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NGFA elects John Heck as new Chairman during 120th annual convention

Wilkey, Baudler also elected to officer team

The National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) elected John Heck, senior vice president of The Scoular Co., Omaha, Neb., as its new chairman during the organization's 120th annual convention.

Heck is the 66th industry leader to serve at the helm of the NGFA. In his new capacity, he serves as chairman of NGFA's Board of Directors, after previously having served as first vice chairman and as chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee. He also continues to serve on NGFA's Executive Committee.

Heck began his Scoular career in 1981 as a grain merchandiser, and held positions of increasing responsibility with the company in succeeding years. In 1984, he became operations manager of the Nebraska Region, and a year later was named vice president responsible for management and operation of the Eastern Region. In 1992, he was promoted to senior vice president.

Scoular is a 123-year-old employee-owned company with nearly \$6 billion in annual sales. Its 120 offices and facilities and 1,200 employees in North America, South America and Asia are involved in buying, selling, storing, handling and processing grain and ingredients, as well as managing transportation and logistics worldwide.

A native of Council Bluffs, Iowa, Heck received his undergraduate degree in economics from the University of Iowa. He is a past chairman of the Agriculture Council for the

Omaha Chamber of Commerce, served as Board chairman for Habitat for Humanity Omaha and is a past trustee of the Nebraska 4-H Foundation. He also is a past president of the Omaha Grain Trade Association.

The convention, which attracted more than 700 grain, feed, processing and export industry members, was conducted at the Hotel del Coronado near San Diego, Calif.

Elected as NGFA's new first vice chairman was **Erik Wilkey**, president of Arizona Grain Inc., Casa Grande, Ariz., while **David Baudler**, managing director – grain, Cargill Agricultural Supply Chain North America, Cargill Inc., Minneapolis, Minn., was elected as NGFA's new second vice chairman.

Wilkey joined Arizona Grain in 1991 after beginning his career six years earlier with the Continental Grain Co. From 1996-2006, he served as the company's vice president and director of merchandising and risk management. In 2006, he was named president of Arizona Grain, which operates in a four-state region of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Colorado. Since 2011, when Arizona Grain purchased Arizona Plant Breeders, Wilkey also has served as president of the wheat and cereal grain-breeding company.

With NGFA, Wilkey previously served as second vice chairman, as chairman of the Country Elevator Committee and as a member of the Risk Management Committee. He continues to serve on NGFA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee. In addition, he has been a member of the Arizona Grain Research and Promotion Council since 2004, and is a past chair of that organization. An Illinois native, he received his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois.

Baudler was named managing director – grain, Cargill Agricultural Supply Chain North America earlier this year, and is responsible for domestic and export grain across the United States and Canada. He previously served since March 2011 as business unit leader and president of Cargill AgHorizons U.S., which was responsible for Cargill's farmer-facing grain and crop-input business. Baudler also has been on Cargill corporate committees, including the Financial Risk Committee and the Technology Venture Fund.

Baudler has had numerous positions in the U.S. grain business with Cargill earlier in his career, including the company's World Trading Unit in Geneva, Switzerland; the Dressings, Sauces and Oils Refining Group within the Food Ingredients Platform; and general manager of the Softseeds and Biodiesel Segment of the company's Grain and Oilseeds North America Division. At NGFA, he serves on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee. He grew up on a southwest Iowa farm, and received his undergraduate degree in agricultural business at Iowa State University. He is a member of the AGree Food and Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee, and has served on multiple non-profit boards of directors.



John Heck, senior vice president at The Scoular Company and new NGFA Chairman



Erik Wilkey, president of Arizona Grain Inc., and NGFA's new first vice chairman



David Baudler, managing director – grain, Cargill Agricultural Supply Chain North America, Cargill Inc., and NGFA's new second vice chairman

Cargill, celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, is one of the world's largest privately owned businesses, providing food, agricultural, risk management, financial and industrial services through its 150,000 employees operating in 70 countries worldwide.

Board of Directors Elected: In addition, NGFA members elected the following members to serve three-year terms on the organization's Board of Directors:

- **Jim Banachowski**, Vice President and General Manager, The Andersons, Maumee, Ohio
- **Robert Bond**, Senior Grain Merchandiser, AGREX Inc., Franklin, Tenn.
- **Randy Broady**, Director of Grain Operations, Trupointe Cooperative, Botkins, Ohio – he will already receive the Board report as a committee chair
- **Steve Campbell**, Executive Vice President, Head of North American Grains, Louis Dreyfus Commodities, Kansas City, Mo.
- **Charles Colbert**, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Trading Officer, Zen-Noh Grain Corp., Covington, La.
- **Mitch Dawson**, Director of Grain Operations, MFA Inc., Columbia, Mo.
- **Bert Farrish**, Chief Executive Officer, Big River Rice and Grain, Monroe, La.
- **Chris Faust**, Vice President and Grain Division General Manager, Grain Division, Gaviion Inc., Omaha, Neb.
- **Roger Fray**, Executive Vice President, West Central Cooperative (to be renamed Landus Cooperative effective April 1, following its merger with Farmers Cooperative Co., Ames, Iowa), Ralston, Iowa
- **Dave Hoogmoed**, Chief Operating Officer, Purina Feed LLC, Shoreview, Minn.
- **Kyle Jeworski**, President and Chief Executive Officer, North America, Viterra, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.
- **Robert Jones**, Senior Vice President, Wells Fargo Clearing, Chicago, Ill.
- **Joe Kapraun**, Business Relationship Manager, GROWMARK Inc., Bloomington, Ill.
- **Ryan McCoy**, President and General Manager, CoMark Grain Marketing LLC, Cheney, Kan.
- **Scott McWilliams**, Executive Vice President, Merchandising, Lansing Trade Group, Overland Park, Kan.
- **Michael Meyers**, Director, Wheat By-Products, APEX, Hamburg, N.Y.

- **Chris Peha**, Chief Executive Officer, Northwest Grain Growers, Walla Walla, Wash.
- **Ryan Pellett**, President and Chief Executive Officer, J.D. Heiskell & Co., Elkhorn, Neb.
- **Rand Schafer**, Co-Owner and General Manager, Lortscher Animal Nutrition Inc., Bern, Kan.
- **Ted Schultz**, Chief Operating Officer, Team Marketing Alliance LLC, Moundridge, Kan.

Executive Committee Elected: Subsequently, the NGFA Board of Directors elected the following of its members to serve on the NGFA Executive Committee:

- **Greg Beck**, Vice President, Grain Division, CGB Enterprises Inc., Covington, La.
- **Chris Boerm**, President, Global Transportation, Archer Daniels Midland Co., Decatur, Ill.
- **Steve Campbell**, Executive Vice President, Louis Dreyfus Commodities, Kansas City, Mo.
- **Tom Coyle**, General Manager, Nidera U.S. LLC, Chicago, Ill.
- **Geoff Finch**, Vice President and Chief Operations Officer, Wenger's Feed Mill Inc., Rheems, Pa.
- **John Fletcher**, General Manager, Central Missouri AGRIService LLC, Marshall, Mo.
- **Roger Fray**, Executive Vice President, West Central Cooperative (to be renamed Landus Cooperative effective April 1, following its merger with Farmers Cooperative Co., Ames, Iowa), Ralston, Iowa
- **Matt Gibson**, Vice President, General Manager, Grain Division, Bunge North America Inc., St. Louis, Mo.
- **David Hoogmoed**, Executive Vice President, Land O'Lakes Inc. and Chief Operating Officer, Purina Feed LLC, Shoreview, Minn.
- **Diana Klemme**, Vice President, Grain Service Corp., Atlanta, Ga.
- **Todd Lafferty**, Vice President and General Counsel, Wheeler Brothers Grain Co., Watonga, Okla.
- **Dan Mack**, Vice President, Transportation, CHS Inc., St. Paul, Minn.; and
- **Ryan Pellett**, President and Chief Executive Officer, J.D. Heiskell & Co., Elkhorn, Neb.

Also serving as members of the Executive Committee by virtue of their office are:

- **NGFA Chairman John Heck**, Senior Vice President, The Scoular Company, Omaha, Neb.
- **NGFA First Vice Chairman Eric Wilkey**, President, Arizona Grain Inc., Casa Grande, Ariz.

- **NGFA Second Vice Chairman David Baudler**, Managing Director – Grain, Cargill Agricultural Supply Chain North America, Cargill Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.
- **Immediate Past Chairman Gary Beachner**, President, Beachner Grain Inc., Parsons, Kan., who was elected as Executive Committee Chairman
- **NGFA President Randy Gordon**, Washington, D.C.



NGFA's 120th annual convention ended with a fireworks show on the beach at the Hotel del Coronado



The Hotel del Coronado during the CoBank Welcome Reception at NGFA's 120th annual convention

In closing address, Beachner says industry “difference makers” must boost free-market principles

By Sarah Gonzalez, Director of Communications and Digital Media

NGFA Chairman Gary Beachner said during his closing address at NGFA’s 120th annual convention that the state of the nation’s free-enterprise, market-based economy is under attack, and it is imperative for the grain, feed, processing and export industry to “make a difference” by pushing back when these principles are denigrated.

Beachner, the president and CEO of Beachner Grain Inc. in Parsons, Kan., made his remarks to more than 700 attendees at the Hotel del Coronado near San Diego, Calif.

He emphasized the Association's commitment to the principles of free markets, free enterprise and competition, especially in the face of prominent political resistance. "We look first and foremost to private-sector solutions, not government, to meet the challenges we face," he said. "In this regard, we may seem out of step with the times, given that an avowed 'democratic' socialist and a business tycoon who opposes free trade – and seemingly about everything else on which our democracy is based – seem to be dominating much of our nation's current political discourse."

However, he noted that NGFA and its members have proven the impact and difference they can make when working collectively through the association. Now, at the top of NGFA members' priorities is congressional passage of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement.

The TPP agreement for the first time brings more transparency and accountability for resolving sanitary and phytosanitary issues, and contains the NGFA's long-sought goal of a rapid-response mechanism for resolving disruptions in agricultural shipments if and when they do occur. TPP also contains the first-ever biotechnology section that requires countries to be transparent, accountable and science-based in their biotech-approval policies.

"Our industry – indeed all of us in agriculture – knows better than anyone about the economic growth and jobs made possible by trade agreements that reduce tariffs and eliminate trade barriers," Beachner said. "NGFA members need to mobilize to reach out to their members of Congress in a concerted effort to pass TPP this year."

Applying NGFA's proven systems to biotechnology

Beachner highlighted during his presentation the NGFA's world-class system of Trade Rules and Arbitration, which is the ultimate private-sector insurance policy in the marketplace and remains one of the NGFA's most-respected and valued membership services.

He presented the possibility of extending this proven form of private-sector dispute-resolution to other important commercial sectors, such as biotechnology.

"The challenge before us now is how reconcile the need for innovation while still protecting access to global markets," he said. "The U.S. producer can grow it. But if the bounty of American farmers can't be sold in a fungible, efficient market, what have we gained?"

As new genetic engineering technologies – like gene editing and cisgenics – encourage many more entrants into the genetic engineering field, "we need to work proactively and collaboratively with other sectors and governments around the world to avoid the same kind of disjointed and uncoordinated regulatory approaches that have plagued transgenic biotechnology and roiled markets," he said.

Working with regulators and educating the industry

Beachner emphasized NGFA's work in preventing government regulatory overreach that can stifle business efficiency, productivity and economic performance.

For example, the Association is working with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to prevent Dodd-Frank regulations from putting hedging strategies long used by the industry at risk. Additionally, the NGFA secured significant grain elevator exemptions in the Food and Drug Administration's

regulations implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act – the most far-reaching change in U.S. food safety laws since the 1930s.

NGFA’s education efforts include conducting regional [FSMA education seminars](#) hosted in cooperation with state feed regulatory agencies and state affiliate organizations across the country.

The NGFA also recently completed a round of [regional grain handling safety seminars](#) in partnership with state and regional Grain and Feed Associations.

Beachner said NGFA’s broad-based membership, grass-roots political strength and dedicated industry members make it an influential group full of difference makers that can meet the challenges that arise from today’s regulatory and political climate.

“My own experience is a testament to how inclusive the NGFA is and how eagerly it encourages involvement of all types and sizes of companies in our business at the highest levels of the Association,” he said. “It also helps explain why the NGFA, unlike many other trade associations, continues to grow its membership and enjoy a sound financial footing.”

There’s more:

Presentations from several speakers at the convention are available on the [NGFA website](#). Video interviews with Commissioner J. Christopher Giancarlo of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and Ivo Daalder, president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, also are available.



Past presidents and chairmen of NGFA at the Hotel del Coronado



Spouses of NGFA past presidents and chairmen at the Hotel del Coronado

NGFA provides input to CFTC on Proposed Algorithmic Trading Rules

By Todd Kemp, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Treasurer

Last December, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) for the first time published proposed rules under which it would oversee high-frequency traders and other automated trading entities. Known as Regulation AT -- or simply "Reg AT" -- the lengthy proposed rule, if implemented as written, would impose new registration, reporting, risk modeling and transparency requirements on futures market participants defined in the rule as engaging in "algorithmic trading." Entities captured under the rule's definition of algorithmic trading that are not already required to register with the commission would be categorized as "AT Persons" and become subject to registration as floor traders. The rule also would impose potentially costly new regulations on futures commission merchants (FCMs) and exchanges.

The NGFA on March 16 filed an official [statement](#) with the CFTC that expressed views and concerns of the grain, feed, processing and export industry. The comment letter is one element of a two-pronged approach in which the NGFA over the past year also has worked with the CME Group to more fully understand automated trading technologies and policies and their impacts on commercial grain hedgers.

In the comment letter, the primary concern expressed by NGFA centered on the definition of "algorithmic trading." The proposed rule attempts to differentiate between purely algorithm-driven trading and transactions that may involve an element of technology but with initial input by a so-called "natural person." However, the NGFA letter detailed several commonly used technologies and strategies employed by grain and oilseed purchasers and hedgers that could be ensnared by the rule. Examples provided in the NGFA letter included use of auto-spreaders, iceberg orders and software designed to enhance customer service to producers.

Upcoming NGFA Events

Aug. 2-5

**NGFA – Grain Journal
Safety Seminar**
Hilton, Omaha, Neb.

Sept. 11-12

Board of Directors Meeting
Ritz Carlton, Amelia
Island, Fla.

Dec. 11-13

**45th Annual Country
Elevator Conference and
Tradeshow**
Marriott Magnificent Mile,
Chicago, Ill.

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

The NGFA warned that if the algorithmic trading definition is applied in an overly broad way, virtually every commercial grain hedger could wrongly become ensnared in the algorithmic trading definition and be subjected to CFTC registration and related regulatory requirements.

While acknowledging the proliferation of algorithmic trading even in agricultural futures markets, the NGFA letter also expressed doubt about the need for another new class of registrant under the rules. Rather than mandate registration and its costly rules, the NGFA's statement suggested that exchanges are better equipped to manage and oversee algorithmic traders.

On other matters, the NGFA letter voiced support for risk modeling and reporting by algorithmic traders; and for full and transparent disclosure by exchanges of their market-maker and incentive programs.

As a final cautionary note, the NGFA statement warned the CFTC against imposing overly burdensome costs, especially on FCMs, through Reg AT. Regulatory costs under a multitude of Dodd-Frank rules already have driven up compliance costs, the NGFA noted, and additional CFTC-mandated costs adversely could affect the important services provided by FCMs to the grain, feed and processing industry.

Looking ahead:

The NGFA and other organizations, including the CME Group, the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) and the Futures Industry Association, previously had requested a 30-day extension of the comment period for Rule AT. The groups noted that the additional time would be beneficial in analyzing and responding to such a lengthy and complex proposal. However, the extension was not granted by the commission.

Informally, CFTC staff members have mentioned the possibility of a public roundtable to discuss issues raised by industry responses to Reg AT. If a roundtable is scheduled, the NGFA will look to participate actively and a reopening of the public comment period likely would occur at that time.

STB to conduct informal meetings with shippers, carriers on streamlining, expediting rail rate cases

By Randy Gordon, President

The federal Surface Transportation Board announced March 15 that it will conduct a series of informal *ex parte* meetings with shippers, carriers and other stakeholders during April to explore and discuss ideas on how it can streamline and expedite rail rate challenges filed with the agency.

The STB Reauthorization Act of 2015 required the STB to assess how procedures to expedite court litigation potentially could be applied to rail rate cases filed with the agency. In addition, the agency said

it plans to explore “innovative ways” to move stand-alone cost (SAC) rate cases forward so as to be compatible with the STB’s shortened timeframes for issuing SAC decisions under the new law.

SAC cases are the most complicated type of rate case that can be brought before the agency, requiring a shipper to construct a hypothetical, perfectly efficient railroad that would replace the shipper’s current carrier against which the rate complaint is filed, and simulate the competitive rate that would exist in a “contestable market” free from legal or financial barriers to entry and exit. It typically takes a shipper two to four years and millions of dollars to bring a SAC case. Further, given the number of origin-destination pairs that exist for agricultural shippers and receivers, a SAC test is unworkable for agricultural shippers.

“The (STB) believes that holding informal discussions with stakeholders in non-public meetings will serve as a productive preliminary action toward the initiation of a meaningful proceeding,” the agency said. STB Chairman Daniel Elliott added that, “these meetings will be a valuable opportunity for STB staff and interested parties to talk openly and candidly about our procedures for handling rate cases, and to brainstorm ideas for improving our processes and expediting case resolution.”

The NGFA plans to request time to meet with the STB’s staff in response to the agency’s invitation.

Under the STB Reauthorization Act, the STB is required to maintain one or more simplified and expedited methods for determining the reasonableness of challenged rail rates in cases in which a full stand-alone cost presentation is too costly, given the value of the case.

In addition, the law sets new deadlines for expediting cases filed with the STB challenging the reasonableness of rail rates. In a [separate decision \(EP 732\)](#) announced March 9, the STB issued final rules revising and significantly shortening its procedural schedule for large rail rate cases to conform with the statute. Among other things, the new procedural schedule requires that discovery be completed within 150 days after the filing of a rate challenge. Final briefs from both the complainant and the defendant party will be due within 335 days after the complaint is first filed, with the STB required to issue a final decision within 485 days after the case is first filed.

As part of the changes, the STB no longer will require parties involved in a rate case to file evidence on the existence of product and geographic competition. Also, reflecting the agency’s recent procedures in SAC cases, only the complainant will file opening and rebuttal evidence, and only the defendant will file reply evidence. Two additional deadlines are being added to the timeline for SAC cases: 1) final briefs will be due 30 days after the deadline for submitting rebuttal evidence; and 2) the STB will issue its decision on later than 180 days after the close of the evidentiary record (generally within 485 days after the case is first filed).

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announces agreements for U.S.-Cuba agriculture sectors

By Sarah Gonzalez, Director of Communications and Digital Media

President Barack Obama arrived in Havana, Cuba, on Monday, marking the first visit by a sitting U.S. president in almost 90 years. Obama met with Cuban President Raul Castro after laying out plans in December 2014 to chip away at the more than 50-year-old U.S. embargo.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who accompanied the president, met separately with Cuban Minister of Agriculture Gustavo Rodriguez Rollero.

While in Cuba, Vilsack announced that USDA will allow the 22 industry-funded Research and Promotion Programs and 18 Marketing Order organizations to conduct authorized research and information exchange activities with Cuba. These groups are responsible for creating bonds with consumers and businesses around the world in support of U.S. agriculture, and now will be able to engage in cooperative research and information exchanges with Cuba about agricultural productivity, food security and sustainable natural resource management, according to USDA.

The NGFA issued a statement saying it believes strongly in normalizing agricultural trade relations with Cuba, including arrangements under which Cuba can finance its purchases of U.S. agricultural products on normal commercial terms.

While the Association recognizes that full normalization of trade ultimately will require congressional action, these steps announced by Vilsack are another positive step forward along the journey to that ultimate destination.

Cuba imports about 80 percent of its food and represents a market worth about \$2 billion annually. In 2014, Cuba imported over \$2 billion in agricultural products including \$300 million from the United States. However, from 2014 to 2015, U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba fell 48 percent to \$148.9 million, the lowest since 2002, giving the United States just a 10 percent market share as Cuba's fourth largest agricultural supplier, behind the European Union, Brazil, and Argentina.

What your Congress is up to the week of March 21?

By Bobby Frederick, Director of Legislative Affairs and Public Policy

Welcome to March Madness in Washington: A U.S. president is visiting Cuba for the first time in nearly 90 years, the Senate is trying to figure out how to deal – or not deal – with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, a biotech federal preemption labeling fix failed to advance on the Senate floor last week, and the House is having trouble coming up with votes to pass a fiscal 2017 budget. The House Appropriations Committee also officially kicks off the spending bill season this week when it marks-up legislation to fund military construction and veterans benefit programs.

Quick look at Capitol Hill: The Senate is in recess for the next two weeks. As you read in Friday's *NGFA Supplement*, consideration of a legislative fix on biotech labeling was blocked in the Senate last week. As part of the Coalition for Safe and Affordable Food, NGFA will be pushing on a number of Senate offices to find a solution that will preempt Vermont's mandatory GMO labeling law, which is set to take effect on July 1.

Otherwise, Vermont's 600,000 people will have effectively set a national policy on biotech labeling. To put that in perspective, the average population of a single congressional district (of which there are 435) is 710,000 people. Further, the Vermont law exempts dairy products, revealing how inconsistent, "home state friendly" and confusing this law will be for consumers.

The House is in session this week before embarking on its own two-week "recess" (aka District Work Period). This week, the House will vote to extend the authorization for the Federal Aviation Administration, provide foreclosure relief to military members and reform the way the government evaluates potential mergers.

NGFA Lobbying Tip of the Month: Taking advantage of “recess” weeks.

Both the House and Senate will be “on recess” for two of the next three weeks. While the media will characterize this as Congress going on vacation, NGFA sees “recess” for what it actually is: a golden opportunity to engage members of Congress and their staffs away from the hustle of a busy time of hearings and floor action on Capitol Hill.

A member of Congress familiar with the NGFA once said: “Every second I’m in Washington, I’m losing votes. It’s not until I get back to my district that I gain them back.” With many members using “recess” to reconnect with the people who sent them to Washington, it makes sense for NGFA members to seize on these opportunities for some meetings with elected officials back home.

Not happy with your senator’s vote on the biotech labeling legislative fix that was blocked last week? Let him or her know about it. Think your member of Congress just introduced a bill that is the greatest thing since sliced bread? Give positive feedback.

Many NGFA members have deep, longstanding relationships with their Members of Congress. The congressional “recess” is a great opportunity to host lawmakers for tours of NGFA member facilities and operations, and to tell the story of the grain, feed, export and processing industry.

If you have a best advocacy practice you’d like to share or any questions about advocacy efforts during recess weeks, please contact Bobby Frederick at bfrederick@ngfa.org or 217-417-5400.

Election Calendar

March 22: Arizona Primary; Utah Caucuses; Idaho Democratic Presidential Caucus

Answer to 3/8/16 trivia question: Jimmy Carter was the only President of the United States not to have opened a baseball season by throwing out the ceremonial first pitch during his administration.

The winner was: Gary L. Friesen of Pride Ag Resources

Trivia

Who was the only other sitting President to visit CUBA and what modes of transportation did he take to get to there?

Please e-mail your answer to bfrederick@ngfa.org

NGFA continues FSMA regional seminars

More than 150 industry members attended the NGFA’s initial Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) regional seminar conducted in Modesto, Calif., on March 10.

The seminar was conducted in partnership with the California Grain and Feed Association and California Department of Food and Agriculture.

The NGFA is scheduling several regional seminars to educate industry members on the far-reaching new feed safety rules being promulgated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to implement FSMA. The seminars, which build upon NGFA's ongoing training and education programs for FSMA, are being conducted in cooperation with state feed regulatory agencies and state and regional associations affiliated with NGFA that will help industry members understand the changes, requirements and appropriate exemptions included in the FSMA rules.

NGFA Senior Vice President of Feed Services David Fairfield is leading the seminars with Feed Manufacturing and Technology Committee Chairman Matt Frederking of Ralco Nutrition.

Each session will cover FSMA major rules and implementation, and the new requirements for current good manufacturing practices (CGMPs) and preventive controls for animal food. The seminars will focus on the animal food rule and corresponding affected facilities.

Additional seminars already are scheduled during March through early May at three locations in Minnesota, Spokane, Wash., and Wisconsin Dells, Wis., with additional requests being received.

- **New Ulm, St. Cloud, and Rochester, Minn., on March 29-31:** "The FDA's New Animal Food Rule – How it Impacts You" (In cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association). To register, contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Commercial Feed Program at (651) 201-6027.
- **Spokane, Wash., on April 22** (In cooperation with the Pacific Northwest Grain and Feed Association). [Register here](#).
- **Wisconsin Dells, Wis., on May 11** (In cooperation with the Wisconsin Agri-Business Association and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture).

The NGFA has in-depth analyses of FDA's FSMA rules, as well as recorded webinars on the topic and ongoing education efforts. The 2015 Joint Feed/Pet Food Conference focused primarily on FSMA and FDA's implementation of the law. For more information about NGFA's educational resources on FSMA, click [here](#).

NGFA Country Elevator Committee to conduct congressional visits during June 14-15 meeting in Washington

By Max Fisher, Director of Economics and Government Relations

NGFA's Country Elevator Committee will meet this summer in Washington, D.C., for its traditional summer meeting and congressional visits on June 14-15.

All NGFA-affiliated association staff and their members have been invited to participate.

This is the committee's opportunity to advocate to Congress on the industry's behalf, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of the high-level legislative issues the industry confronts.

Congress depends on these visits to help inform them of the impact of proposed legislation. In fact, fly-in advocacy performed by the Country Elevator Committee, the Executive Committee and the

state/regional associations undoubtedly played a role in the successful legislative priorities accomplished in the last half of 2015.

Some of the legislative accomplishments of the past year include:

- Grain Standards Act Reauthorization bill became law – contained many reforms sought by the NGFA and North American Export Grain Association, including an official inspection waiver in emergency situations and when both buyer and seller agree;
- Funding in the appropriations bill for inland waterways and ports infrastructure exceeded expectations;
- Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization bill became law – contained numerous rail regulatory reforms pushed by the grain and feed industry;
- The federal preemption to GMO labeling bill passed the House;
- Trade Promotion Authority passed and laid the groundwork for agreement to be reached on the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade accord;
- A five-year highway bill became law and contained not only funding for road and bridge infrastructure that is critical for freight industries like grain and feed, but also a provision to ensure the Department of Transportation is more thoughtful regarding its financial responsibility (truck insurance) rulemaking; and
- Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) for beef and pork products was repealed.

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