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CEC 2023

ELEVATE YOUR BUSINESS

DECEMBER 3-5



LOUISVILLE, KY

NGFA

NEWS

Progressive Safety Services LLC takes consulting role with NGFA

NGFA is pleased to announce a consulting agreement with [Progressive Safety Services, LLC](#) operated by Joe Mlynek, who also serves as a partner with [Safety Made Simple](#).

Progressive Safety Services, LLC will work with NGFA on a project-by-project basis to review and update NGFA safety programs; create new training materials; provide safety webinars; and assist with regional safety seminars as needed.

Mlynek, a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a degree in environmental policy and analysis, began his safety career in 1996 and has since worked in the grain handling, milling, insurance, construction, manufacturing, and maritime industries. He founded Progressive Safety Services LLC in 2009 to provide safety consulting services including safety assessments, training, and safety program development.



He is a Certified Safety Professional (CSP) and an Occupational Health and Safety Technician (OHST), as well as an active member of the NGFA, Grain Elevator and Processing Society, Ohio Risk Coordinators, National Fire Protection Association, and American Society of Safety Professionals.

He is also a partner and subject matter expert for Safety Made Simple, LLC located in Olathe, Kan. Safety Made Simple offers a full range of online training courses specific to grain handlers, feed yards, agronomy centers, dairy farms, commercial farms, manufacturing facilities, and construction companies.

Speaker turmoil continues on Capitol Hill

After narrowly securing the House Republican Conference vote on Oct. 11 in his bid for House Speaker, Majority Leader Steve Scalise, R-La., dropped out of the race last night when he determined he could not get the 217 votes needed on the House floor.

After the unprecedented ousting of former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., last week, the two leading candidates for the role became Scalise and Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan, R-Ohio. At this time, it appears Jordan would also be short of the necessary votes on the House floor. With Scalise dropping out, the timing for a vote on speaker remains very uncertain with it unknown if Republicans will decide to close ranks and get behind Jordan or if others will get into the race. This is unprecedented and uncharted territory.

Without a speaker, the House cannot consider any legislation or pass any appropriations bills to avoid a potential government shutdown in mid-November. The stopgap spending bill currently funding the government expires Nov. 17. The uproar similarly delays any progress on the farm bill, which expired on Sept. 30.

“Now, precious time to get the appropriations bills done is being spent on electing a new speaker,” noted Lauren Sturgeon Bailey, vice president of government relations at CoBank in the company’s latest quarterly report. “This change in the environment now means that an extension of the 2018 Farm Bill by the end of the year may be the best we can hope for, perhaps until 2025.”

She noted that a farm bill has not passed in an odd-numbered year since 1985, a tradition that likely will continue as the government continues to struggle to pass several major pieces of legislation that also expired on Sept. 30.

OSHA clarifies warehousing inspections related to grain facilities

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) authorities this week clarified that a new inspection program should not apply to grain handling facilities with certain storage structures.

Early this month, OSHA Compliance Safety and Health Officers (CSHOs) from the Region 7 Kansas City and Wichita Area Offices visited grain handling facilities to conduct inspections under the [National Emphasis Program \(NEP\) on Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations](#) that became effective on July 13.

Deputy Administrator Ryan Hodge sent an Oct. 5 alert to OSHA Area Offices to distinguish between farm product warehousing and storage facilities and grain handling facilities, noting the NEP should **not** apply to grain handling facilities since the storage is considered “intermittent” (e.g., short-term – days to weeks).

Further, he said the CSHOs should have visited the facilities to conduct outreach, not to conduct actual inspections. He also encouraged NGFA members to [contact his office](#) directly with any future issues related to NEP inspections.

The NEP on Warehousing and Distribution targets warehouse-related industries as identified by seven NAICS codes, as well as a set of “high-injury retail establishments,” as identified by five NAICS codes, including Farm Product Warehousing and Storage 493130. However, the 424510 Grain and Field Bean Merchant Wholesalers (which applies to many grain elevators) is not on the list. Flat storage structures are not traditional warehouses and are not part of the farm product warehousing NAICS code.

NGFA members can contact [Jess McCluer](#), NGFA's vice president, safety and regulatory affairs, with questions or more information.

EVENTS

CEC early bird registration ends Oct. 13

Register for the upcoming Country Elevator Conference and Trade Show (CEC) before the Oct. 13 early bird deadline to save an additional \$50. NGFA members receive a 20 percent discount on registration. [Register now.](#)

CEC 2023 will be held at the Omni Louisville in downtown Louisville, Ky., from Dec. 3-5. CEC, NGFA's flagship conference for grain merchants, elevator operators, feed manufacturers, processors, and grain industry suppliers, attracts several hundred industry members each year for networking, education, and a supplier trade show.

General sessions on Dec. 4 include:

- **2024 Ag Economy Outlook:** Dan Basse, President, AgResource Company
- **DC Policy Update:** Sara Wyant, President, Agri-Pulse Communications Inc.
- **New and Notable Issues for Ag Transportation in 2024:** Ken Eriksen, Transportation Consultant

General sessions on Dec. 5 include:

- **El Nino and Beyond: Leveraging USDA Weather Reports to Optimize Your Business:** Mark Brusberg, Chief Meteorologist, United States Department of Agriculture
- **Is it Scary or a Saving Grace? Generative AI and Real Talk on How it Could Impact Agriculture and Agribusinesses:** Jake Joraanstad, CEO & Co-Founder, Bushel

Attendees will have opportunities to attend two of the following breakout sessions on Dec. 4:

- **Panel | Help Wanted: Foreign Ag Labor Solutions:** Kristi Boswell, Agricultural Policy Lawyer, Alston & Bird; and Chad Carlson, Senior Vice President of Talent, Central Valley Ag
- **The Thirst for Soyoil: Emerging Market Opportunities for 2024:** Nate Burke, Senior Vice President Fats, Oils, Greases, FCStone Merchant Services
- **Panel | Addressing the Challenges in Obtaining Insurance:** Speakers TBD from Marsh McLennan Agency and Berkley Ag

Submit your entries to the 2023 Grain and Feed Photo Contest

NGFA is accepting entries for its [annual photo contest](#). Winners of \$500, \$300 and \$200 are announced during the Country Elevator Conference and Trade Show in December. Deadline for entries is **Nov. 21, 2023**.

The contest theme is “**A Day in the Life.**” (What's happening day-to-day at your NGFA member location? What daily tasks help “transform America's harvest” into food, fuel and fiber? NOTE: The best photo will clearly depict aspects of the grain handling industry.)

One photo per participant will be accepted. Email photos as an attachment to sgonzalez@ngfa.org. The body of the email must include the photographer's name and contact information. Full rules are available [here](#).

SUPPLEMENTS

CoBank report outlines interest rate outlook

Long-term interest rates have reached their highest levels in years, note economists in “Higher for Longer – a Drag on Rural Economy,” a [report](#) prepared by the CoBank Knowledge Exchange division.

The report says the Federal Reserve's battle against inflation has led to the highest interest rate environment since 2007 and a surging U.S. dollar, hurting key segments of the rural economy.

“The one-two punch of high borrowing costs and the strong dollar, which hurts our export competitiveness, have combined to take a disproportionate toll on rural industries like agriculture, forest products, mining and manufacturing,” wrote Rob Fox, director of CoBank's Knowledge Exchange research division.

“The majority of international transactions are still conducted in dollars, and a strong dollar makes U.S. exports more expensive and imports cheaper – both of which disproportionately hurt the backbone of the rural economy: agriculture, durable goods manufacturing, mining, and forest products. Combined with slower global economic growth, it's a double whammy – our export customers can't afford to buy U.S. products,” he wrote.

Extra Supplements

NGFA in the news:

RFD-TV: [Unflinching Leadership: Late agricultural policy expert inducted into the National Agriculture Hall of Fame](#)

Grain Journal: [NGFA Fighting to Maintain the Lower Snake River Dams](#)

Other news:

DTN: [Ag Secretary Vilsack Ties Rural Workforce Problems to Broken Immigration System](#)

Iowa Capital Dispatch: [Stalk strength is a worry as Iowa harvest continues](#)

Agri-Pulse: [New laws on pesticides, groundwater and workplace violence coming to agriculture](#) (log in)

CNN: [The Mississippi River has dropped to a historic low for the second consecutive year](#)

ABC News: [Deadly bird flu reappears in US commercial poultry flocks](#)

NGFA | 1400 Crystal Drive | Suite 260 | Arlington | VA | 22202