



National Grain and Feed Association

NEWSLETTER

Volume 66, No. 4 | Feb. 21, 2014

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Syngenta Announces Agreement with Gaviion to Assist in Marketing Agrisure Duracade Biotech Corn

By Randy Gordon, President

Proceeding with its plan to initiate what it terms a “limited launch” in the United States of Agrisure Duracade® biotech-enhanced corn in 2014, Syngenta on Feb. 20 announced an agreement with Gaviion Grain LLC to provide “marketing options” for producers who decide to plant and grow the trait, which has not been approved yet for import in China, the European Union and several other foreign countries.

The Syngenta announcement said that Gaviion would “accept Agrisure Duracade grain at market price while providing stewardship and distribution services” for such producers.

In its statement, Syngenta said its “limited launch volume of (Duracade) corn seed will be concentrated in areas most in need of this corn rootworm technology.” But in its statement, and during a Feb. 11 meeting with NGFA and the North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA), the company thus far has declined to provide information on which specific states it plans to make Duracade seed available to corn producers for planting. Nor has it updated the number of acres it anticipates will be planted, saying that such an estimate is dependent in part on availability of the seed being produced in South America. During a meeting with NGFA’s Biotechnology Committee in mid-December, a Syngenta representative had estimated that Duracade could be grown on as much as 700,000 acres in 2014. But recent indications from other sources are the figure may be somewhat less than 300,000 acres.

In an accompanying question-and-answer document released by Syngenta’s North American Region, the company said Agrisure Duracade seed dealers and Syngenta representatives will be contacting producers regarding a planting,

Arbitration Default Judgments

Default judgments published this week:

- [Case No. 2661](#) - *Gavilon Grain, LLC (Omaha, Neb.) v. Buford Lake Planting Partnership / John Seely (Lyon, Miss.)* - 2/21/2014 - \$81,518.39
- [Case No. 2667](#) - *Gavilon Grain, LLC (Omaha, Neb.) v. Yancy Farms / Bruce Yancy (Collierville, Tenn.)* - 2/21/2014 - \$29,712.50
- [Case No. 2693](#) - *Interstate Commodities Inc. (Troy, N.Y.) v. Joseph Calabrese (Southwick, Mass.)* - 2/21/2014 - \$146,705.63

These and all NGFA Arbitration committee decisions and default judgments are accessible at ngfa.org/decisions.

stewardship and harvesting plan that they will be required to implement in 2014 as a condition for planting the biotech trait. The plan will require participating farmers to “steward their grain appropriately, including ensuring that it is delivered to approved end-use markets and exported to approved locations,” the Syngenta document stated. Gavilon representatives are to follow up by contacting such producers to discuss their grain marketing options, Syngenta said.

Syngenta’s question-and-answer document stated producers choosing to plant Duracade in 2014 are not restricted to marketing the biotech corn trait solely through Gavilon, but are “free to market their grain to any outlet for domestic market use, or any outlet that ensures the grain is only exported to approved markets.”

Syngenta has not made available publicly the grower agreement containing specific stewardship obligations that producers presumably will be required to sign prior to obtaining Agrisure Duracade corn seed for planting. NGFA and NAEGA will be urging that it do so in full transparency.

Further, Syngenta officials thus far have declined to provide commercial assurance in response to direct requests from NGFA and NAEGA that the company will assume risk responsibility if and when the Duracade trait becomes present in export shipments to countries where it is not approved. The NGFA and NAEGA on Jan. 22 issued a joint statement urging Syngenta not to proceed with commercialization of the Duracade trait in 2014, given the trait’s lack of approval in China and several other foreign countries and the rejections of U.S. corn and distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGs) by Chinese authorities because of the presence of the company’s Agrisure Viptera® corn, which also has not been approved for import yet by China.

Syngenta stated that the Agrisure Duracade trait has been approved for cultivation in the United States and Canada, and has received import approvals from Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand. Information compiled by biotradestatus.com as of Feb. 14 indicates that Agrisure Duracade has **not** been approved for import by China, all 28 states of the European Union, Brazil, Egypt, India, The Philippines, the Russian Federation, or Turkey.

In the near future, the NGFA will be preparing and distributing additional fact-based materials that members can consider using if they wish to discuss directly with farmer-customers their individual companies’ policies regarding acceptance or non-acceptance of Agrisure Duracade corn in 2014. In its Jan. 22 joint statement, the NGFA and NAEGA advised U.S. farmers “to check with their local grain elevators and merchants to determine whether the grain buyer or handler has any limitations on accepting biotechnology traits that do not have certain export market approvals.” Similar advice has been issued to growers by the National Corn Growers Association and American Farm Bureau Federation.

In addition, the NGFA in January made available options for sample grain contract clause language based upon provisions developed by NGFA several years ago to assist grain purchasers who wish to address issues that may arise from time-to-time concerning the introduction and commercialization of new biotech-enhanced traits. One or more of the [sample contract clause options](#) are available online and may be relevant and applicable. The sample boilerplate biotech contract language options, which are presented in no particular order or preference, should be read and considered carefully before being used. Importantly, as with all contractual matters, it is recommended strongly that companies consult with competent legal counsel before making changes to legal documents, such as grain contracts.

Outbreaks of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus Continue; Impacts the Feed Industry

By Dave Fairfield, Vice President of Feed Services

The number of outbreaks of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv) within the swine industry in North America continues to increase, which is affecting how swine feed is distributed as the industry works to limit the spread of the disease.

PEDv is a disease caused by a member of the virus family *Coronaviridae*. Introduction of PEDv into a swine herd typically results in acute outbreaks of severe diarrhea, vomiting and high morbidity that often reaches 100 percent. The virus may spread via the fecal-oral route and fomites – objects capable of carrying infectious organisms.

The first U.S. cases of PEDv were confirmed in April 2013. While PEDv is not a new swine disease globally, the April 2013 occurrence represented the first time the disease was identified within the United States. PEDv is not a “listed disease” of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), which means that its presence does not cause marketing disruptions of U.S. pork to other countries. PEDv also is not considered a foreign animal disease by the U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). As such, there currently are no interstate trade restrictions within the United States pertaining to PEDv in swine. Further, PEDv is not a zoonotic disease that is transmissible to people and is not a food safety concern.

Pertaining to the outbreak, there were 265 new confirmed cases of PEDv within the United States during the week of Jan. 24. That number represents the largest number of new cases in a single week since the outbreak began in April 2013 and brings the total number of confirmed case to 2,962. The disease also is wide-spread, with 23 states reporting at least one confirmed case of the virus. In addition, outbreaks of the disease were reported in Mexico during the third-quarter of 2013, and Canada recently reported its first confirmed cases of PEDv in mid-January 2014.

Investigations of Feed, Feed Ingredients as a Potential Disease Vector

The ongoing outbreak of PEDv has affected the feed industry. Following is a timeline of information released on feed-related PEDv issues.

APHIS and FDA Investigation: APHIS, in collaboration with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), issued the following statement on May 30, 2013 pertaining to reports the agency received that animal feed may be a possible factor in transmitting the disease:

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is working closely with stakeholders to monitor the situation around porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED) in the United States. We received reports that animal feed may be a possible factor in transmitting this disease, so we partnered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate this possibility. At this time, here is what we know – we tested samples of feed and feed ingredients associated with one case of PED at the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL), with no positive results for PED antigen by polymerase chain reaction (PCR). However, our investigation with FDA is ongoing. We are also collaborating closely with American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV), National Pork Board (NPB) and the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) on a broad epidemiological investigation to help identify any risk factors in the transmission of this disease.

Neither APHIS nor FDA have issued subsequent statements related to the potential of feed being a vector for PEDv.

Testing Feed for PEDv: The [University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory](#) reported in June 2013 that: 1) there currently are neither official nor validated methods for testing the virus status of a feed sample; and 2) historically, feed samples testing positive for infectious virus have rarely been documented. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assays of feed and feed ingredients do not distinguish between live and inactive virus.

AASV Epidemiologic Survey: AASV collaborated with NPB, NPPC, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health to conduct an epidemiologic survey to identify risk factors potentially associated with the introduction of the PEDv into the U.S. swine herd. As an outcome, AASV released a [statement](#) in August 2013 concerning preliminary findings of the survey, which included the following:

Over 100 variables were assessed during the survey. Of these, only seven were considered significantly likely to have some association with the introduction of PEDv into the herds involved in the survey. These seven risk factors were associated with the process of feeding the animals. The questions were broad in scope and did not implicate any

Upcoming Events

March 26 Regional Safety Seminar
With North Dakota Grain
Dealers Association,
Minnesota Grain and Feed
Association, and South
Dakota Grain and Feed
Association
Fargo, N.D.

March 30-April 1, 2014
NGFA Annual Convention
Westin Hilton Head Resort,
Hilton Head, S.C.

For a full listing of events, go to
ngfa.org/events

specific finished feed, feed ingredient, feed manufacturer or ingredient supplier.

The results of this initial survey should not be over-interpreted. The sample size was small, with many common on-farm practices and potential biases.

To date, all feed and ingredient samples tested for PEDv have tested negative. There is no diagnostic indication that feed was in any way related to the introduction of PEDv into the U.S. swine herd. The feed industry has been, and continues to be, fully cooperative with all efforts to identify any possible sources of viral introduction. We want to stress that we do not have any evidence that any feed ingredient, finished feed or feed manufacturer was associated with the introduction of PEDv.

APHIS Disease Pathway Assessment: APHIS conducted a meeting on Dec. 11-12, 2013, with other regulatory agencies and industry groups to gain information as part of a project to assess disease pathways. The purpose of the project was to conduct an entry assessment as the first step toward determining whether significant gaps exist in import regulations that may result in infections of U.S. domestic swine with exotic viral pathogens of swine. Participating in the meeting were representatives from the NGFA, American Feed Industry Association (AFIA), FDA, Customs and Border Protection, NPB and AASV.

Representatives from NGFA, AFIA and FDA during the meeting provided information about regulatory requirements associated with feed ingredients, and industry practices pertaining to sourcing and using such products. APHIS is using this and other information to make a likelihood estimation concerning the potential of feed being a pathway for introduction into the United States of exotic viral pathogens of swine. APHIS has made an initial draft of the entry pathways assessment available to the meeting's participants for review and comment. It is anticipated that APHIS will issue a final report by the end of March.

Statement by National Renderers Association: In response to concerns that rendered products and blood products used in animal feed may be a potential factor in transmitting the disease, the National Renderers Association on Feb. 11 issued a [statement](#) that provides scientific information pertaining to the safety of such products.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency Investigation: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) on Feb. 18 issued a [statement](#) related to its PEDv investigation, which included the following information.

Testing [by CFIA] has determined that PED virus was present in

samples of US-origin plasma obtained [by a Canadian feed manufacturer]. This plasma was used as an ingredient in feed pellets produced by the company. Testing with a swine bioassay has determined that the plasma ingredient contains PED virus capable of causing disease in pigs.

Further testing will be done to assess if the feed pellets are capable of causing disease in piglets, and results are expected within days. Testing will continue to confirm a direct link between the feed and the spread of the disease, as the virus is only confirmed in a single ingredient at this time.

Testing with a swine bioassay involves feeding pigs with the ingredient and/or feed in question and monitoring the animals for the disease. Within the United States, APHIS's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa is the only laboratory capable of performing bioassay testing for official purposes.

Biosecurity during Feed Delivery

The use of prudent biosecurity practices during feed delivery assists in limiting the spread of infectious diseases among livestock, including PEDv. Following are sample feed delivery biosecurity practices based upon recommendations made by the NPB that feed manufacturers may wish to consider when delivering feed to swine producers.

Delivery Equipment: The cleanliness of feed delivery equipment plays an important role in preventing the spread of disease. Trucks and trailers used for feed delivery should be thoroughly cleaned, washed, disinfected and dried. To appropriately clean delivery equipment:

- Scrape/remove dirt and/or debris that may be present on the equipment prior to washing.
- Soak the equipment with soap and/or degreaser.
- Pressure wash the equipment with hot water.
- Disinfect the vehicle with an appropriate disinfectant, following all label directions. The effectiveness of disinfectants is reduced when applied to a surface that is not clean.
- Cleaning and disinfecting also is to occur within the interior of the truck cab.
- Other equipment associated with delivery of feed – e.g., brooms, shovels, etc. – are to be cleaned and disinfected.
- All delivery equipment is to be thoroughly dried prior to being placed back in service.

Delivery Driver Practices

- Drivers are to wear clean clothes and footwear.

- Drivers are to put on clean, disposable boots in the truck before exiting the cab at the delivery site.
- Drivers are to put on clean, disposable coveralls immediately after exiting the truck cab.
- Drivers are to stay as close to the delivery truck as possible to minimize the areas accessed.
- Drivers are to only access areas of the delivery site for which they are authorized. This likely means not entering the barn office or other facilities. Feed invoices and tags also should be left in a designated area, such as mailboxes attached to the bin leg or outside of the office.
- For bulk feed deliveries, if possible, drivers should communicate with the farm staff and ask them to open and close the bin lids.
- For sack feed deliveries, drivers are to only unload products within designated areas.
- After unloading of feed is complete, drivers are to remove coveralls and disposable boots when climbing back into the truck. These items are to be disposed of in a separate garbage bag or container.
- Drivers are to apply hand sanitizer to maintain a clean cab before touching surfaces after re-entering the truck.

Visit [NPB's website](#) to access specific transportation and delivery practices recommended by the NPB to assist in preventing the transmission of infectious diseases.

The NGFA will provide additional information pertaining to PEDv and feed-related issues as it becomes available. Members with questions about PEDv may contact NGFA Vice President of Feed Services David Fairfield by phone at (712) 243-4035 or by email at dfairfield@ngfa.org.

Ready for the Hill

In conjunction with the Agricultural Retailers Association, eight NGFA affiliates took part in the annual Washington, D.C., fly-in of state and regional affiliates on Feb. 11-12. Among those who attended, from bottom left: Attebury Grain Operations Manager Scott Day, NGFA President Randy Gordon, Muenster Milling Vice President Ronnie Felderhoff, and Westway Feed Products Southern Division/National Accounts Manager Jerry Stephenson. In addition, from top left: Texas Grain and Feed Association President Ben Boerner, NGFA Director of Legislative Affairs Jared Hill, Attebury Grain Merchandiser Dean McIntosh, and NGFA Vice President and Treasurer Todd Kemp.



USDA Agricultural Marketing Service to Initiate Process to Develop List of U.S. Firms for Conformance with China Decree 118

By Dave Fairfield, Vice President of Feed Services

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has made available [a web-based process](#) whereby industry firms may submit applications to be included on an AMS list of registered U.S. plant-based feed facilities that have interest in exporting feed and feedstuffs products and are subject to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) jurisdiction.

The AMS application process is designed to facilitate the export of processed plant-based feed products to China in accordance with requirements established by the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ). AQSIQ requirements – formally known as Decree 118 – mandate that U.S. exporters of plant-based feed products meet the following criteria in order to pass customs inspection into China:

- The exported product must originate from a registered U.S. facility;
- The registered facility may be subject to audits by AQSIQ officials; and
- The exported product must be accompanied by a shipment-by-shipment certificate.

China defines “processed plant-based feed products” as follows:

Feed derived from grain and oil crops, such as wheat bran, bran coat, soybean cake/meal, peanut cake/meal, rapeseed cake/meal, cottonseed cake/meal, sunflower cake/meal, safflower seed cake/meal, linseed cake/meal, coconut cake/meal, palm cake/meal, distillers grains from maize or cassava, and beet pulp. The definition excludes forage grasses and raw feed grains.

In order to meet AQSIQ requirements and further facilitate trade, AMS will provide a web-based application to build a list of registered U.S. plant-based feed facilities for submission to Chinese authorities. AMS will evaluate applications before adding the facilities to the list of registered facilities submitted to Chinese officials. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis, and updated facility lists will be available to Chinese officials through the AMS website. Application by firms for inclusion on the AMS list is voluntary.

The AMS application process will include submission of specific facility information, as well as attestation that the facility is in good standing and is not the subject of pending judicial enforcement action or a pending administrative action. In addition, the applicant is to affirm that the facility meets established

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) that are based upon the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) Model Good Manufacturing Practice Regulations for Feed and Feed Ingredients. To do so, applicants will be required to complete a checklist and confirm the facility's compliance with specified GMPs criteria.

The NGFA was extensively involved in the development of the AAFCO GMP, which were adopted by AAFCO in 2009. The GMPs outline basic feed safety conditions and practices that are to exist within a facility that manufactures and distributes animal feed and/or feed ingredients, and contains sections on receiving and storage of feed and feed ingredients; maintenance and housekeeping; equipment suitability and testing; manufacturing, including practices for minimizing the risk of adulteration and ensuring product safety; recordkeeping; labeling and packaging; storage of finished products; transportation and distribution; and voluntary recall and withdrawal from distribution procedures.

NGFA supports the AMS process and has been active in discussions with AMS/FAS to address the 118 requirements. NGFA encourages its members to use the [AMS web-based process](#). If you have additional questions, contact [Dave Fairfield](#).

NGFA Warns CFTC on Bona Fide Hedging Constraints

By Todd Kemp, Vice President of Marketing and Treasurer

The NGFA on Feb. 10 submitted formal comments to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) regarding a proposed rule that would redefine bona fide hedging and potentially put at risk hedging transactions in the grain, feed and processing industry that long have been considered bona fide hedges. The NGFA's eight-page letter, accompanied by an additional 12 pages of hedging examples, urged the commission to take a policy approach consistent with its historic interpretation of bona fide hedging.

The proposed rule also seeks to establish new position limits and new methodologies for agricultural commodities and expands position limits to many energy, metals, financial and other products.

As previewed in the Feb. 6 edition of the **NGFA Newsletter**, major issues in the proposal for the grain, feed and processing industry included:

- **Bona fide hedging definition:** The commission proposes to redefine bona fide hedging in ways that appear to preclude some commonly used

hedging strategies from the new definition. The NGFA urged the CFTC to maintain its historical treatment of such transactions so that commercial hedgers can continue to utilize these critically important risk management tools to manage their own business risk and to facilitate risk management for agricultural producers.

- **Position Limits:** The NGFA recommended that spot-month position limits be maintained at their current levels so that convergence will continue to occur consistently. The NGFA also recommended that new all-months-combined position limits should be structured so as to promote an orderly transition down to spot-month levels.
- **Position Limit Parity for Wheat Contracts:** Consistent with historical practice, the NGFA urge the CFTC to maintain position limits for the Chicago Board of Trade, the Kansas City Board of Trade and the Minneapolis Grain Exchange wheat contracts at equivalent levels.
- **Conditional Position Limits:** The NGFA letter opposed establishment of position limits for cash-settled contracts up to five times the level allowed for physically settled contracts.

In addition, the NGFA statement made the case that new reporting requirements and a new process for seeking hedge exemptions are overly burdensome and not timely.

The CFTC is expected to take a deliberate approach to analyzing a large volume of comments from the public before moving to adopt a final rule. The Commission's timeline for consideration, likely at least several months, probably will be lengthened by the pending confirmation hearings of three new CFTC Commissioners. Most observers do not expect action on the proposal until the CFTC is at or near full strength.

For additional information, see the [full text of the NGFA letter](#) and hedging examples or the [complete comment file](#) containing feedback on the CFTC proposed rule from 173 organizations and individuals.

FDA Designation of High-Risk Foods for Additional Traceability Requirements

By Dave Fairfield, Vice President of Feed Services

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently made available [draft methodology](#) that the agency intends to use to designate high-risk foods that would be subject to additional recordkeeping requirements to facilitate the rapid and effective tracking and tracing of such foods during a foodborne illness outbreak or other event.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) mandates that FDA make such determinations for high-risk foods for which additional traceability requirements are appropriate and necessary to protect public health. FDA's draft methodology represents the first step towards establishing such requirements. In addition to designating high-risk foods, FDA in the future will issue a proposed rule to specify the additional recordkeeping requirements for such foods.

FSMA requires that FDA designate high-risk foods for traceability purposes based on the following factors:

- The known safety risks of a particular food, including the history and severity of foodborne illness outbreaks attributed to such food, taking into consideration foodborne illness data collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
- The likelihood that a particular food has a high potential risk for microbiological or chemical contamination or would support the growth of pathogenic microorganisms due to the nature of the food or the processes used to produce such food;
- The point in the manufacturing process of the food where contamination is most likely to occur;
- The likelihood of contamination and steps taken during the manufacturing process to reduce the possibility of contamination;
- The likelihood that consuming a particular food will result in a foodborne illness due to contamination of the food; and
- The likely or known severity, including health and economic impacts, of a foodborne illness attributed to a particular food.

Significantly, the term "high-risk" has more than one meaning within FSMA. For example, the law requires that "high-risk" food/feed facilities be subject to more frequent regulatory inspections. In this context, the "high-risk" determination is based upon facility-specific issues, such as compliance history. In contrast, the compliance history of facilities is not relevant in determining "high-risk foods" for traceability purposes, which instead is to be based upon the characteristics of the food.

FDA's draft approach to identifying high-risk foods would use a multi-criteria risk-ranking model that would consider seven factors: 1) frequency of outbreaks and occurrence of illnesses; 2) severity of illness, taking into account illness duration, hospitalization and mortality; 3) likelihood of contamination; 4) growth potential/shelf life; 5) manufacturing process contamination probability/intervention; 6) consumption; and 7) economic impact.

NGFA will work with several committees to draft comments on the methodology by the April 7 deadline. For additional information contact [Dave Fairfield](#).

USDA 2014 Ag Outlook

By Max Fisher, Director of Economics and Government Affairs

At the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) annual [Agricultural Outlook Forum](#), USDA Chief Economist Joe Glauber provided the first glimpse of USDA's view on the 2014 crop.

[In his presentation](#), Glauber projected that corn plantings are likely to decrease from 95.4 million acres in 2013 to 92 million in 2014. Meanwhile, year-over-year soybean acres are likely rise from 76.5 million to 79.5 million. Wheat acres decrease 0.7 million to 55.5 million for 2014. (For more information, see [Glauber's speech](#).)

In addition, he reported global ending stocks in days of use. Global ending stocks for corn increase from 56 days in 2012/13 to 61 days in 2013/14. Soybean world stocks rise significantly from 83 days last year to 99 days this year. Lastly, wheat stocks increase from 93 days in 2012/13 to 96 days in 2013/14.

USDA's forecast for 2014 national average marketing prices are \$3.90/bu corn, \$9.65/ bu soybeans and \$5.30/bu wheat.

[Additional information on the forum](#) is available online.

DOL Revokes Family Farming Guidance

By Jess McCluer, Director of Safety and Regulatory Affairs

Nearly a month after expressing concerns about the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) inspections of family farms, the Department of Labor (DOL) recently announced it revoked the controversial guidance that allowed the practice.

In a [letter](#) addressed to the House Education and the Workforce Committee, the DOL said it has worked with OSHA to explain the end of the guidance and will work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and organizations representing farmers to find a more suitable solution.

Until then, the previous guidance has been removed from the OSHA website.

Background

Since 1976, Congress has banned OSHA from regulating farming operations with 10 or fewer employees. However, in 2011, OSHA issued a memo without any public notice indicating the agency had authority to regulate "post-harvest"

activities which could include storage, fumigation, and drying – processes common on farms of all sizes.

For additional information, see the [DOL's response letter](#).

Chipotle Attacks Industry; NGFA Offers Assistance With a Response

By Heather McElrath, Director of Communications

Chipotle on Feb. 17 launched a new online TV series called “Farmed and Dangerous.” According to the restaurant chain, the show is a new comedy series that “satirically explore(s) the world of industrial agriculture in America.” Each week, over the next four weeks another 22-minute episode will be aired.

The first season focuses on the introduction of a fictitious, petroleum-based animal feed that promises to reduce industrial agriculture's dependence on oil by eliminating the need to grow, fertilize, irrigate and transport the vast amount of feed needed to raise livestock on factory farms.

The series has sparked debate not only about the content, but also a proper response. However, it is best to ask “what's the best way to engage to minimize the negative impact and encourage a more balanced public discussion of today's agriculture?”

NGFA has taken the approach that issuing a statement simply calls more attention to the subject, which may further promote the series and the restaurant. Instead, NGFA recommends engaging those already taking part in the conversation to illustrate realities of the industry.

To do this, the NGFA is employing the following talking points as needed:

- Members of the grain and feed industry produce an abundant, safe and high-quality supply of grain, feed and feeding ingredients for domestic and world consumers.
- Throughout the grain and feed industry, providing a safe and high-quality supply of grain, feed and feeding ingredients is a top priority, and we question the need for marketing tactics that utilize fear to instill distrust to divide the agriculture community into large and small producers.
- Members of the grain and feed industry employ technology so that we can produce a safe and high-quality supply of grain, feed and feeding ingredients for our growing population while using fewer resources.

Social media is another avenue that can be used to counter falsities in the series.

To do so, it's best to incorporate Chipotle's own hashtag (#foodwithintegrity) on Twitter – and even Facebook, which now supports hashtags – so that industry messages appear with the restaurant's.

Some suggested tweets:

- Everyone has the right to eat food that's produced & delivered safely & responsibly. #FoodWithIntegrity
- I believe that consumer choice should be celebrated & protected. #FoodWithIntegrity
- By using technology, we can produce food for our growing population while using fewer resources. #FoodWithIntegrity

For questions or assistance with this issue, contact [Heather McElrath](#).

Grain Bin Safety Week Kicks Off Feb. 23

By Jess McCluer, Director of Safety and Regulatory Affairs

In an effort to increase awareness of the dangers of flowing grain, Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Company has partnered with Farm Safety for Just Kids, Heartland Co-op, Iowa FFA Foundation, National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) and additional organizations for Grain Bin Safety Week (Feb. 23-March 1).

NGFA is marking Grain Bin Safety Week by echoing the importance of grain bin safety, and reminding its members of the organization's training materials and upcoming safety seminar.

Each year, NGFA teams up with state grain associations and offers regional safety seminars. The next one is slated March 26 in Fargo, N.D., and is sponsored by NGFA, North Dakota Grain Dealers Association, Minnesota Grain and Feed Association, and South Dakota Grain and Feed Association.

The seminar provides the tools needed by successful operations to comply with federal and state regulations. It will include an update on the status of several OSHA regulatory issues, an overview of key Grain Handling Standard components, NGFA guidance documents, and the revised OSHA Hazard Communication Standard.

For further information, see the [seminar schedule of events](#) and [registration form](#).

In addition, NGFA offers numerous training materials, such as:

- **Your Safety Matters** a 30-minute employee safety training DVD – in Spanish and English – jointly produced with Grain Elevator and Processing Society (GEAPS). The video addresses: fires and explosions; confined space and bin entry; truck and rail safety (such as fall protection); safe operation of equipment (such as proper lockout and tagout procedures); ladder safety; manlifts; electrical; personal protective equipment; hazard communication; first aid; emergency action plans; and facility security.
- **Grain Bin Safety**, which was jointly produced with the National Corn Growers Association, promotes grain bin safety on the farm by providing a wide range of information on prevention tips and background data on grain bin accidents. Includes interviews with professionals in the fields of grain bin safety research and rescue. DVD includes a long version (13 ¾ minutes) and short version (6 ½ minutes).
- **Don't Go With the Flow**, which was produced by Purdue University, includes supplemental CD with PowerPoint presentation and training material. The 24-minute DVD examines most common types of grain entrapments at commercial facilities and their causes. Provides information on effective procedures for rescuing partially and fully entrapped workers from various locations.
- **Partners for Protection**, a 19-minute DVD, provides guidance on how to develop emergency action plans and respond to firefighting challenges unique to grain-handling facilities. Serves as excellent resource to educate local fire departments. It complements NGFA's written publication **Emergency Preplanning and Firefighting Manual**, which contains firefighting techniques and planning for fire emergencies in grain-handling facilities.

For more information on safety and the NGFA's training resources, contact [Jess McCluer](#), director of safety and regulatory affairs.

In addition to NGFA's resources, Grain Bin Safety Week has put together further resources on its [website](#), organized an #AgChat on Twitter and will be hosting a grain bin safety webinar.

- **#AgChat**: Grain bin safety week partners will host an #AgChat on Twitter 7-9 p.m. CT, Feb. 25. This moderated, online conversation will look at grain bin safety from different angles and generate insight from folks involved in the business of growing food, fuel, feed and fiber. Anyone with a Twitter account can participate. Go to [twubs.com/agchat](https://twitter.com/twubs.com/agchat) to tweet during the chat. The site automatically enters the #agchat hashtag in every tweet and allows users to participate in real time.

- **Webinar:** On Feb. 26, Nationwide Agribusiness will host a free, live webinar on grain bin safety. Farmers and commercial grain handlers will gain valuable insight into the risks and hazards of grain bins, safe-work procedures, OSHA standards and more. Space is limited so people should [reserve a spot now](#).

For more information about or to participate in Grain Bin Safety Week, go to GrainBinSafetyWeek.com or ngfa.org/safety.



March 7 Early Bird Registration Deadline Fast Approaching for Convention

Rebecca Grubbs, Director of Meetings and Event Marketing

Don't miss out on the opportunity to save on registration fees by [registering for NGFA's 118th annual convention](#) by March 7. The convention is being held March 30 to April 1 at the Westin Hilton Head Resort.

While that hotel is sold out, arrangements have been made at the nearby Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort, and complimentary bus transportation will be provided. To make hotel reservations, call the hotel at 1-888-444-6664 and reference the NGFA block. The secured room rate is \$189 + tax, but will expire March 7. [Reservations can also be made online](#).

In addition, if you currently have a room at the Westin, but will not be able to attend convention, please do not cancel your reservation. Instead, please contact Rebecca Grubbs at 202-289-087 or rgrubbs@ngfa.org. That way, NGFA can cancel the room for you and make it available to another member.

Major New Speaker Just Confirmed

In terms of convention programming, NGFA recently confirmed that Howard Minigh, president and chief executive officer, CropLife International, Brussels will provide a presentation on "Biotechnology: Accommodating Innovation While Preserving Markets."

In addition, attendees will be treated to programming that includes:

- A Transportation Open Forum featuring John Hellmann, president and chief executive officer of Genesee & Wyoming Inc.; Mike Toohey, president of Waterways Council Inc.; and John Miller, group vice president agricultural products, BNSF Railway. A

speaker from the trucking industry also will address the Forum.

- A congressional speaker.
- Marc Freedman, director of labor law policy from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, who will address “Regulatory Overkill.”
- A panel on “Sustainability and Consumer Preferences” featuring a major retailer; Steve Peterson, director of sourcing sustainability, General Mills; and Randy Spronk, president, National Pork Producers Council.
- Sessions on “Futures Markets – Change and Innovation.”
- The always entertaining membership awards.
- Receptions and networking events.

Tours and Golf

Outside conference programming, the following tours have been scheduled:

- A River Boat Cruise and Bluffton Oyster Experience,
- The Parris Island Marine Recruit Depot, and
- A Daufuskie Island History and Artisan Tour.

However, if golf is preferred, put a group together for the Foundation Golf Tournament held this year at the [Oyster Reef Golf Club](#). Play a round and help support the National Grain and Feed Foundation.

For additional information, download the program or go to ngfa.org/annualconvention.

Finally, don't leave early. Be sure to stay for the Tuesday night beach banquet, where the palm trees will sway in time to the laid-back rhythm of Hilton Head Island – enjoy a change of attitude with a change of latitude.

Sponsorship opportunities

Are you interested in reaching more than 450 of your peers, representing 210 domestic and international companies in the grain, feed, export, rail, futures, and banking industries? Consider sponsoring the NGFA annual convention – many opportunities at several cost levels are available. Please contact Rebecca Grubbs at 202-289-087 or rgrubbs@ngfa.org.

Exhibit Spaces Available

A very limited number of exhibit spaces still are available in the NGFA registration area. Please contact Todd Kemp at tkemp@ngfa.org



Profile: International Trade/Ag Policy

Editors note: NGFA relies heavily on its 18 active committees and councils to address significant issues related to public policy and industry business. As such, NGFA has launched a series of profiles looking at the committees, their priorities and leadership to keep members up-to-date on current issues. A new committee will be featured each month in the "Committee Corner" based on association priorities.

Committee Name: International Trade/Ag Policy

Committee Chairwoman: Beth Bechdol, Agribusiness Council of Indiana/Indiana Grain and Feed Association, Indianapolis, Ind.

NGFA Liaisons:

- Jared Hill, director of legislative affairs
- Max Fisher, director of economics and government affairs

Committee Members: Below is a list of committee members as of Feb. 20:

- James Black, Maplehurst Farms, Rochelle, Ill.
- John Brammeier, Co-Alliance LLP, Avon, Ind.
- John Cassidy, Perdue AgriBusiness LLC, Salisbury, Md.
- Matt Caswell, Ag Processing Inc., Omaha, Neb.
- Joe Christopher, Crossroads Cooperative Association, Sidney, Neb.
- Charles Colbert, Zen-Noh Grain Corp., Covington, La.
- Bryan Dierlam, Cargill Inc., Washington, D.C.
- Thomas Erickson, Bunge Product Lines, Washington, D.C.
- Sarah Gallo, CHS, Washington, D.C.
- Lorraine Hawley, Archer Daniels Midland, Washington, D.C.
- Joe Kapraun, GROWMARK Inc., Bloomington, Ill.
- Susan Lyons, Perdue AgriBusiness LLC, Washington, D.C.
- James Mayer, James Mayer & Associates, Inc., Northfield, Ill.
- Timothy Mellencamp, Rabo AgriFinance, Chicago
- Ron Mitzel, Dakota Mill and Grain Inc., Rapid City S.D.
- Joseph Needham, The Andersons Inc., Maumee OH
- Rolf Peters, AgMotion Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.
- Bill Reed, Riceland Foods Inc., Stuttgart, Ark.
- Mark Reisinger, Dupont Pioneer Johnston, Iowa
- Charles Schwerha, Roquette America Inc., Geneva, Ill.

In addition, the committee has one member, Daniel Camichael with Maplehurst Farms in Rochelle, Ill., from the [Committee Apprentice Program](#).

Committee Purpose: This committee advocates policies that promote sustained economic growth for all sectors of U.S. agriculture. It works to minimize market-distorting farm and acreage-idling programs, such as conservation policies that idle productive farmland, to encourage U.S. agricultural growth to meet expanding demand for food, feed, exports and biofuels. And it promotes free trade agreements that significantly reduce and eliminate trade-distorting domestic and export subsidies, and enhance U.S. access to foreign markets.

Major Current Committee Activities: The committee currently is focusing on the following major issues:

- **Farm Bill Implementation:** During the farm bill debate, the committee focused on two primary areas of the legislation: commodity programs and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). NGFA successfully advocated for the commodity program to not be tied to actual planted acres, so as to make the program as market-oriented as possible. In regards to CRP, NGFA also successfully advocated for lowering the acreage cap from 32 million acres down to 24 million acres and allowing penalty-free termination of CRP contracts at the option of the producer.

The farm bill did indeed reflect the positions advanced by NGFA, and USDA has begun its work on implementing the bill. The committee will keep a close watch on, and if necessary provide input on, how USDA implements the new commodity program and CRP.

- **Conservation Reserve Program Payment Rates:** As NGFA has conducted analysis on how the CRP program is currently administered, NGFA has discovered there are some areas of the country where the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is paying CRP contract-holders higher rates than the average cash rental rate for the area. This causes some landowners to enroll productive farmland into the CRP based on government payments rather than environmental factors. NGFA has raised this issue with USDA officials, as well as officials with the Office of Management and Budget. The issue has not been resolved and NGFA will continue to push for the use of sound practices in calculating such rates.
- **Trade Promotion Authority (TPA):** NGFA is a member of the Trade Benefits America Coalition, which is comprised of trade associations, business groups, corporations, and whose purpose is to advocate for the swift passage of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), considered essential in order for the U.S. to complete international trade agreements.
- **Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP):** NGFA continues to advocate for a strong and enforceable sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) chapter in the TPP, along with the inclusion of a rapid response mechanism that would provide for shipment specific trade facilitative obligations that address

frustration of trade in perishable and time sensitive shipments of agricultural products as result of implementation of SPS restrictions, and technical barriers to trade measures.

- **Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP):** NGFA is working with coalition partners to ensure the U.S.-EU trade negotiations result in a 21st century agreement that addresses the trade barriers facing U.S. agricultural products.
- **Prevented Planting Crop Insurance Coverage:** NGFA continues to be supportive of the crop insurance program as a vital risk management tool. However, the committee is continuing to analyze the prevented planting insurance coverage to assess what impacts it may have on the grain industry.