.

Along with the carcass data, feedlot performance and profitability was maintained.

For sires to develop an expect-

ed progeny difference (EPD) for tenderness, Strohhahn says an easy test will need to come in the form of gene markers.

"The National Carcass Merit project is trying to address the issue of gene markers, but it takes time to address," he explains.

"Tenderness EPDs are a reality in the Simmental breed right now. We have developed EPDs and we have developed EPDs for the bulls that were tested in this project."

He says the best way to evaluate a sire is to feed out a minimum of 15 progeny and evaluate them for shear force.

The heritability of tenderness seems to be moderate.

Strohhahn says many traits have genetic relationships to beef tenderness, but none of them has the perfect correlation.

"That means other factors, such as feeding program, management, harvest conditions, post-harvest management, cooking methodology, etc. have a

great deal to do with the degree of tenderness."

He says recent and past studies have suggested marbling is related to tenderness. Higher degrees of marbling is seen as being desirable.

Australian scientists suggest cattle disposition also relates to tenderness.

"Keep in mind, just because a factor is related to tenderness does not mean we can have a major impact on improvement of that trait," Strohhahn says.

"For instance, if the genetic correlation between tenderness and disposition is .4, that means only about 15 percent of the variation in tenderness is due to cattle disposition," he says.

The ultimate question is how consumers will feel about these findings.

In some studies, Strohhahn says consumers were willing to pay a premium for guaranteed tender beef.

Kansas State University research also shows people would

pay a premium for a tender steak.

Researchers performed two experiments. In one, consumers were not told which steak was more tender. In the other test, they were told which one was tender.

In the blind test, 69 percent preferred the tender steak, and 36 percent were willing to pay a premium for the tender steaks. Those consumers said they would pay \$1.23 more per pound.

In the labeled test, 84 percent of the consumers preferred the tender meat. Of those, 51 percent said they would pay \$1.84 more per pound.

The Kansas State University research shows consumers might be willing to pay up to \$2.67 or more per pound to buy a tender steak.

Strohhahn hopes all breeds will develop EPDs for tenderness. This would enable producers to use them when making breeding decisions which will affect the consumer's palate.

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GMO use higher with young farmers

Survey

From page 1

"The economics of using GMOs helps drive increased farmer use. The bottom line is the trend is going to continue because it makes good economic sense," DeWitt says.

Northern Iowa farmers are more likely to plant "genetically modified" hybrids than those in the southern region and out of state: 63 percent vs. 53 percent.

Younger farmers are more likely to use biotech hybrids than older farmers.

Here's how it breaks out:

- 65 percent of farmers 35-54 years old plan to use biotech hybrids;

- 49 percent of farmers who are 55 and older plan to use biotech hybrids.

Not only are younger farmers more likely to use biotech hybrids, so are people who farm more ground.

Sixty-nine percent of the farmers who manage 500 or more acres said they intend to use genetically modified hybrids this year. This compares with 61 percent for farmers with 300-499 acres and just 33 percent of those people farming less than 300 acres.

Last year's question about planting intentions for "geneti-

cally modified" crops lumped corn and soybeans together. Therefore, it's not possible to compare this year's answers to last year's results.

The survey offers some tantalizing details on which of the biotech traits will be used in 2003.

Of the 58 percent who said they intended to plant biotech hybrids in 2003:

- 81 percent said they will use "Bt" corn design to kill European corn borers;

- 35 percent said they will plant Roundup Ready corn;

- 16 percent said they will use LibertyLink hybrids, and

- 9 percent said they will use "stacked" hybrids which combine biotech traits, Bt and herbicide resistance.

Again, because questions about planting intentions for biotech corn and soybeans were combined in the 2001 survey, a comparison is not possible.

The survey also contains some intriguing information on planting intentions regarding corn hybrids not approved for export to Europe.

Eighty-six percent said they would not plant hybrids that have not been approved by the European Union (EU) for import. This includes hybrids that resist Roundup and any hybrids that

BIOTECH TRENDS

For the 2003 growing season, will you use "genetically modified" corn hybrids?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 58% |
| No | 37% |
| NA | 5% |

If yes, which corn hybrid traits will you use in 2003?

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Bt | 81% |
| Roundup Ready | 35% |
| LibertyLink | 16% |
| Stacked traits | 9% |

For the 2003 growing season, will you use genetically modified soybean varieties?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 70% |
| No | 27% |
| NA | 3% |

If yes, which will you use in 2003?

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Roundup Ready | 82% |
|---------------|-----|

Do you plan to grow a corn hybrid in the 2003 growing season that has not been approved for export to Europe?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 8% |
| No | 86% |
| NA | 6% |

Source: 2002 IFT Buying Intentions Survey

include Roundup resistance and another biotech trait, i.e., insect resistance.

Eight percent of farmers said they would plant a hybrid that hasn't been approved for export to the European Union, while 6 percent said they did not know

or did not answer.

Younger farmers, farmers managing more land and those in Northeast Iowa are most likely to plant hybrids not approved for export to the EU.

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Farmers most likely to plant hybrids not approved for export to Europe include:

- 15 percent of those managing 1,000 acres or more;
- 13 percent of farmers in Northeast Iowa (the most likely) vs. just 6 percent in Southeast Iowa (the least likely), and
- 10 percent of the farmers 35-54 years old vs. 6 percent of farmers 55 and older.

Here's what farmers who intend to plant a hybrid with a biotech trait not approved for import in the EU would choose:

- Roundup Ready, 69 percent;
- YieldGard (Bt) stacked with herbicide resistance, 31 percent;
- Corn rootworm Bt (not yet approved for use and sale in the United States), 31 percent; and
- Herculex 1, a new Bt trait for European corn borer resistance, 12 percent.

As for soybeans, 70 percent of farmers in the survey said they plan to use genetically modified soybeans in 2003. To date, soybeans with the "Roundup Ready" trait are the only ones that have been commercialized in the United States.

Twenty-seven percent said they will not plant genetically modified soybeans this year, while 3 percent said they did not know or did not answer the question.

In a follow-up question, 82 percent of those surveyed said they will use soybeans that tolerate Roundup or glyphosate herbicides this year.

Farmers in Northwest Iowa are most likely to plant Roundup Ready soybeans — 78 percent.

The other areas break out:

- 65 percent in Northeast and Southeast Iowa will use GMO soybeans;
- 68 percent of farmers in Southwest Iowa will plant Roundup Ready; and

- 68 percent of respondents outside Iowa will plant GMO soybeans.

Just as younger farmers who manage more ground are more likely to plant biotech hybrids, the same holds true for soybeans.

- 74 percent of farmers younger than 55 will plant Roundup Ready soybeans; and

- 63 percent of farmers 55 and older will plant the biotech soybeans.

Here's how intentions break-

out by acres farmed:

- 80 percent of farmers managing 500 acres or more will use Roundup Ready soybeans; and
- 58 percent of farmers with less than 500 acres will plant Roundup Ready.

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Mid-Group III (3.7)

Chickens ordered to be destroyed

LOS ANGELES (AP) — State officials have ordered the destruction of 1 million chickens infected with a deadly virus and expanded a quarantine to a total of five Southern California counties.

The exotic Newcastle virus, which is harmless to humans but contagious and fatal among poultry, threatens the state's \$3 billion poultry industry.

It was found in 1 million hens at an egg farm in western San Bernardino County and they were ordered destroyed, authorities said. Ranchers are compensated for all birds that are destroyed.

San Bernardino already was under quarantine, along with Riverside and Los Angeles counties.

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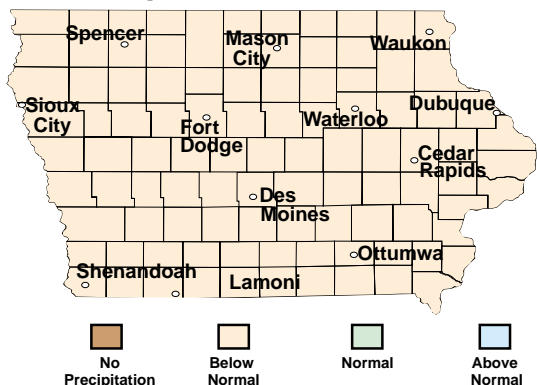
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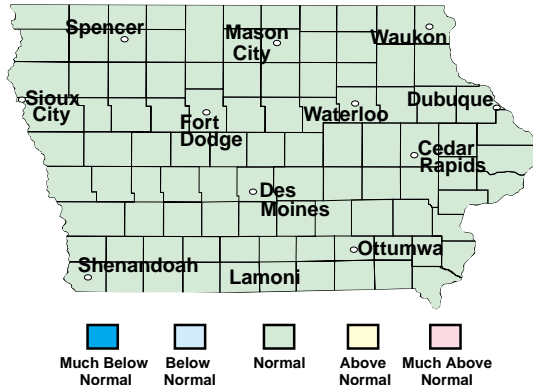
Weather WATCH

FIRST ALERT FORECASTS
K C R G - T V

Precip. Forecast Jan. 11-17



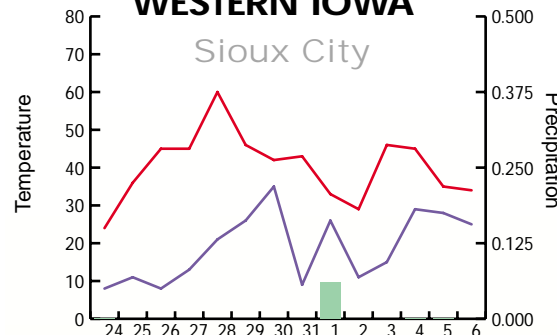
Temp. Forecast Jan. 11-17



STATE REPORT

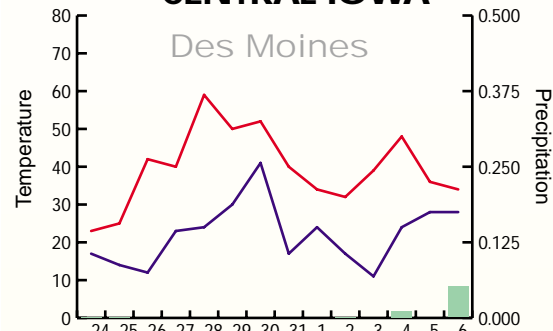
FOR PERIOD ENDING Jan. 6

WESTERN IOWA



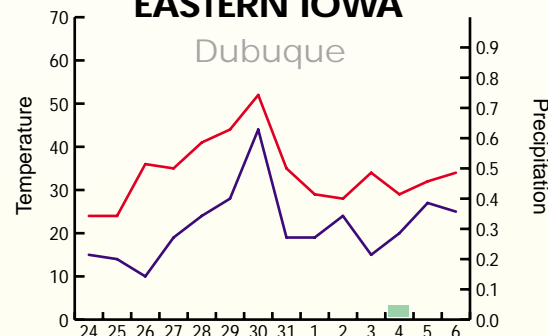
Average maximum temp..... 40.2°
Average minimum temp..... 18.9°
Precipitation for the week..... 0.02"

CENTRAL IOWA



Average maximum temp..... 39.6°
Average minimum temp..... 22.1°
Precipitation for the week..... 0.00"

EASTERN IOWA



Average maximum temp..... 34.1°
Average minimum temp..... 21.6°
Precipitation for the week..... 0.00"

THIS WEEK'S WRAP UP

Storms bypass Great Plains

Storms that roamed the Southeast and Northeast produced virtually no precipitation for the Great Plains, leaving winter wheat fields on the High Plains exposed to potentially damaging temperature extremes.

However, temperatures remained far above normal over the Pacific Northwest and Northern Great Plains, further reducing the threat of heaving and winter kill, despite the lack of a protective snow cover.

In California, precipitation interrupted field and orchard work in the central and northern valleys, but the delays were mostly brief. The precipitation and above-normal temperatures contributed to vigorous crop growth.

A strong storm that formed in the Southern Great Plains produced heavy rain, damaging winds, and flooding as it moved across the interior Mississippi Delta and up the Ohio

River Valley. Parts of the Gulf Coast and scattered areas of the interior Southeast and Atlantic Coastal Plain also received heavy rainfall and severe weather.

The storms further hampered sugarcane harvest in Louisiana and saturated Florida's already wet citrus groves. Abnormally warm, dry weather prevailed in the Cornbelt and adjacent areas of the Great Plains and Great Lakes.

In the Cornbelt, mild, mostly dry conditions in the Upper Midwest contrasted with wet weather in the Ohio Valley.

Snow blanketed the eastern Cornbelt toward week's end.

On Jan. 3-4, heavy snow returned to the Northeast, the region's second major winter storm in less than two weeks.

Meanwhile, more rain fell across the South, further delaying fieldwork and threatening the quality of winter grains.

Although dry weather returned to the South late in the week, cool conditions slowed evaporation rates from wet fields and flooded lowlands. Daily-record highs in the Midwest included 63 degrees in Peoria, Ill., and 62 degrees in Burlington, Iowa.

During the second half of the week, warmth intensified across the western half of the United States, resulting in more than 60 daily-record highs. On January 3, daily records included 61 degrees in Sheridan, Wyo., and 64 degrees in Hill City, Kan.

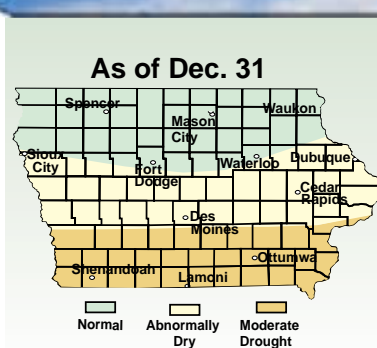
A day later in California, record highs peaked at 87 degrees in Simi Valley and Chatsworth. On Jan. 3-4, snow spread across the Northeast with a developing coastal storm.

The system followed a track similar to the Dec. 25-26 storm, blanketing many of the same areas with heavy snow. Albany, N.Y., received 20.8 inches on Jan. 3-4, their 10th-greatest storm-total snowfall on record.

HISTORICAL NORMS

| Crop District | Max. Temp. Jan. 11 | Min. Temp. Jan. 11 | Mean Temp. Jan. 11 | Avg. Precip. Jan. 11-16 |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Northwest | 23° | 3° | 13° | .10" |
| North Central | 21° | 4° | 13° | .15" |
| Northeast | 25° | 5° | 15° | .15" |
| West Central | 27° | 7° | 17° | .10" |
| Central | 28° | 10° | 19° | .14" |
| East Central | 25° | 9° | 17° | .20" |
| Southwest | 31° | 10° | 20° | .15" |
| South Central | 29° | 12° | 20° | .15" |
| Southeast | 30° | 13° | 20° | .20" |

IOWA DROUGHT MONITOR



LEGEND: Daily Precip. (green bar), Max. Temp. (red line), Min. Temp. (blue line)

ONE YEAR AGO

Snow fell Jan. 14, but it was very light. Only .2 of an inch was recorded at The Eastern Iowa Airport.

Global warming affecting wild plants, animals

By The Associated Press

Rising global temperatures that have lured plants into early bloom and birds to nest earlier in the spring are altering the ranges and behavior of hundreds of species

worldwide, two studies conclude.

From North America's marmots to Britain's birds, the findings could spell bad news for species already stressed by habitat loss if predictions of global warming over the next century pan out, the authors

said in the studies, which appear in the journal Nature.

Other scientists said the studies, which are based largely on research done previously in Europe and North America, could foretell the extinction of many species in

the coming decades as rising temperatures force them to retreat from their historical ranges or face new competitors.

A United Nations panel has predicted average global temperatures could rise 10.5 degrees Fahrenheit over the next century.

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No panic, yet, over dry conditions

By Jeff DeYoung

Iowa Farmer Today

After the driest December in

state history, it still might be too early to push the panic button. However, the finger might be closer to the button than it was a month ago.

"Iowa also had its least snowfall ever in December, and while it is dry, it's nothing that a wet March won't cure," says Jeff Thompson, a meteorologist with Global Weather Services in Kansas City, Mo. "I don't think we need to be alarmed yet. We just have to have faith in El Nino."

Soil moisture levels that were average or above average in late November took a hit in December, Thompson says.

A subsoil moisture map assembled by Iowa State University in late November indicated ranges from 4.2 inches in Harrison County in Western Iowa, to tile lines running in other sections of the state.

"With some of the warmer days we had in December, obviously soil moisture is going to be more likely to evaporate," Thompson says.

"And with the much colder weather, we are anticipating over the next couple of weeks, that doesn't indicate any type of moisture."

"We need those nice, warmer air patterns that generally carry moisture."

Even without precipitation during December, soil moisture levels appear to be near normal in most regions of Iowa.

Joel DeJong, Extension crops specialist in Le Mars, says much of Northwest Iowa is in good shape.

"We have had almost no precipitation since November, but then winter precipitation does very lit-

tle to add to soil moisture normally," he says.

"Agriculture's key moisture additional time periods are before and after freeze-up. And, with subsoil moistures in pretty good shape in Northwest Iowa right now, I am not overly concerned about present dry weather patterns."

Virgil Schmitt, Extension crops specialist in Muscatine, says Southeast Iowa soil moisture levels are down slightly.

He says normal November and December precipitation is 4 to 5 inches, but adds precipitation levels in his area range from less than half an inch to just over an inch.

"In most years, the ground is frozen and winter precipitation just runs off and does not, therefore, contribute to soil moisture reserves," Schmitt says.

"In November and December 2002, most of the rainfall was on unfrozen ground and, therefore, did soak into the ground, adding to soil plant available moisture for 2003 in areas where the soil profile was not already full."

Schmitt adds soil moisture levels in most row crop fields remain near or above normal.

Brian Lang, Extension crops specialist in Decorah, says precipitation in Northeast Iowa is a couple inches below normal.

"That can easily be made up with an extra couple of spring rains," he says.

"The frozen soil does not allow for water infiltration, so the only

soil water contribution comes in late winter/early spring when the frost leaves and snowfall still occurs and melts."

The drought that plagued most of Southwest Iowa last summer continues to concern farmers, says Clarke McGrath, Extension crops specialist in Lewis.

"As far as moisture, the showers and small amount of snow we got in late September and early October helped, but we are still behind and needing moisture," he says.

"As of the end of November, most of Southwest Iowa was behind in precipitation, from 3-7 inches below normal, and with the complete lack of precipitation in December, we are probably another 1-2 inches behind on top of what we were."

"I am concerned that if we stay dry through winter, spring and early summer, it will be difficult for the crop to get off to a good start with the low subsoil moisture readings in many counties in Southwest Iowa."

Typically in an El Nino season, precipitation stays south until late February and early March says State Climatologist Harry Hillaker.

"Usually with El Nino Iowa has wet weather in November and it's dry in December, but we had over a month head start on it," he says.

"January and February are typically dry in the northern part of the U.S., but we shouldn't have been so dry in November and December."

Hillaker says Southwest and South Central Iowa are still considered to be in a moderate drought area, with the rest of the state considered normal.

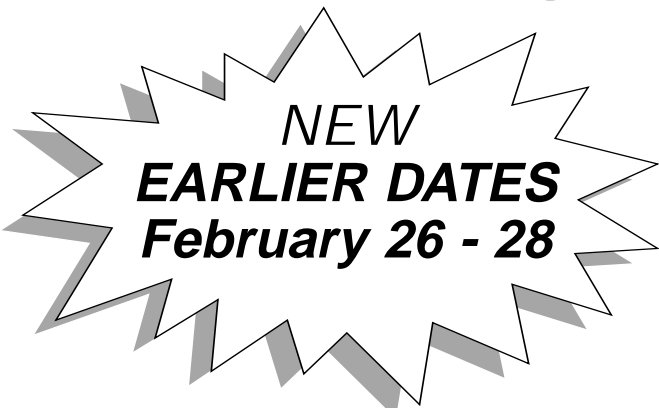
He believes March will bring a cool and relatively wet spring.

"My guess is that as dry as it has been the last few years, unless we are ridiculously wet in the spring, we should be able to soak in the moisture," Hillaker says.

Thompson agrees this El Nino has been anything but typical.

"The last few weeks we have seen the moisture flow from the South on up through the Northeast, and that is fairly typical, but for some reason we have this one section of Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Northwest Missouri that is just not getting any precipitation, and we're baffled by it," he says.

"This is not the time of year that we are going to see an increase in soil moisture anyway, so there is really no cause for alarm. All it will take is one wet March or April, and we should be right back where we need to be."



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IOWA FARMER TODAY Brings You Results

Mystery remains how StarLink landed in Japan

By Dan Zinkand

Iowa Farmer Today

Two things remain clear about the apparent mystery surrounding the detection of the StarLink Bt gene in a December shipment of U.S. corn to Japan.

First, neither Cenex Harvest States, which exported the corn, nor the U.S. Grains Council seem any clearer about the situation now than when the detection was first announced in late December.

Officials from the Minnesota co-op and the Grains Council stress the shipment was thoroughly tested before it left the United States.

Second, regardless of the mystery, Japan has never approved StarLink for food, feed or industrial use.

In a move criticized by supporters and critics of crop biotechnology, the Environmental Protection Agency partially approved the StarLink Bt gene.

The EPA allowed Aventis to commercialize StarLink, but only permitted its use for feed and industrial use.

About 50,000 bushels of corn — 1,200 metric tons (MT) — tested positive in a shipment of 18,000-19,000 MTs of corn loaded in Louisiana, a spokeswoman for Cenex told Iowa Farmer Today on Monday.

THE JAPANESE found “trace amounts of the StarLink gene” in one compartment which held 1,200 MT, said Lani Jordan, Cenex director of corporate communications.

“We use extensive testing,” she said.

“We tested it from beginning to end. It’s tested all the way along. Our intent is to give them what they (want).”

Cenex has “very strict protocols so we ensure we meet our (customers’ requirements).”

She said the corn was shipped to Mitsui, a large Japanese trading company.

Jordan repeatedly stressed Cenex tested the corn for the presence of any biotech traits as it moved through the grain-handling system to the Gulf of Mexico.

“We test every step of the way.” The co-op is reviewing its testing procedures, she said.

“This testing is so sophisticated you could almost get vapors” to test positive for the presence of StarLink, said Mike Callahan, grains council director of international operations in Washington,

D.C. Cenex’s testing in the United States before shipping the corn to Japan was “extremely thorough,” he said. “On this side, everybody had every reason to believe it was OK.”

Callahan said it’s difficult to determine what effects the detection will have on sales of U.S. corn to the country, which long has been the No. 1 foreign market for U.S. corn.

“No one wants to blow it out of proportion if this is just a minor incident,” Callahan said.

ON THE other hand, it could prompt the Japanese government

to increase its testing of U.S. corn shipments for biotech traits not approved in that country, he said.

“We’d all hate to see anything crop up again” that would hurt U.S. corn exports.

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FarmLIFE

Cook's treats

'To die for'

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

JEFFERSON — Treat day at the office was invented for people like Diane Ostrander.

"I like to take food to people," she explains. "It's fun."

So, she occasionally brings treats for co-workers at the Greene County Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

Ostrander has catered meals and treats for West Central Cooperative in Jefferson.

She's still a favorite at church activities.

"I try to bake every week and take something in," she says of the goodies she brings to friends and co-workers.

"I just took biscuits and gravy to work not too long ago."

THERE ARE no biscuits or gravy on the table today, but there are plenty of other treats to go around, from Angel Cookies to soup and a Breakfast Casserole to a Chocolate Layered Dessert that is a favorite at family gatherings.

"I'm kind of expected to make that," she says. "If I don't, people ask me why."

Ostrander and her husband, Dennis, farm about 1,150 acres just north of here.

Their children, Angela and David, are married. Angela has two sons, Logan and Devin.

That means family gatherings are a big part of the cooking routine for Ostrander.

Work at the FSA office is also an important part.

"I love work. I'm just a people person," she says.

Ostrander concedes since she began working full-time off the farm a few years ago, she sometimes misses doing more with the harvest.

"USUALLY NOW, after work and on the weekend, I hop in the grain truck and help out."

Church is also a part of the schedule.

The Ostranders are active in the Grand Junction United Methodist Church.

But the schedule seems to revolve around the kitchen here and for good reason.

"Here, try some of this," Ostrander says, offering a visitor a snack.

"It's to die for."

You know, she's right.



Diane Ostrander



Above: Angel Cookies Below: Breakfast Brunch, Poppy Seed Cake



Poppy Seed Cake

½ C. poppy seed in 1 C. buttermilk
1 C. margarine (softened)
1½ C. sugar
4 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
2½ C. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
Beat margarine and sugar together. Add eggs one at a time.

Add buttermilk with poppy seeds and vanilla. Continue adding dry ingredients.

Grease an angel food cake pan.

Mix 2 tsp. cinnamon and ½ C. sugar. Layer cake mix and cinnamon sugar.

May layer three times. Bake 40 to 45 minutes at 350°. Don't over bake.

Breakfast Brunch

8 slices day-old bread, cubed
1 lb. sausage
1 lb. ground pork
8 oz. shredded Cheddar cheese
¼ tsp. dry mustard
½ tsp. salt
6 eggs
2 C. milk
Butter a 9x13-inch pan. Brown sausage and pork. Drain well.

Put bread cubes in bottom of pan.

Add meat and cheese.

Beat eggs and add mustard, salt and milk.

Pour mixture over top of cheese and refrigerate overnight.

Bake covered 1 hour at 325° or until set.

Angel Cookies

½ C. brown sugar
½ C. sugar
½ C. margarine (softened)
1 egg
2 C. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. vanilla

Mix first four ingredients. Add next four ingredients to the mixture. Have a small bowl of cold water and a bowl of sugar ready. Roll a teaspoon of dough into a ball with your hands and dip half of it in the water. Dip the wet half in the sugar and put it on a cookie sheet, sugar side up. Flatten it a bit with a fork. The water helps the sugar stick to the cookie. Bake 10-12 minutes at 375°. Makes two dozen.

Sour Cream Raisin Bars

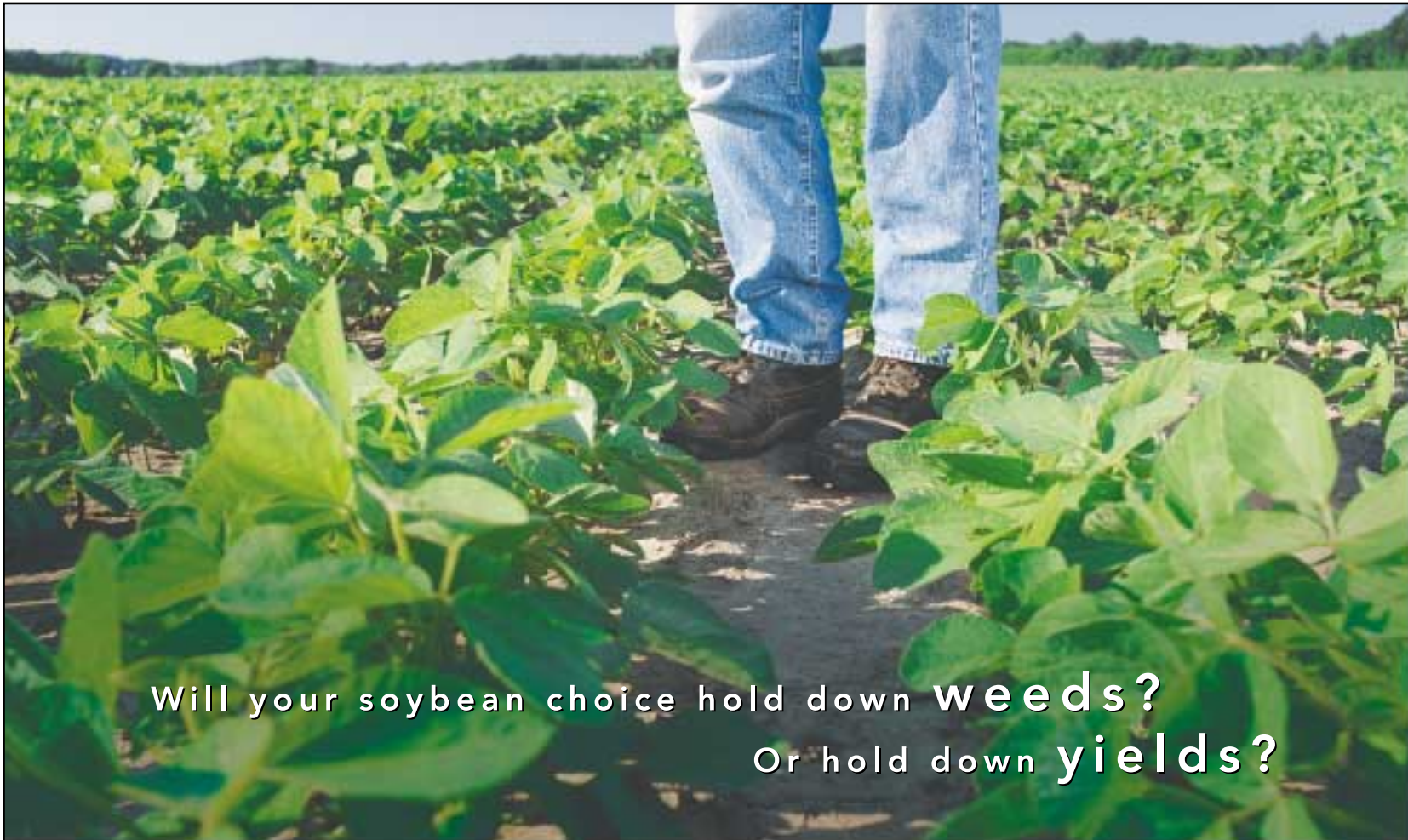
First mixture:

1½ C. oatmeal
1½ C. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 C. brown sugar
1 C. margarine (softened)

Second mixture:

4 egg yolks
1½ C. sugar
3 T. cornstarch
2 C. raisins
2 C. sour cream

Mix ingredients for first mixture. Put enough (about 2½ cups) in a greased 9x13-inch pan to cover the bottom of the pan. Mix ingredients for the second mixture and cook in a pan until thickened. Stir constantly to keep from sticking. Pour over first layer. Top with rest of first mixture. Bake 25 minutes at 350°.



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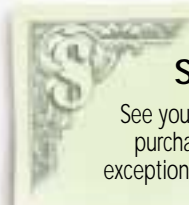
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Market WATCH

Coarse grains ample, feed tight

By Dan Zinkand

Iowa Farmer Today

Stocks of corn and other coarse grains worldwide remain ample, while production of soybeans and other oilseeds worldwide merely matches demand, a Truro marketing adviser says.

Knowing the world picture helps explain why prices behave — or do not behave — the way U.S. farmers might want them to do right now, says Jim Stewart with Ag Marketing Solutions.

The December 2002 USDA forecast of worldwide coarse grain ending stocks was 144 million metric tons (MMT), for a stocks-to-use ratio of 16.2 percent, he says. There are about 39.4 bushels of corn in a metric ton. The tightest stocks-to-use ratio was in July 1996.

There's a tight world inventory of feed grains. As a result, there is an element of uncertainty and risk in this next coarse-grains production cycle.

"It's more acute this year," Stewart says. "It could be quite interesting" if there are any weather problems in the Northern Hemisphere, he adds.

However, people wonder why U.S. corn prices are lackluster, given the tight stocks-to-use ratio.

Here are the four major holders of the world's inventory of coarse grains:

- United States, 17 percent;
- China, 40 percent;
- Former Soviet Union, including Russia and Ukraine, 15 percent; and
- European Union, 15 percent.

Competition in coarse grain exports has increased in the past two years. The former Soviet Union went from exporting 4 MMT to 16 MMT.

China holds an astounding 2.27 billion bu. of corn, Stewart says, adding the U.S. ag attache in Beijing estimates the number even higher — 2.75 billion bu. of corn (69.7 MMT).

Stewart, who spoke before the USDA issued its final crop production and stocks reports, said he expects minor changes in the U.S. balance sheet.

With that, the focus moves to this year's growing season. Much attention gets placed on the large South American soybean crop, he says.

However, that masks a crucial fact: World production currently matches demand. From 1990 through 2002, global oilseed production matched consumption, Stewart says.

"We've grown literally what we've consumed."

If there's a glitch in growing the crop in South America or in North America, prices could move higher. If production in either area drops, ending inventories could slip, Stewart says.

Down the road, "we may be on the doorstep of better prices 'IF' we have any weather problems in the next 12 months," he says.

COUNTRY GRAIN

Jan. 7

SOYBEANS

CORN

| ELEVATOR | CASH | MAR | CASH | MAR |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|
| Ackley | 5.54 | 5.51 | 2.15 | 2.17 |
| Alden | 5.54 | 5.45 | 2.15 | 2.16 |
| Atlantic | 5.56 | 5.58 | 2.18 | 2.20 |
| Belmond | 5.47 | 5.42 | 2.08 | 2.11 |
| Blair, Neb. | | | 2.30 | |
| Bondurant | 5.61 | 5.57 | 2.23 | 2.26 |
| Cedar Rapids | 5.65 | 5.67 | 2.34 | 2.39 |
| Clarence | 5.49 | 5.60 | 2.22 | 2.26 |
| Clear Lake | 5.44 | 5.44 | 2.11 | 2.12 |
| Council Bluffs | 5.71 | | 2.28 | |
| Cresco | 5.38 | | 2.07 | |
| Davenport | 5.64 | 5.79 | 2.30 | 2.39 |
| Dubuque | | 5.76 | | 2.37 |
| Eddyville | | | 2.31 | 2.35 |
| Fonda | 5.51 | 5.51 | 2.13 | 2.15 |
| Fort Dodge | 5.51 | 5.46 | 2.12 | 2.15 |
| Goldfield | 5.50 | 5.48 | 2.12 | 2.14 |
| Greenfield | 5.50 | 5.46 | 2.17 | 2.18 |
| Hawarden | 5.48 | 5.44 | 2.16 | 2.18 |
| Holstein | 5.47 | 5.42 | 2.13 | 2.18 |
| Independence | 5.48 | 5.57 | 2.18 | 2.21 |
| Jesup | 5.51 | 5.47 | 2.13 | 2.17 |
| Keokuk | 5.78 | 5.10 | 2.37 | 2.41 |
| Liscomb | 5.46 | 5.41 | 2.08 | 2.13 |
| Lone Rock | 5.48 | 5.36 | 2.11 | 2.13 |
| Mallard | 5.50 | 5.45 | 2.11 | 2.13 |
| Moulton | 5.46 | | 2.14 | |
| Mount Ayr | 5.43 | | 2.23 | |
| Muscatine | | 5.78 | | 2.37 |
| Oskaloosa | 5.49 | 5.49 | 2.23 | |
| Pleasant Hill | 5.67 | 5.63 | 2.28 | 2.31 |
| Pocahontas | 5.51 | 5.44 | 2.12 | 2.14 |
| Princeton, Mo. | | | 2.34 | |
| Ringsted | 5.48 | 5.36 | 2.07 | 2.11 |
| Rockwell City | 5.54 | 5.51 | 2.14 | 2.17 |
| Sheldon | 5.50 | 5.50 | 2.22 | 2.25 |
| Sioux City | 5.53 | 5.47 | 2.19 | 2.24 |
| Sperry | 5.67 | 5.77 | 2.26 | 2.36 |
| Spirit Lake | 5.50 | 5.50 | 2.11 | 2.14 |
| Titonka | 5.46 | 5.44 | 2.11 | 2.13 |
| Union | 5.51 | 5.42 | 2.17 | 2.18 |
| Ulmer | 5.51 | 5.48 | 2.14 | 2.17 |
| Willamsburg | 5.48 | 5.55 | 2.15 | 2.19 |
| Woodward | 5.55 | 5.49 | 2.15 | 2.17 |
| Yetter | 5.54 | 5.51 | 2.14 | 2.17 |

U.S. CASH GRAIN

| Jan. 7 | Corn | Beans |
|----------------|------|-------|
| Chicago | 2.46 | 5.88 |
| Illinois River | 2.43 | 5.81 |
| Kansas City | 2.46 | 5.80 |
| Keokuk | 2.37 | 5.78 |
| Minneapolis | 2.16 | 5.56 |
| New Orleans | 2.70 | 6.23 |
| Omaha | 2.29 | 5.72 |
| St. Joseph | 2.38 | 5.70 |
| St. Louis | 2.49 | 5.99 |

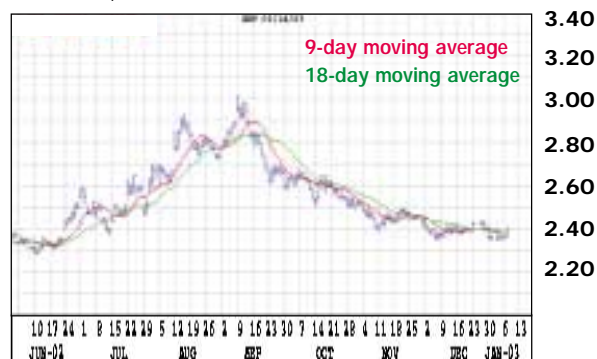
BARGE GRAIN MOVEMENT

| River/Lock | Corn | Soybeans |
|----------------|---------------------|----------|
| Mississippi 15 | No traffic reported | |
| Mississippi 25 | No traffic reported | |
| Mississippi 26 | 489,000 | 116,000 |
| Mississippi 27 | 450,000 | 103,000 |
| Illinois 8 | 482,000 | 121,000 |
| Ohio 52 | NA | NA |
| Arkansas 1 | NA | NA |

*Thousand tons; For the week ending Jan. 3, 2003

CORN PRICES:

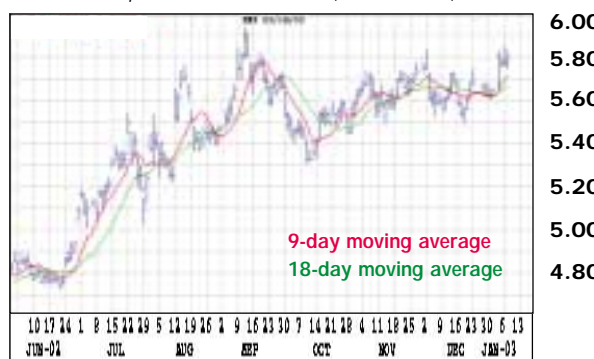
March Corn, CBOT Futures H=\$2.40¼ L=\$2.36 Jan. 7



Source: Chicago Board of Trade

SOYBEAN PRICES:

March Beans, CBOT Futures H=\$5.82¼ L=\$5.74½ Jan. 7



Source: Chicago Board of Trade

TERMINAL PRICES

(through Jan. 8)

| | Corn | Soybeans |
|--------------|------|----------|
| Cincinnati | 2.49 | 5.96 |
| Gulf | 2.70 | 6.24 |
| Kansas City | 2.46 | 5.74 |
| Memphis | 2.50 | 6.03 |
| Minneapolis | 2.16 | 5.64 |
| Pacific N.W. | 2.94 | 6.34 |

CREDITS/DISCLAIMER

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Market WATCH

Numbers slow price recovery

By Jeff DeYoung

Iowa Farmer Today

Larger-than-anticipated market numbers in January and February might force hog producers to wait a little longer for a profit.

The December USDA Hogs and Pigs Report predicted larger hog marketings in the first two months of 2003 than previously expected, says Chris Hurt, Extension livestock marketing economist at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

"That's slightly bearish, to see that the supply in those two months is unchanged," he says.

"We had thought those numbers might be down. It suggests cash prices will not come back as quickly as we thought."

Cash prices currently are in the low-\$30s, but Hurt expects prices to climb into the mid-\$30s by the end of February.

"We had certainly hoped for a better January and February," he says.

Hurt expects supplies to drop 2 to 3 percent in March.

"I think we will see more price recovery in March, April and May, but we will not be to a profitable level for most producers until early or mid-May," he says.

"I'm still optimistic for the first quarter, that we can average prices in the mid-\$30s for the quarter, but we are going to have to get with it."

Hurt says a reduction in total meat supply also will help hog prices. He expects a 1.6 percent reduction in pork, beef and poultry supplies.

"This is the first time since 1982 that we have seen this. It should be a really positive factor for prices."

Hurt says beef supplies continue to drop, adding weights have been brought under control in the past month. "We have been carrying heavier weights for some time, so we will want to stay current," he says.

Hurt expects beef supplies to drop by 5 percent in 2003 with prices in the upper-\$70s over the next two months.

"The threat of a war usually has more of an impact on beef prices than pork prices because people are going to watch their pocketbook," he says. "However, I think we can still average \$75 for the year with the highs coming in the spring."

Problems with spring planting could throw a kink into both price cycles, Hurt adds.

"It's interesting that grain and soybean meal prices are so cheap, considering how tight stocks are right now," he says. "I've recommended that producers lock in some grain prices this year."

"Traders are saying we are going to have a huge soybean crop in South America, and that U.S. corn exports are weak and we will have enough to get through. But if we do have any problems, it could really affect prices."

HAY PRICES

Week ending Jan. 3

Maurice, Iowa, auction, prices per ton:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Alfalfa small squares, good | \$100-115 |
| Alfalfa small squares, fair-good | \$95-100 |
| Alfalfa large squares, fair-good | \$75-91 |
| Alfalfa large rounds, good-prem. | \$80-87 |
| Alfalfa large rounds, fair-good | \$75-80 |
| Grass small squares, good | \$80-90 |
| Grass large rounds, good-prem. | \$70-83 |
| Brome small squares | \$82.50-120 |
| Brome large rounds | \$70-90 |
| Straw small squares | \$2-2.20/bale |

Source: USDA

South Central Iowa, private, prices per ton:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Alfalfa small squares, good | \$120 |
| Alfalfa large rounds, good | \$65-75 |
| Alfalfa/grass small squares, prem. | \$110 |
| Alfalfa/grass large rounds, good | \$65-70 |
| Grass small squares, premium | \$90-105 |
| Cornstalks large rounds | \$40 |

Dyersville, Iowa, auction, prices per ton:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Alfalfa small squares, good | \$1.90/bale |
| Alfalfa large squares, premium | \$110-115 |
| Alfalfa large rounds, good | \$60-70 |
| Alfalfa large rounds, fair | \$45-60 |
| Cornstalks large rounds | \$17-18/bale |

PRICE COMPARISONS:

For the week ending Jan. 3 For Iowa and Southern Minnesota
Prices mostly cwt. 1-3-03 12-6-02 1-4-02

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| CATTLE: National | | | |
| 65-80% Ch. steers wt. avg. | 72.98 | 72.24 | NA |
| Average weights | 1,267 | 1,263 | NA |
| Boxed Ch. 1-3 600-750# | 122.17 | 121.23 | 109.85 |
| Boxed Sel. 1-3 650-700# | 117.31 | 114.43 | 105.85 |

| | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Interior Iowa | 17,568 | 18,533 | NA |
| Avg. price Choice steer | | | |
| Live basis | 74.18 | 72.91 | 66.43 |
| Dressed basis | 117.58 | 115.78 | 106.11 |
| Feeder steers at river markets; No. 1 muscle thickness: | | | |
| 500-600# | 91.60 | 88.97 | NA |
| 700-800# | 84.71 | 85.13 | NA |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| HOGS: Interior Iowa | | | |
| Iowa/Minn. direct wtd. avg. | 42.77 | 46.37 | 50.35 |
| Average weights | 264# | 266# | 264# |
| Sows 1-3 300# & up avg. | 23.12 | 24.96 | 30.35 |
| Pork loins 13-19# | 90.63 | NA | NA |
| 51-52% 185# carcass | 51.76 | 51.86 | 58.11 |
| Early weaned 10# avg. price | 36.70 | 33.37 | NA |
| Feeders 50# avg. price | 53.06 | 43.60 | NA |

SHEEP: Kalona Sales Barn, Dec. 18, Slaughter lambs \$2.00-3.50 lower, feeder lambs \$3.00 lower, slaughter ewes and bucks steady.

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|-------------|
| Slaughter lambs | 123-149# | 83.25-86.00 |
| Feeder lambs | 80-99# | 86.00-93.25 |
| | 99-117# | 87.25-91.25 |
| Slaughter ewes | 135-200# | 36.00-45.00 |

EGGS: Grade A Large/dozen, incentive .38 NA .35

HEN TURKEYS: 8-16# 62.00 69.56 62.38

Prices gathered by ISU Extension Market News, the USDA and the Iowa Department of Agriculture.

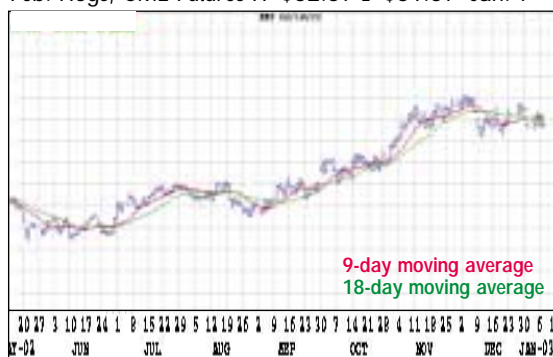
FEEDER PIGS

| | | |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|
| SEW pigs* , Jan. 3: | 32,380 head | Auction pigs |
| 50-54% lean | 31.50-47.50 | Edgewood, Jan. 2: 1,315 head |
| Direct-sale feeders* , 29,778 head | | 20-30 lbs. |
| 40 lbs., 50-54% | 45.50-55.75 | 30-40 lbs. 19.00-32.50 |
| 45 lbs., 50-54% | 49.50-57.25 | 40-50 lbs. 32.50-46.00 |
| 50 lbs., 50-54% | 51.00-54.00 | 50-60 lbs. 46.00-50.00 |
| 55 lbs., 50-54% | 57.50-62.50 | 60-70 lbs. 43.00-52.00 |
| 60 lbs., 50-54% | | 70-80 lbs. |

*Prices include freight and fees on farm-to-farm basis.

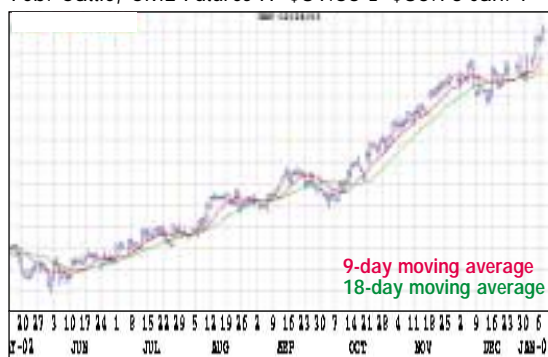
HOG PRICES:

Feb. Hogs, CME Futures H=\$52.57 L=\$51.57 Jan. 7



CATTLE PRICES:

Feb. Cattle, CME Futures H=\$81.65 L=\$80.70 Jan. 7



SLAUGHTER & FEEDER CATTLE

For the week ending Jan. 3

Midwest direct slaughter

Slaughter steers and heifers were not established in the South. Sales in the North were limited, with prices steady on a dressed basis. Snow in much of the trade area was hampering gains in the feedlots.

Live: 35-80% Choice, 900-1400# \$74.00-75.50
Dressed: 35-80% Choice, 550-950# \$116.00-119.00

Iowa/Southern Minnesota direct feeder

Feeder steers and heifers steady.

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Steers: Md & Lg | 625-725# | \$85.00-88.50 |
| Heifers: Md & Lg, | 500-525# | \$87.50-89.00 |
| | 600-650# | \$80.50-84.00 |
| | 675-750# | \$82.00-84.00 |

Distressed kids turn to parents for relief

Children seek physical and emotional closeness with their parents.

When children experience distress or threat, they turn to their parents for safety and comfort.

Most of all, when children feel secure in their parents' availability and willingness to respond to them, they explore the world and other relationships.

These three functions — proximity-seeking, a safe haven and a secure base — form the basis of attachment.

Psychologist Cindy Hazan and her colleagues at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., have studied how these three attachment aspects gradually shift from parents to romantic partners.

Peer friendships provide the transition experiences for learning the social skills needed to sustain adult relationships.

How do children develop the ability to be reliable and responsive care providers as required in adult relationships? How do they transfer their dependence on their parents to an attachment with a romantic partner?

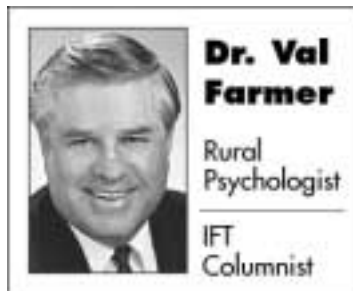
Proximity-seeking

How willing children are to seek and make friends and playmates depends on how secure they feel with their parents. Secure attachment is the springboard to social and nonsocial learning.

- By age 3, children usually like to play with others their age. They can play games and engage in complex social action for long periods.

- By ages 5-7, children showed a slight preference (52 percent) for spending time with their friends than with their parents.

- By ages 8-10, children still



rely on their parents for comfort and security while preferring to spend time with friends (61 percent).

Safe haven

Beginning around age 10 through age 16, children add the safe-haven type of attachment to their relationships. During this time, teen-agers do not become more independent. They trade dependence on parents for dependence on peers.

- By age 11, most youngsters not only prefer to spend time with peers but are beginning to turn to their friends for emotional support and comfort. Girls start doing this earlier than boys.

- Among 11- to 13-year-olds, the majority sought proximity and comfort from peers. However, they still turned to their parents first when they wanted to share positive news.

During these ages, 81 percent saw their parents as their base of security.

- A peer was named by three-fourths of 17-year-olds as the person they preferred to be with, and to whom they turned for emotional support. This was usually a best friend or romantic partner.

The majority still considered their parents to be their base of security. By age 17, there was no

Most of all, when children feel secure in their parents' availability and willingness to respond to them, they explore the world and other relationships. These three functions — proximity-seeking, a safe haven and a secure base — form the basis of attachment.

difference in whether they shared positive and negative events with their peers.

The process of letting go starts early and it happens gradually. Friendships during childhood and adolescence are a vital part of growing up.

Secure base

Through high school, parents serve as the base of emotional security for most teens. By late adolescence and early adulthood, the three types of attachment are gradually transferred to peers with the base of security the last to go.

Relationships need time, trust and commitment to take the place of the certain commitment and security parents have provided over the years.

- More than 90 percent of the adults named a romantic partner as their base of security.

- None of the adults studied preferred to spend time with parents or reported being bothered by separations from parents.

- Only 4 percent reported that a parent was their primary source of comfort and emotional support.

Ten percent considered their

parents to be their base of security.

Hazan also feels romantic relationships progress in the same sequence: proximity (sexual interest, mutual attraction) to safe haven (comfort and care) and finally to a secure base.

Attachment and new marriages

Even within the early years of marriage, the relationship shifts from attraction and mutual enjoyment to meeting each other's needs for comfort and security. The attraction phase of a relationship has been estimated to last two to three years.

Not letting go

If a couple hasn't established a pattern of being emotionally available and responsive to each other's needs, then breakups are likely.

This might explain why there is a peak in divorce after four years even while rates of divorce change.

The new bond doesn't get established because the old ones take precedence. Upset spouses sense they are not the source of

confiding, trust and comfort and feel like third wheels in their own marriages.

Not feeling safe

Some of the disputes young couples have occur when one partner continues to use their parents as a safe haven and secure base for confidential conversations.

This may occur because in the process of trying to resolve conflict in a new marriage, one partner may come to doubt the empathy, care and concern their partner has for him or herself.

Angry outbursts, selfish demands or disrespectful judgments violate the attachment bond and create a feeling of not feeling emotionally safe in expressing one's opinion.

Feeling betrayed or abandoned

Some attachment wounds — being betrayed or abandoned in a situation of threat or loss — may have occurred and haven't been resolved.

Their marriage is perceived as no longer secure. Walls go up. One partner shuts down emotionally as a way of protecting him or herself from further hurt.

In either case, the unhappy spouse may turn to their former secure base for advice and comfort. Counseling is needed to reestablish the marital relationship as a secure base for comfort, confiding and affection.

Dr. Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist with MeritCare in Fargo, N.D. He specializes in rural mental health and family business consultation. www.valfarmer.com.

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Harkin fears farm bill will be targeted for cuts

By E. Michael Myers

The Gazette

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Sen. Tom Harkin's legislative triumph this year as chairman of the Agriculture Committee was passage of a \$248 billion authorization farm bill that now worries him.

"My big concern is OMB (Office of Management and Budget) will come out and start cutting farm programs as a way of 'saving money,'" Harkin said.

He is no longer chairman of the Agriculture Committee because Republicans captured a 51-seat Senate majority on Nov. 5. Republican Thad Cochran of Mississippi became ag chairman Jan. 7.

"I would much rather be chairman," Harkin said of the post that was a major part of his campaign for re-election.

The federal budget is in deficit again, and President Bush is insisting Congress not exceed his spending guidelines.

Harkin's farm bill authorized spending over only 10 years. Congress must appropriate a portion of the money each year, making the bill subject to annual fights over spending.

The farm bill passed by wide margins in the House and Senate, and Bush took some political credit for it while campaigning against Harkin.

Harkin said Democrats would need the political clout of the majority Republicans to protect farm spending against possible slashes in funding.

Harkin is prepared to confront the administration on another likely conflict — further cuts in taxes.

"Their tax policy is still going to be focused on 'trickle down,' giving the vast majority of tax breaks to those who already have a lot and hope it 'trickles down,'" he said.

"I think that is bad tax policy. I want fairness and good jobs. We should raise the minimum wage, invest in job training and make it easier for small business to provide health care coverage."

Harkin plans a series of speeches to define the political agenda of the Democratic Party. It will be a way to showcase both the issues and his leadership.

Harkin brushed off a suggestion he also could be showcasing himself as a candidate for president or vice president against Bush in 2004. There is no front-runner for the 2004 nomination, but candidates are already in Iowa. "I intend to make sure

everyone is welcome, but I do intend to be talking about the issues, especially the economy," Harkin said.

He said the White House last

fall turned the electorate's attention away from economic problems to a possible war and that helped Republicans recapture the Senate. "We have got to focus on

the economy," Harkin said of Democrats.

"I think the biggest threat to America in the coming years is the lack of a robust economy and

more red ink."

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Iowa joins fight to change USDA warehouse rule

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

DES MOINES — A battle between state and federal officials over a grain warehousing rule appears to be heading toward a court fight.

The latest step in the war came last week when Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Patty Judge and Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller joined with officials from 11 other states in writing to USDA Secretary Ann Veneman on the issue.

The state officials are urging Veneman to rescind a new USDA rule they say could undercut protections to farmers from state governments.

It comes down to one word: merchandising.

“Attorney General Tom Miller and I don’t need to pick another fight with the U.S. Agriculture Department, but the effect of this rule by USDA could be so devastating to Iowa producers.”

Patty Judge
Iowa ag secretary

That word was added to a new federal rule that previously referred to grain warehousing and federally licensed grain warehouses.

A proposed rule regarding the governance of federally licensed grain warehouses was issued in early 2002 and did not generate controversy or debate.

In late August, the USDA issued the final rule including the merchandising provision, something that was not part of the earlier proposed rule.

Federal officials cited several old court cases to essentially say federally licensed grain warehouses would not be subject to state merchandising requirements because federal law preempts state law on that matter.

The problem is, federally licensed grain warehouses are still subject to merchandising laws, such as the one protecting farmers through an indemnity fund in Iowa.

It pays farmers for some losses for some types of transactions if the business goes broke.

Although it hasn’t happened, officials in Iowa and other states say they are concerned federally

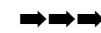
licensed warehouses will withdraw from the indemnity fund and/or state-licensed warehouses will switch to federal status so they could withdraw.

In either case, farmers doing business at those places would lose protection from the fund.

Judge says, “Attorney General Tom Miller and I don’t need to

pick another fight with the U.S. Agriculture Department, but the effect of this rule by USDA could be so devastating to Iowa producers.”

She says when Crestland Cooperative, a federally licensed warehouse that was still covered by the indemnity fund as a merchant-



diser, went broke, farmers got about \$700,000 from the state fund. State officials concede not all types of transactions are covered by that fund.

It does not cover credit sales or deferred-payment sales or price-later sales.

However, they argue many farmers were at least partially protected.

State and federally licensed grain elevators pay into the Iowa Grain Indemnity Fund established in 1986.

Farmers can recover up to 90 percent, or a maximum of

\$150,000, in losses caused by an elevator bankruptcy or insolvency.

There are 513 state-licensed grain dealers in Iowa and 131 federal warehouses.

USDA officials say they are working with state and industry officials to find a compromise.

“We’ve been working with the

NASDA (the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture) and the National Grain and Feed Association on this,” says Matt Lloyd, USDA deputy press secretary.

“We’re working toward a resolution that is acceptable to most states and the industry.”

“States will still be free to provide even greater protection than federal law requires.”

That’s not the way Judge and Miller see it.

Neither do officials from many of the other states offering an indemnity fund or bonding system to protect farmers.

They argue the rule was changed after the official comment period, despite the fact only one comment — from Cargill — addressed the issue of merchandising and indemnity funds.

Iowa commodity groups have supported state officials, saying the federal government should do nothing that would harm state indemnity funds.

Iowa co-ops also have expressed support for state officials, saying they don’t want to eliminate the indemnity fund.

However, Judge and Miller say negotiations with USDA officials in recent months have produced no results.

“We’re working toward a resolution that is acceptable to most states and the industry. States will still be free to provide even greater protection than federal law requires.”

Matt Lloyd
USDA official

They say the USDA argues it is enforcing the law, but state officials say the law dealing with this issue is not new.

“The part of the statute that deals with this has not changed for many years,” says Iowa Assistant Attorney General Steve Moline with the office’s farm division.

“This is a new interpretation by the administration.”

Because of that new interpretation, Miller and Judge say if the USDA does not change course, the best remedy likely either will be in court or Congress.

MEANWHILE, they say Iowa will continue to enforce the state law as if there were no change, potentially setting the stage for a lawsuit by a federally licensed grain warehouse that might not want to pay into the indemnity fund.

That is despite the fact the fund is capped — no new money is going into it.

Joining Judge and Miller in signing the letter to Veneman are officials from Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio and South Dakota.



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Iowa weather tame as a lamb in 2002

DES MOINES (AP) - All in all, meteorologists say 2002 was rather a dull year for weather in Iowa. "Overall, it was a quiet year," said State Climatologist Harry Hillaker. Temperatures around the state tended to

avoid the extremes, but the mercury tended to jump or drop at unusual times of the year. The lowest temperature of the year, 10 degrees below zero, was recorded March 4, in Elkader. The highest temperature was 104 degrees on July 21 in Glenwood in

Southwest Iowa, Hillaker said.

Sioux City recorded a 96-degree high on April 15, the hottest temperature so early in the year since 1930, Hillaker said.

While temperatures were fairly normal, there was a fair share of extremes.

The crisp winds of autumn brought an early winter, subjecting Iowans to the coldest October in 77 years, and the fifth-coldest on record, Hillaker said. The month also brought surprise weather to Northwest Iowa - a hailstorm.

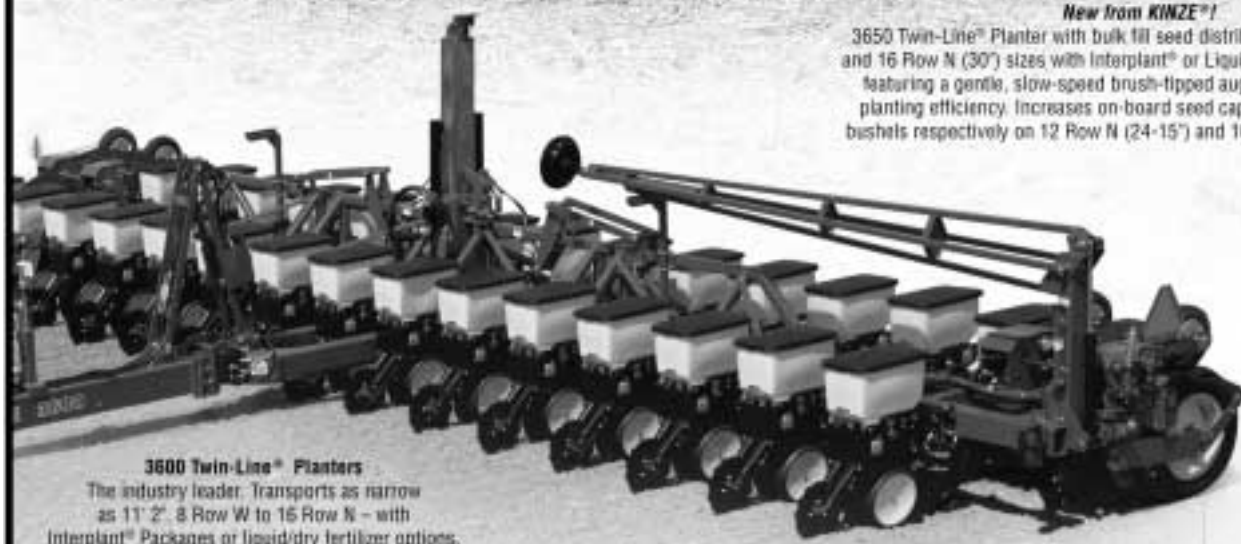
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LivestockSOURCE

Rules have changed for Iowa livestock exhibitors

By Jennifer Bremer

Iowa Farmer Today

OTTUMWA — The rules have changed for livestock exhibitors wanting to show at the 2003 Iowa State Fair.

Youths now are required to identify beef, swine and sheep by nose prints, DNA hair samples, ear notches, tattoos and ear tags.

The new rules were established after last summer's controversy over the identity of the grand champion steer.

Last year's grand champion steer, shown by Jenna Sievers of North Liberty, was disqualified after a nose print taken after the State Fair failed to match a print taken last December.

"We agree with 4-H officials that these new rules are necessary to help establish and confirm identity of fair entries," State Fair Manager Gary Slater said in a news release.

"Everyone wants to reward young exhibitors who follow the rules and raise champions. The integrity of our livestock-judging program is of paramount importance to the fair board.

"We aim not just for high stan-

dards but the highest of standards."

In November, 535 people were trained on the new verification process, says Denise Schwab, Iowa State University Extension 4-H youth development specialist.

Each county selected volunteers to be trained. Most are those who have helped with the previous weigh-ins.

Volunteers were trained in beef and sheep identification. Swine verification will be handled by area and state livestock specialists and a few select volunteers.

Fifty-eight counties were selected for beef verification sites. All market beef must be nominated by Jan. 15 to be eligible for State Fair judging.

Most counties had separate weigh-ins for youths that only wish to exhibit at their local fairs.

Wapello County was chosen as a state cattle verification site to identify cattle for it and Monroe County.

Byron Leu, ISU Extension area

livestock specialist, said many youths decided to nose print and do the DNA testing in case they decided to go to the State Fair. Nose prints were taken by using ink on the nose and then printing them on cards, which had a place for information on that animal. The process is similar to finger printing.

When collecting for the DNA sample, pliers were used to pluck hair from the tail head, hip or neck. The follicle must be present for the sample to be usable for DNA testing. Hair was placed in an envelope, sealed and marked for each animal.

Leu says all 4-H cattle weighed in across the state will have a green tag, and all FFA cattle identified will have a pink tag.

Market beef (steers and market heifers) are to have been tagged, nose printed, hair samples collected and weighed at their verification site between Dec. 1 and Jan. 15.

See page 20: Rules →→→

LIVESTOCK SALES

Monday, Jan. 13

■ Special Bred Heifer, Bred Cow Sale, 6 p.m., Carthage Livestock Inc., Carthage, Ill. Contact: Bob Markey: office, 217-357-3314; mobile, 319-795-3510; home, 217-659-3995.

Saturday, Feb. 1

■ Varley Angus Farms Heart of the Herd Production Sale, 12:30 p.m. At the farm near Menlo. Contact: Charles Varley, 515-523-1218; Evan Varley, 641-524-5463; or Conover Auction Service, 641-227-3537.

Monday, Feb. 3

■ Nash Farms Complete Dispersal, 11 a.m. at Dunlap Livestock Auction, Dunlap. Contact Kurt Nash, 712-873-3728, 712-873-5169 or 712-251-0054; or Continental Livestock Services, 816-583-2104.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

■ Hoover Angus Farm 13th Annual Production Sale, noon at Creston Livestock Auction, Creston. Contact: John Kibruz, 641-772-4439. Catalog requests, call 800-383-6778.

When planning your production sale, call Tom Rooney at 515-967-2629 with sale dates and information.

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Livestock SOURCE

Rules

From page 19

Market sheep will be handled the same as beef, between April 15 and May 15. Verification sites will be announced later but may not be the same as the beef sites.

Market swine will be tagged, notched, tattooed, hair collected, and derby pigs will be weighed. Swine will be done between April 19-26 at sites that have been used for derby weigh-ins. It costs \$5 to verify each animal. "We are asking those youths interested in verifying sheep and swine to complete an intent-to-participate form so we know about how many animals and youths to plan on. Those forms are available from their county office in early January," says Schwab.

Youths and the person who collects the sample will sign the sample envelopes. After the samples are collected, the county Extension staff will double check for accuracy and send them to the state office.

"We will separate the FFA samples from the 4-H samples and send them to their state coordinator. The 4-H nose prints will be checked for clarity, and then filed by county and kept in locked cases in the state 4-H office," Schwab explains.

"The hair samples will be forwarded to the DNA company in Texas and kept on file until we have State Fair samples to compare them to. We will not run the chemical analysis on all samples, only those that we match after the State Fair," she says.

If nose prints are determined to

not be clear, they will be sent back to the county immediately. The county will be asked to re-print that animal.

Animals nose printed for State Fair are also eligible Ak-Sar-Ben. "We are working with Ak-Sar-Ben to ensure that we are determining the clarity of nose prints at the same level, and we are also getting them the data to start their computer databases," says Schwab. "We will then deliver the original nose prints to Ak-Sar-Ben after the Iowa State Fair."

In 4-H beef and sheep competition during the fair, the first- and second-place animals in each class will be nose printed. The new prints will be compared to those made during nomination before being allowed to continue on to division judging.

If prints do not match, DNA samples will be pulled to compare with previous samples. Schwab says they also plan to do random nose print comparisons and DNA tests, similar to random drug testing.

Discrepancies will be handled by the State Fair Board Competition Committee, but likely will include DNA testing, and disqualification and possible barring. DNA analysis takes about two weeks for an initial comparison or an additional two weeks if more testing is needed.

She says officials realize there is not a fool-proof process. This system provides immediate comparisons with nose prints and chemical comparisons with the DNA analysis. "Both nose prints and DNA comparisons have a long history of scientific testing to support their use," Schwab says.



IFT photo by Jennifer Bremer

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Byron Leu, Iowa State University Extension livestock specialist, holds a steer's head while Don Swanson of Ottumwa inks the nose. Rich Swartz of Batavia prepares to take a nose print for State Fair verification at the Wapello County beef weigh-in on Dec. 28. The rules have changed for livestock exhibitors wanting to show at the 2003 Iowa State Fair. Youths now are required to identify beef, swine and sheep by nose prints, DNA hair samples, ear notches, tattoos and ear tags.

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Lawmakers likely to renew livestock battle

By James Q. Lynch

The Gazette

As much as they'd like to, it's going to be tough for Iowa lawmakers to avoid another nasty fight over livestock regulations.

After passing sweeping rules for livestock operations last year, some ag leaders in the Legislature are suggesting they leave the new law, S.F. 2293, alone to see if it works.

"It's hard to tweak something before we give it a chance to work," said Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Jerry Behn, R-Boone.

"It's hard to tweak something before we give it a chance to work."

Sen. Jerry Behn
R-Boone
Ag committee
chairman

Groups that don't think the law — and rules that go into effect March 1 — goes far enough won't hesitate to propose changes, according to Rep. Mark Kuhn, D-Charles City, who is a farmer and ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee.

"WE WANT more than just local input. We want local control over siting livestock facilities," Kuhn said.

Kuhn doubts Republicans want to take up the issue.

They control the House and Senate, which opens the 2003 legislative session Jan. 13.

"But we'll give them that opportunity," said Kuhn, who was a member of last session's so-called Committee of 12 that drafted much of the bill.

Some Republicans are concerned that the Department of Natural Resources has interpreted S.F. 2293 too broadly.

"THERE ARE some people who were involved in the discussion a year ago who think the DNR is going further than the Legislature intended," said Rep. Jack Drake, R-Lewis, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Rep. Gene Manternach, R-Cascade, and a member of the bipartisan Committee of 12, is among them.

"I'm not saying they took liberties with it, but it seems to have changed a lot from the original draft," the Jones County pork pro-

ducer said.

"There are things in there I don't agree with."

Despite agreement ag will take

a backseat to the budget, Kuhn said his caucus will fight to restore funding to programs, such as the Leopold Center for Sustain-

able Agriculture.

"If we want to keep families on the farm, we need to do more in that area," he said.

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| PRODUCERS | 7284B | 214.8 | 21.0 | 2.0 | 28.8 | \$511.1 |
| MIDWEST SEED | G8070B | 212.0 | 21.0 | 1.0 | 27.9 | \$504.3 |
| PRODUCERS | 717B | 209.2 | 20.8 | 1.0 | 28.3 | \$498.7 |
| NC+ HYBRIDS | 5411 | 208.9 | 21.0 | 2.0 | 29.7 | \$497.3 |
| CROWS | 5202B | 207.6 | 21.8 | 1.0 | 28.8 | \$490.5 |
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| JACOBSEN | 154785B | 206.4 | 20.1 | 1.0 | | \$494.9 |
| 4 STAR SEED | 5738B | 206.2 | 21.8 | 1.0 | | |
| KRUGER | K-9315B | 205.8 | 22.0 | 1.0 | | |
| LG SEEDS | LG2637 | 204.2 | 21.7 | 1.0 | | |
| WILSON | 1765 | 204.0 | 20.2 | 1.0 | | |
| SUKROSCO | 2012 | 203.9 | 20.5 | 1.0 | | |
| MIDWEST SEED | G8122 | 203.6 | 20.6 | 3.7 | | |
| MYCOGEN | 2833 | 203.3 | 22.5 | 4.7 | | |
| DYNA-GRO | DG5467 | 202.9 | 20.7 | 1.0 | | |
| DYNA-GRO | DG5460AB | 202.6 | 20.7 | 1.0 | | |
| CROWS | 5360 | 202.6 | 21.1 | 1.0 | | |
| PRODUCERS | 7290B | 202.3 | 21.1 | | | |
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Biopharming touted for Iowa; some fear risks

By James Q. Lynch

The Gazette

Hoping to make Iowa's "Fields of Opportunity" a reality, Iowa lawmakers are likely to consider legislation to help farmers earn better profits by turning their fields into living factories.

Crops planted would produce chemicals for industrial use and drugs that offer better treatments, perhaps even cures for a variety of diseases.

Gov. Tom Vilsack and some legislative leaders are touting "biopharming" — the production of corn and soybean plants genetically engineered to contain pharmaceuticals and industrial chemicals — as an opportunity for farmers and Iowa to tap a lucrative market.

That, they say, could smooth the bumpy farm economy and keep farmers on their land and out of bankruptcy court.

The price could be steep if it comes at the cost of Iowa's traditional crops, as well as organics and crops Iowa farmers raise for specialty markets, others warn. They are calling for regulations that will protect the genetically modified crops and Iowa's corn and soybeans.

"I think farmers understand this is a big step up from regular GMOs (genetically modified organisms) like Bt genetically modified crops and Iowa's bread-and-butter corn and soybeans.

"I think farmers understand this is a big step up from regular GMOs (genetically modified organisms) like Bt corn," said corn and soybean grower Sen. Jerry Behn, R-Boone, who will be chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee when the Legislature convenes Jan. 13. "They think we need better protection.

"However, farmers think that if we're not careful, we'll let this golden opportunity slip through our fingers."

Mount Vernon seed corn pro-

ducer Laura Krouse hopes Iowa farmers cash in on "biopharming" opportunities, but she doesn't have to look far to see problems associated with genetically modified crops.

In 2001, pollen from genetically modified crops near her once-organic corn caused the loss of half her seed corn sales for the 2002 crop.

"I'm just trying to keep going," Krouse said. "I've lost about half of my customers, so I have to create a new market."

Like Krouse, who teaches biology at Cornell College in Mount Vernon and understands the promise of biopharming, Democratic Rep. Mark Kuhn, a Charles City farmer, worries turning plants into drug factories could threaten food supply safety.

"If we are going to feed the world, then we have to ensure the safety of the food supply and ensure the world that we can prevent contamination," Kuhn said. "The perception is that you could have drugs in your cornflakes."

Contamination problems brought to light by the Aventis StarLink and ProdiGene cases confirmed Krouse's worries federal guidelines don't offer adequate protection.

So, Krouse is working with a group of Iowans to draft legislation creating an indemnity fund to reimburse farmers for losses caused by biopharming.

As proposed, the fund would collect a fraction of a cent on every bushel of corn and beans sold in Iowa to raise about \$5 million a year, Krouse said. Producers of identity-preserved crops who suffer losses caused by pollen drift or other problems could be reimbursed. They could get up to 90 percent of the difference between the price they could have received for the identity-preserved crop and the price they receive after the damage.

"It would be open to the people raising the biopharm crops, too," Krouse said.

Kuhn has some reservations with that approach.

He said, "The obvious problem

is, why should farmers pay for a problem they didn't create? Where is the industry in this?"

Gary Bogenrief of Hampton, a member of the ad hoc committee, calls the indemnity fund "a timely proposal because the problem is getting bigger."

He is president of ProfiSeed International, a specialty soybean producer.

Reaction from legislators and commodity groups has been good, he said.

"It's an industrywide problem, and no one wants to take responsibility," Bogenrief said. "Farmers growing identity-preserved crops are without a safety net now."

Farmland Industries seeks to reduce benefits

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Former executives of Farmland Industries Inc. could lose millions of dollars in retirement benefits if the bankrupt company's request to cancel them is approved.

The company wants to reclassify almost \$17 million in deferred compensation and retirement adjustments owed to 138 current and former professional level employees, and to cancel life insurance policies for about 2,200 retirees of various levels.

Farmland also wants to renege on about \$2 million in "separation" payments it had planned to pay four former top executives for leaving the company.

Kansas City-based Farmland, North America's largest farmer-owned cooperative, has been reorganizing its operations and cutting costs since filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last May 31. A judge is to hear the benefits-related motions and objections Jan. 28. About \$900,000 of the separation payments were owed to former Chief Executive Harry Cleberg. The rest is owed to former Chief Executive Bob Honse, former Chief Financial Officer John Berardi and former Farmland Foods President William Fielding.

Although the issue "really is on the front burner right now," Rep. Jack Drake, R-Lewis, who will be chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, favors waiting for federal standards.

"We don't want to preclude farmers from making more money with new crops, but we want to keep our food supply safe," he said.

Those rules haven't worked, according to Kuhn, because they are full of "shoulds" rather than mandates.

He agrees with Krouse that for most farmers, profit opportunity has been overstated.

"There's a lot of money to be made by the companies which in-

vent" the specialty crops, Krouse said. "But I don't see how very many farmers could handle growing those crops. That's not most farmers.

"There seems to be a belief that there will be a lot of farmers increasing their bottom line," Kuhn said.

"But it's not going to happen.

"There will be very few farmers growing these crops on very few acres, and they will be selected by the companies who hold the patents."

Iowa Farmer Today and The Gazette are divisions of Gazette Communications Inc.

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FYI

Fire kills 3,000 pigs

WEST BRANCH (AP) — Fire destroyed a hog nursery and 3,000 young pigs Tuesday, with the loss estimated at nearly \$600,000.

The Iowa State Fire Marshal's Office was investigating the cause, but West Branch Fire Chief Dick Stoolman said the fire is believed to be an accident.

Firefighters from West Branch, Atalissa, Tipton, West Liberty and Solon spent five hours battling the blaze in Eastern Iowa.

Owner Dale Vincent said the steel roof kept the fire hot and raging like an "inferno."

Vincent said the building, which has a capacity for 4,000 pigs, is insured and he plans to rebuild.

Fayette County rejects hog proposal

WEST UNION (AP) — Fayette County supervisors have rejected a proposal for a hog confinement operation near Westgate even though the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) said the plan meets state requirements.

The 2-1 vote Dec. 30 ensured the matter will be appealed to the DNR's Environmental Protection Commission, which will likely hold a hearing Jan. 21.

The DNR issued a draft permit on Dec. 20 approving construction of Fremont Ridge, a confinement operation that would house

15,000 hogs a year.

Westgate citizens raised a number of concerns, 17 of which were compiled by the supervisors and given to the DNR. The DNR examined the list but deemed none significant enough to deny the permit.

Residents are upset over odor water pollution and property devaluation problems they anticipate will come with the hog operation. Many have complained to the county supervisors for three months.

The supervisors have until Jan. 3 to request a hearing with the commission, which likely would take place Jan. 21.

Dickinson County to appeal hog permit

SPIRIT LAKE (AP) — The Dickinson County Board of Supervisors will appeal a construction permit the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) granted to a proposed hog confinement farm near Spirit Lake.

The supervisors voted 4-1 Jan. 2 to appeal the Dutch Creek Farms' 4,000-head confinement permit.

The Fairmont, Minn., company wants to build the hog farm in the Okoboji township.

The DNR's Environmental Protection Commission is scheduled to hear the appeal Jan. 21 in Urbandale.

Lonnie Saunders, Assistant Dickinson County Attorney, said he'll request the hearing be moved to Dickinson County so residents can comment there.

The county requested in November the DNR revoke the permit, which was already issued but was flawed.



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Fine not paid year after major anhydrous fish kill

DES MOINES (AP) — It's been a year since an anhydrous ammonia spill killed more than 1 million fish in North Central Iowa, and the company blamed for the accident has not paid for the damage.

State lawyers and Koch Pipeline Co. are negotiating how the company should pay for the damage to Lotts Creek and the East Fork of the Des Moines River in the Algona area.

The Dec. 14, 2001, spill wiped out wildlife in 48 mile stretch of the waterways.

The state hasn't fined the Wichita-based company for leak,

which occurred when a maintenance crew accidentally broke the pipe open with a backhoe. The firm has vowed to help restore the streams, and the state has sent a list of possible watershed-improvement projects.

"It has been, and we expect it to continue to be, a very cooperative process," said Koch spokeswoman Mary Beth Jarvis. "It's not like everyone has been sitting around for a year. We have been in regular contact."

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also hasn't sent Koch a bill for the \$147,700 it normally would charge as restitu-

tion for the 1.3 million fish killed.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also is investigating the anhydrous ammonia leak and is considering whether to seek federal fines, said DNR lawyer Randy Clark.

Clark said Koch had been cooperative and was expected to reach an agreement with the state in coming months.

Jarvis said the company was eager to settle with the state, which could mean an informal agreement, court decree or some other action.

The leak occurred when a pipe-repair crew hired by Koch acci-

dentally severed a major Iowa ammonia pipeline near Whittemore. The result was the state's worst spill-related fish kill on record.

The spill killed virtually everything — fish, plants, frogs, turtles, worms — along 31 miles of Lotts Creek and some of the fish in 17 miles of the river.

The DNR said the fish were worth \$147,731, based on an American Fisheries Society formula. The state said it would consider civil fines or order stream-improvement work, too. The company spent approximately \$1 million on the immediate cleanup, records show.

Ken Hennessey with the DNR's environmental-protection office in Spencer said money from certain parts of the fish kill settlements is funneled into buffer strips and other voluntary conservation programs intended to help

cut pollution in waterways.

The DNR also has passed a new rule that allow the state to charge for its costs to investigate spills and charge for the deaths of game fish or endangered species.

Clark said the state could charge Koch for investigative costs under a hazardous-materials law that was in effect when the spill happened.

Meanwhile, the creek and river have been quietly recovering.

Biologists and chemists have checked the creek and river and found the water in good shape and non-game fish, invertebrate and plant life quickly recovering.

"There is a recovery time for all those species," said Jim Wahl, a Clear Lake-based state fisheries worker.

"Everything we stocked was 2 to 4 inches. It will take some time for them to grow to acceptable size."

Federal meat-recall system criticized

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — A series of food-poisoning outbreaks that killed nine people and sickened 135 others has consumer groups and the meat industry questioning how the government handles meat recalls.

The USDA and processors now share the responsibility for "voluntary" recalls under a system the industry and consumer groups criticize as cumbersome and ineffective.

While companies supposedly make the decisions voluntarily whether to issue recalls, the ag department announces them.

Carol Tucker Foreman, director of the Consumer Federation of America's Food Policy Institute, said the illnesses and deaths linked to large recalls this year are proof that the current system does not work.

Her group, which represents more than 300 consumer organizations, wants Congress to give the government authority to mandate recalls.

Some of the bigger recalls this year started out small because of haggling between processors and the USDA over their size, but had to be expanded later, Foreman

said. More than 21 million pounds of hamburger meat from a Cargill-owned plant in Milwaukee and a ConAgra Beef Co. plant in Greeley, Colo., were eventually recalled, linked to E. coli contaminated meat that killed one person and sickened 90.

The two recalls started with a total of 770,000 lbs. from the two plants.

AN OUTBREAK of listeriosis in the Northeast over the summer prompted the largest recall in history. Eventually, it covered more than 30 million lbs. of precooked chicken and turkey packaged at a Wampler Foods plant in Pennsylvania and J.L. Foods plant in New Jersey.

Consumer groups complained those recalls were not initiated until months after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta picked up evidence of the listeria-produced outbreak. It killed eight people, caused three miscarriages and sickened another 45 people.

"Every day when a bargain goes on is a day when that food is being consumed and more people run the risk of getting sick," said

Foreman, the USDA's assistant secretary for food and consumer services from 1977 to 1981. "Giving the government the power to go in and mandate a recall would eliminate some of the bargaining that goes on."

The American Meat Institute, the industry's trade association, says packers, rather than the government, should announce the recalls in addition to making the decision on whether they are needed.

"If you had the company take the lead, if you had the company do the press release, that would take some of the inefficiencies out of the process," said Mark Dopp, the institute's vice president for regulatory affairs.

Dopp disputed critics' arguments processors might withhold vital information to consumers if they announced the recalls, claiming the government on occasion has put out misinformation.

Bush administration officials oppose mandatory recalls, saying they have the potential of becoming arbitrary and capricious.

On the Web:

USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service: www.fsis.usda.gov.

Holiday storms ease East Coast drought

A rainy, snowy fall and early winter are fast quenching the remnants of the two-year drought along the East Coast.

The Christmas storm that blew across Pennsylvania, New York and New England was icing on the cake for soil moisture and groundwater watchers, said Randy Durlin, a U.S. Geological Survey hydrologist in Harrisburg, Pa.

Even before the storm, Durlin said, "We've seen great recovery. It's been perfect, it's just been slow rain.

"The ground didn't freeze, so it soaked in."

Drought designations were already lifted in Pennsylvania and most East Coast states, though concerns remained about low water tables and aquifers in New Jersey, central Virginia and the northern tip of Maine.

"IF WE keep this pattern going, pretty soon those areas will be going too," said David Miskus, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Climate Pre-

diction Center.

"It took a long time to build this drought. We've actually cut it back pretty quickly."

The long drought lowered wells, slowed waterways, and damaged agriculture, leaving farmers with the poorest corn crop in years and limiting water for livestock.

Many areas declared drought emergencies, limiting such activities as washing cars and watering lawns, and many also banned outdoor burning.

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