

2003-04 A
Sub-District Creed Speaking CDE

1. In the fifth paragraph, you said "...that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life..." What are some of those traditions?

2. What are some of the achievements won by past generations of agriculturists, as stated in the first paragraph?

3. Why is the FFA Creed important to agriculture?

2003-04 A
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: To host a faculty breakfast.

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: To conduct a chapter SAE tour.

2003-04 A
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: To host a faculty breakfast.

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: To conduct a chapter SAE tour.

Questions:

1. Which officer is stationed at the Bust of Washington?
 - a. Answer--Treasurer
2. When would the President use three taps of the gavel?
 - a. Answer—To direct the members to stand or rise.
3. What officer is stationed at the shield of friendship?
 - a. Answer--Sentinel
4. What are the three key components of the FFA Mission?
 - a. Answer—premier leadership, personal growth and career success
5. The cross section of the ear of corn symbolizes?
 - a. Answer—Corn has historically served as the foundation crop of American agriculture. It is also a symbol of unity, as corn is grown in every state of the nation.

2003-04 A
Sub-District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

How do genetically modified crops change the management practices of the producer?

How important are foreign markets to Iowa agriculture?

How can a producer use the internet to improve his or her profit margin?

2003-04 A
Sub-District Parliamentary Procedure CDE

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: Purchase a computer for the classroom

Ability: To adjourn
Business: Plan a chapter trap shoot

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: Plant trees in the city park

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: Present the Food for America program to third grade students

Ability: To take from the table
Business: Rent land for a demonstration plot

1. What are two advantages of referring items to a committee? (43)
 - a. Answer--page #43 from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
2. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member who had voted on the losing side moved to reconsider? (64)
 - a. Answer--page #64 from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
3. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member moved to refer a matter to a committee, and the motion to refer received no second? (44)
 - a. Answer--page #44 from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
4. What is the advantage of the qualified motion to adjourn over the unqualified motion to adjourn for most business meetings? (26)
 - a. Answer--page #26 from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
5. As presiding officer, what would you do if a vote to table a motion resulted in a tie? (34)
 - a. Answer--page #34 from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"

2003-04 B
Sub-District Creed CDE

1. In the fourth paragraph you state "...and enough honest wealth to help make it so..."
What is honest wealth?
2. What are two ways progressive agriculturists can market the products of their toil?
3. Why are you representing your chapter in the Creed Speaking Career Development Event?

2003-04 B
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

- Ability: To amend a motion
Business: To conduct a chapter SAE tour.
- Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: Collect food for the local food pantry.

2003-04 B
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: To conduct a chapter SAE tour.

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: Collect food for the local food pantry.

1. What is unfinished business?
 - a. Answer—Motions postponed or tabled at previous meetings.
2. What are the official colors of the FFA?
 - a. Answer—National Blue and Corn Gold
3. Which officer is stationed at the Rising Sun?
 - a. Answer—President
4. In the FFA Manual, there are eleven points outlined in the FFA Code of Ethics, please name 7 of them.
 - a. Answer— Page 12 in the Official FFA Manual
5. What are the three key components of the FFA Mission?
 - a. Answer— premier leadership, personal growth and career success

2003-04 B
Sub-District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

Are genetically-altered foods safe for human consumption?

What marketing strategies can Iowa grain producers use to be more profitable?

How does the European economy affect Iowa?

2003-04 B
Sub-District Parliamentary Procedure CDE

Ability: To lay a motion on the table
Business: Plant trees in the city park

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: Present the Food for America program to third grade students

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: Donate \$500 to the Iowa FFA Foundation

Ability: To suspend the rules
Business: Sponsor a soup supper

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: Visit the local meat processing plant

1. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member offered an amendment to the motion to lay a motion on the table? (34)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
2. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member offered an amendment to the motion to suspend only a certain rule? (61)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
3. As the presiding officer, what would you do if a member made remarks on a motion before it was seconded? (15)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
4. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member began to discuss a motion to take from the table? (68)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
5. What are some methods by which a countable vote can be taken? (21)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"

2003-04 C
Sub-District Creed CDE

1. Assume the National FFA Organization has decided to add a sixth paragraph to the FFA Creed, and they have asked you to write it. What would you write about?

2. Is the FFA creed still relevant to today's agriculture and today's FFA members?

3. Who wrote the FFA Creed and when was it adopted?

2003-04 C
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: Collect food for the local food pantry.

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: Sponsor a record book scholarship program.

2003-04 C
Sub-District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To rise to a point of order
Business: Collect food for the local food pantry.

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: To sponsor a record book scholarship program.

1. What are two types of committee reports that can be presented at chapter meetings?
 - a. Answer—standing, special
2. What are the duties required of the Sentinel?
 - a. Answer—see page 16 in the 2001-2002 Official FFA Manual
3. Which officer is stationed by the flag? (21)
 - a. Answer—Reporter
4. What are the seven general duties expected of all officers? (14-15)
 - a. Answer— see page 14 in the 2001-2002 FFA Manual
5. What are the three components of the FFA Mission? (4)
 - a. Answer— premier leadership, personal growth and career success

2003-04 C
Sub-District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

Can biotechnology be utilized to make sustainable agriculture more attractive?

In what ways can producers become profitable using forward contracting?

How do concerns over bovine spongiform encephalopathy affect the United State's beef industry?

2003-04 C
Sub-District Parliamentary Procedure CDE

Ability: To amend a motion
Business: Assist with community snow removal

Ability: To appeal from the decision of the chair
Business: Visit the local meat processing plant

Ability: To adjourn
Business: Organize a tractor pull

Ability: To receive a motion to reconsider
Business: Build a greenhouse

Ability: To refer to a committee
Business: Invite a state officer to speak at a chapter meeting

1. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member moved to refer a matter to a committee, and the motion to refer received no second? (44)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
2. What is the advantage of the qualified motion to adjourn over the unqualified motion to adjourn for most business meetings? (26)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
3. As presiding officer, what would you do if a vote to table a motion resulted in a tie? (34)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
4. What are two types of committees? (43)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"
5. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member appealed from your decision? (53)
 - a. Answer--page # from 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure"

2003-04 Iowa FFA Ag Broadcasting/Journalism Career Development Event Radio Copy

Deer hunting rules proposed for 2003 are a step in the right direction, but additional changes are needed to increase the harvest of antlerless deer, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF) said in comments to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

“Farm Bureau members continue to voice their concern about crop and property damage from deer,” said Rick Robinson, IFBF director of environmental affairs.

The department should issue paid antlerless licenses in every county, not just in 20 select counties authorized during the 2002 season, he said.

Also, the DNR should authorize an additional 18,000 antlerless only licenses for resident hunters equally distributed among bow, gun, muzzleloader and special late season licensees.

Robinson said crop and property damage caused by deer continues to grow in Iowa.

A joint public survey by the DNR and Farm Bureau found an 8 percent increase in the number of landowners citing unacceptable damage being caused by deer. Ninety-five percent of the respondents had deer on their property with 74 percent citing an increase in the population since the last survey six years ago.

“The survey, along with recent harvest data, shows that the DNR needs to continue to increase hunting pressure, particularly of antlerless deer, in 2003,” said Robinson.

Corn, wheat prices up on Board of Trade

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO -- Corn and wheat futures leaped strongly higher Wednesday on the Chicago Board of Trade.

Soybean prices declined modestly.

Wheat for December delivery rose 14 1/2 cents to \$4.03 1/2 a bushel; December corn rose 7 3/4 cents to \$2.40 1/4 a bushel; December oats fell 1/2 cent to \$1.44 3/4 a bushel; January soybeans fell 5 3/4 cents to \$7.70 a bushel.

Beef futures moved lower while pork futures finished mixed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

December live cattle fell 1.50 cent to 95.32 cents a pound; January feeder cattle fell 1.50 cent to 95.32 cents a pound; December lean hogs fell .68 cent to 50.07 cents a pound; February frozen pork bellies rose .57 cent to 85.62 cents a pound.

Wildflowers: Weeds With a Press Agent

NEW MARKET, Va. (AP) -- A popular definition for weeds here in the agriculture-rich Shenandoah Valley is "anything growing where it isn't wanted." That catchall phrasing puts a lot of posies in the pot: Wild roses, for example. Chicory.

It comes as no surprise, then, that many wildflowers are grouped among the undesirables.

"Wildflowers," one disapproving wag wrote, "are weeds with a press agent." That writer must have been a farmer, or a frustrated gardener trying to grow crops in ground already occupied by volunteer blooms.

Garlic mustard, ragweed and purple loosestrife can quickly overrun otherwise productive plots if you let them get growing on you.

Most of the weeds posing as wildflowers are non-natives - invasive plants that crossed the Atlantic accidentally or intentionally with immigrants, says Jack Sanders, author of "The Secrets of Wildflowers: A Delightful Feast of Little Known Facts, Folklore and History."

"When they got here and the farmers opened fields from the woods, they (wildflowers) took over like wildfire," Sanders said. "They didn't have any natural enemies."

With the exceptions of milkweed and thistles, few native varieties were considered pests.

"Most were used by farmers for foods or flavorings," Sanders says.

Wildflowers enrich woodlots with their color; nourish insects and other foraging critters. Many wildflowers have medicinal value or are otherwise utilitarian - dye plants or plants used for making fabrics.

U.S. Ag Secretary Meets Iraqi Students

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) -- U.S. Agriculture Secretary Anne Veneman met with students and teachers Wednesday to see how to help Iraq's universities recover from war and economic sanctions under Saddam Hussein.

Veneman visited the sprawling complex of the Baghdad School of Agriculture in the Abu Ghraib neighborhood, a short distance from the prison complex where Saddam's regime tortured political opponents.

"Agriculture is very important to this country, as it is to our country, and we want to see it rebuilt," Veneman said after meeting the school's faculty. "The people of Iraq need to restore their way of life, and we are ready to help them be a part of the global system."

The school, founded in 1952 with the help of Arizona State University, had received two date palm trees brought from the United States. They were planted at the school's complex in the first years of operation.

The dean, Ahmed Al-Zubaidi, recounted the decay and neglect that had befallen his school under Saddam. The school suffers from shortages in all aspects of academic life, from textbooks to equipment and laboratory materials.

Farm Bureau: Put safety first during busy planting season

Farming ranks as one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States. With the arrival of another busy planting season, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF) urges both farmers and non-farmers to make safety a top priority this spring.

The numbers, according to the state's largest farm organization, highlight this call to action. Nearly 700 farmers are killed each year in work-related accidents and more than 120,000 ag workers suffer disabling injuries.

In addition, the National Center for Health Statistics reports that nearly 2,200 youth less than 20 years of age died of unintentional injuries on the farm between 1982 and 1996 – 107 in Iowa. Farm machinery-related accidents were the leading cause of death, accounting for 36 percent of the fatalities.

"Although it's impossible to prevent every injury and accident from occurring, there are ways to reduce their likelihood," says Aaron Putze, IFBF director of public relations. "The spring planting season provides an opportune time for farm families to take precautions and make farm safety a top priority."

A good place to start is by equipping farm tractors with roll-over protective structures, or ROPS. The National Safety Council estimates that more than half of all farm tractors do not feature this protective device. By installing ROPS and seat belts, approximately 350 lives could be saved annually.

Senate OKs Ban on 'Downed' Animals

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The Senate on Wednesday moved to ban the human consumption of "downed" animals, which are livestock too sick to stand or walk unassisted.

Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, who offered the amendment to an agriculture spending bill, said many of these animals are dying from infectious diseases and present a significant pathway for the spread of disease.

"My amendment prevents downed animals from being approved for consumption at our dinner tables," he said.

The Senate approved the measure by a voice vote. The House, in passing its version of the spending bill for the 2004 budget year, defeated a similar amendment on a 202-199 vote. The two chambers must negotiate a common stance on the issue when they meet to come up with a final bill.

The Agriculture Department estimates that 130,000 such downed animals are slaughtered every year. Farmers usually sell their sick and injured animals to meat renderers who grind them up into pet food and animal feed.

McKeon, Pena Named MLB Managers of Year

NEW YORK (AP) -- Jack McKeon was voted NL Manager of the Year after turning around Florida's season, and Tony Pena won the AL honor for keeping Kansas City in contention until the final week.

McKeon received 19 of 32 first-place votes and 116 points in balloting released Wednesday by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, becoming the first manager to win the award after taking over a team during the season.

Before this year, McKeon had never taken a team to the playoffs. With the Marlins, he won a World Series title on his first try.

"This is something that topped off all the good things that happened to us this year," he said.

Pena was an overwhelming choice for the AL award, getting 24 first-place votes and 130 points. Minnesota's Ron Gardenhire was second with four firsts and 44 points.

After the unexpected success this season, Pena thinks more will be expected from Kansas City next year.

USDA Projects Record Corn Production

USDA is projecting a record corn crop in the U.S. this year, at 10.278 billion bushels. Yields are seen at a record 143.2 bushels/acre. These totals are below average trade guesses, so analysts are expecting a neutral to friendly opening.

Soybean production is seen down 1% from the October report, at 2.45 billion bushels, near the average trade guess. Yields are pegged at 33.8 bu/acre.

All cotton production is forecast at 18.2 million bales, up 4% from October and 6% higher than last year's production. Yields are pegged at a record high 722 pounds per harvested acre.

Ukraine Refusal of Canadian Wheat Still a Mystery

WINNIPEG (Resource News) -- The recent refusal to unload a 55,000 metric ton shipload of Canadian milling wheat by the Ukraine's State Reserve, the country's largest state-run grain trader, continues to be shrouded in mystery, according to industry sources in Canada.

The 55,000 tonne shipload of Canadian wheat was refused due to poor quality, according to news reports from the Ukraine.

"The wheat shipment is believed to have been generated from Eastern Canada," according to an export source. "It wasn't sourced from western Canada, it was soft wheat from Eastern Canada."

The source said the refusal of the shipload was tied to the fact the soft wheat did not meet the minimum guaranteed protein requirement called for under terms of the contract that was agreed to.

"The seller of the wheat is responsible for making sure the protein content is satisfied...in this case it wasn't," the export source said.

"We have checked with our accredited exporters to see if the shipload of Canadian milling wheat had been sourced in Western Canada....it was not," Rheel Cenerini, media relations officer with the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) said. "All the wheat that has originated in Western Canada has so far been well received by our Ukrainian customers."

The exporter speculated that the refusal of the wheat by the Ukrainian outlet may have been tied to the temporary suspension of that country's feed wheat to Canada because of disease problems.

As its agricultural power grows, Brazil's line on free trade stiffens

LINS, Brazil (AP) -- With 3,500 workers slaughtering and processing an at-capacity 1,100 cows a day, you might think the owners of the Bertin Ltda. plant would have all the work they could handle.

Instead, the company would like to expand -- but is cramped by import restrictions that keep raw Brazilian beef out of U.S. grocery stores and restaurants.

"We are exporting our beef to all other major markets in the world," said Bertin sales manager Dominic MacDermot. "Why is it that we are being penalized by the Americans?"

Bertin is just one of many companies that are helping transform Brazil into a competitive agricultural giant, and that support its role as a hard-line leader in the push for better global trade terms for developing countries.

Key talks on forming a 34-nation Free Trade Area of the Americas will take place in Miami next week, but may go nowhere because of differences over trade rules on grain, fruit, beef and other farm products. Other nations want the United States to reduce or eliminate subsidies, quotas, tariffs and other barriers that protect American farmers.

Disputes over agriculture were key to the collapse of a round of world trade talks in Mexico in September. Brazil was Latin America's leader in a group of poorer nations that opposed the U.S. and European positions in that meeting.

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) -- The debate has been going on for decades, in legislatures, in county board rooms and in farm fields: Can the clouds be changed to make rain?

Hans Ahlness says yes. Dan Flor says no.

The National Research Council says it's time to find out.

The council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, said in a recent report that while clouds across the globe have been seeded for 60 years to increase rainfall and reduce hail, there is no convincing evidence it works.

The council is calling for a national research effort into weather modification -- cloud seeding now done in some form in 24 countries and 10 states, including North Dakota.

Ahlness, vice president of operations for Fargo-based Weather Modification Inc., which seeds clouds in a number of states and countries, doubts more research will ever end the debate, but he thinks it's a good start.

Storm clouds are seeded by sprinkling them with tiny crystals of silver iodide to promote moisture circulating in the tops of the clouds. The theory is that the developing ice crystals melt as they fall, producing rain.

A Denver cloud seeding operation was credited last year with increasing the amount of snow in one county with four ski areas.

Flor, who ranches near Marmarth in southwestern North Dakota's Slope County, sees no proof of it.

"There's no proof that it's ever produced any more rainfall. The hail insurance premiums don't reflect that it decreases hail," he said.

Closing Grain Market Report for Wednesday, 11/12/2003

Soybean futures at the Chicago Board of Trade settled mixed Wednesday with the front end of the market falling off its highs for the close.

Throughout the better part of the session, soybean, soymeal and soyoil futures each were sharply higher after rallying off of a weak close subsequent to the release of a slightly bullish crop report. But despite the market-friendly figures released in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly revision, the market lost its enthusiasm as the day's trade came to an end.

Rumors again circulated through the market of Chinese buyers purchasing a number of U.S. cargoes of soybeans. However, the rumored quantity ranged from five or six cargoes to as many as 14 to 17 cargoes.

Jan soybeans settled 5 3/4 cents lower at \$7.70 a bushel, and Nov beans were 8c lower at \$7.69 a bushel. Dec soymeal was unchanged at \$244.70 a short ton, and Dec soyoil ended 4 points higher at 26.04c a pound.

Corn futures on the Chicago Board of Trade ended the day holding onto solid gains, as supportive demand prospects rekindled bullish enthusiasm.

CBOT Dec corn settled 7 3/4 cents higher at \$2.40 1/4, Mar corn finished 7 1/4c higher at \$2.46 3/4, and May corn ended 7c higher at \$2.50 1/2 per bushel.

Speculative led buying fueled the advances, with prices returning to levels established during the late October, early November rally, traders said. A 75 million bushel increase in projected exports attributed to less Argentine competition provided the fundamental spark to ignite upward momentum.

Oat futures ended narrowly mixed, with Dec oats settling 1/2 cent lower at \$1.44 3/4, Mar finished 1/4c higher at \$1.48 1/2 and May ended unchanged at \$1.49 1/2.

Chicago Board of Trade wheat futures soared to new contract highs Wednesday amid large-scale fund buying, which was triggered after the U.S. Department of Agriculture forecast soft red winter wheat ending stocks at their lowest level since 1978-79.

This exacerbated recent worries over world supplies as the USDA also forecast lower world wheat ending stocks and France lowered its wheat carryout estimate. Concerns over this year's Argentine wheat crop have also grown.

CBOT Dec wheat pushed above its former contract high of \$3.99 per bushel set back in August to trade at a new high of \$4.05 Wednesday. CBOT Dec wheat ended up 14 1/2 cents at \$4.03 1/2.

Ahead of Wednesday's open, the USDA cut U.S. 2003-04 wheat carryout by 25 million bushels to 608 million, with much of that reduction coming from the soft red winter wheat class traded at the CBOT.

Chicago Board of Trade rough rice futures catapulted to three-month highs, with the most active Jan future gaining over 4% on the day.

Supportive supply and demand numbers from U.S. Department of Agriculture gave the futures a shot in the arm, returning speculative buyers to the market, traders said.

CBOT Nov rice ended 30 cents higher at \$7.89, Jan rice finished 32c higher at \$8.08, and Mar rice finished 27c higher at \$8.14 per hundredweight.

From the Green Revolution to the Gene Revolution

Nobel Peace Prize winner says biotechnology can help produce more food on existing land.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Norman Borlaug originally intended to pursue a career in forestry, but shifted gears to plant pathology after hearing an invigorating speech titled, "These Shifty Little Enemies That Destroy Our Food Crops."

Seventy years after enrolling at the University of Minnesota, the man who triggered The Green Revolution — which dramatically increased crop yields through the use of improved seeds and modern farming techniques — said his career change had more of an impact on forestry than he ever could have imagined.

"I've had the privilege of saving habitat — preserving more wildlife species from extinction — than had I stayed in forestry," said Borlaug in an Oct. 10, 2003, speech at the University of Minnesota titled "From the Green Revolution to the Gene Revolution: Our 21st Century Challenge."

He said the dramatic increases in crop productivity on existing cropland over the past 50 years saved 2.7 billion acres of land from coming under the plow — an area slightly larger than the entire United States.

And he predicted that what the Green Revolution did for the 20th century, the coming gene revolution can do for the 21st century — increase production with more environmentally friendly farming techniques to feed a growing, more affluent global population.

"We need to have better technology to increase the yields even in those areas where yields are already high," said Borlaug whose work in developing a high-yielding variety of wheat is credited with saving the lives of about 1 billion people.

Saving the World's Bananas

Biotechnology is giving this popular fruit a new chance at survival.

A steady supply of an important staple crop that is being threatened by disease may be assured, thanks, in part, to plant biotechnology.

Researchers from around the world are working to develop biotech bananas that are resistant to two of the fruit's worst enemies — black Sigatoka and Panama fungal diseases. On some banana plantations, black Sigatoka has reduced yields by 80 percent.¹

Researchers are working to map the entire genetic code of a wild banana from East Asia in the hopes it will reveal the genes that provide resistance to these devastating diseases.²

Once identified, researchers hope to copy the genes from the wild banana and insert them into edible varieties so they, too, can resist the diseases that have laid waste to a crop that is the fourth most important staple food in the developing world and a healthy snack for many in the developed world.³

This strategy has worked well for other crops. Researchers, for example, have successfully inserted a gene from a wild plant related to the potato into an edible potato — which is not yet commercially available — to make it completely resistant to the disease that triggered the [Irish potato famine](#) of the 1840s.

And a different plant biotech technique was used to successfully combat a virus that had decimated the [papaya](#) industry in Hawaii. Biotech papayas are now being commercially grown in the United States and the technique for growing them is now being transferred to several developing countries where papaya is a staple.

Plant Biotechnology Improves Wildlife Habitat, Water Quality

No-till conservation practices have increased 35 percent since biotech crops came on the market in 1996.

Biotechnology has helped spur further adoption of environmentally beneficial conservation tillage practices, according to a study released Oct. 23 by an Indiana-based nonprofit group whose mission is to promote soil and water quality.

The benefits range from improved habitat for birds such as pheasants and bobwhite quail to cleaner drinking water and a reduction in harmful greenhouse gases and fuel use.

“An analysis of surveys conducted since the introduction of herbicide-tolerant crops strongly supports the conclusion that these crops developed through plant biotechnology are facilitating the continued expansion of conservation tillage, especially no-till,” said the study titled “Conservation Tillage and Plant Biotechnology: How New Technologies Can Improve the Environment By Reducing the Need to Plow.”

The study was written by Richard Fawcett, an environmental specialist with *Farm Journal* magazine and a former agronomy professor at Iowa State University, and Dan Towery, a natural resource specialist with the national Conservation Technology Information Center, which has ties to Purdue University in Indiana. It said that since biotech crops were first commercially grown in the United States in 1996, no-till conservation acreage has grown by 35 percent.

“There is a clear association between sustainable tillage practices and biotech crops,” said the study, noting that nearly three-fourths of no-till soybean acres — and 86 percent of no-till cotton acres — were planted with biotech varieties.

Today: partly sunny in the morning then clearing. Blustery. High 10 to 15. Northwest wind 20 to 25 mph with gusts to around 40 mph decreasing to 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon. Wind chill readings 15 below to 25 below zero increasing to zero to 10 below zero in the afternoon.

Tonight: clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Colder. Low near zero. West wind 5 to 10 mph. Wind chill readings 5 below to 15 below zero.

Wednesday: partly sunny in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. Scattered flurries. High around 20. North wind 10 to 15 mph. Wind chill readings 10 below to 20 below zero in the morning.

Wednesday Night: partly cloudy. Low 5 to 10 above. North wind 5 to 10 mph shifting to the east after midnight. Wind chill readings zero to 10 below zero after midnight.

Thursday: cloudy in the morning then becoming partly sunny. Windy. High in the lower 20s. South wind 10 to 15 mph becoming west 20 to 30 mph with gusts to around 45 mph in the afternoon. Wind chill readings zero to 10 below zero.

Thursday Night: mostly clear. Windy. Low zero to 5 above.

Friday: partly sunny. High in the mid 20s.

Friday Night: mostly cloudy. Low near 15.

Saturday: cloudy. Chance of snow. High in the upper 20s. Precipitation chance 30 percent.

Saturday Night: partly cloudy. Chance of snow. Low near 15. Precipitation chance 30 percent.
Sunday Through Monday: partly cloudy. High in the mid 20s. Low near 15.

2004

District Creed Speaking CDE

1. What did you mean when you stated that you believe in “less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining”?
2. What are the “joys and discomforts of agricultural life” that have affected you in the past?
3. At what National FFA Convention was the FFA Creed adopted and what two conventions was the Creed revised?

Answer: Adopted at the 3rd, Revised at the 38th and 63rd.

2004

District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To refer to a committee

Business: To purchase a digital camera.

Ability: To table a motion

Business: To hold a golf tournament for scholarships.

2004

District Conduct of Meetings CDE

Ability: To refer to a committee
Business: To purchase a digital camera.

Ability: To table a motion
Business: To hold a golf tournament for scholarships.

Questions:

1. What four items should the Chapter Secretary have on hand at all meetings?

- Answer:*
- a. *FFA Chapter Books: Secretary, Treasurer, & Program of Activities Handbook or the computer software.*
 - b. *Copy of the POA including all standing and special committees.*
 - c. *Official FFA Manual and Student Handbook*
 - d. *Copy of the chapter constitution and bylaws.*

2. When would the President use two taps of the gavel?

Answer: To call the meeting to order.

3. What is the purpose of parliamentary procedure?

Answer: The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to promote efficient meetings to that business can be transacted in an orderly efficient manner.

4. What is the FFA Motto?

Answer: Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve

5. Name four of the six responsibilities of the Sentinel.

- Answer:*
- a. *Assist the president in maintaining order.*
 - b. *Keep the meeting room, chapter equipment and supplies in proper condition.*
 - c. *Welcome guests and visitors.*
 - d. *Keep the meeting room comfortable.*
 - e. *Take charge of candidates for degree ceremonies.*
 - f. *Assist with special features and refreshments.*

2004

District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

How will the recent Iowa Values Fund support of biotech companies affect Iowa agriculture and biotechnology in general?

How can Iowa livestock producers become more profitable?

How do concerns over Asian bird flu affect the United States' poultry industry?

2004

District Parliamentary Procedure CDE

- Ability:** To refer to a committee
Business: To present at the Lions Club meeting.
- Ability:** To suspend the rules
Business: To purchase a DVD player for the classroom.
- Ability:** Change the presiding officer
Business: To transplant prairie grass at the golf course.
- Ability:** To rise to the point of order
Business: To host the District Softball Tournament.
- Ability:** To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: To hold an antique tractor show.

1. As presiding officer, what would you do if one member objected when you asked for “general consent to carry out a stated procedure? (62)

Answer: Page 62 from 1994 Edition of “Mastering Parliamentary Procedure”

“Sometimes a rule is suspended by the Chair simply by asking for general consent for an action, rather than securing approval of the organization by the motion to suspend the rule. . . . If no one objects, this is equivalent to a unanimous vote in favor of suspending the rule. Any member who objects does so by addressing the Chair and stating, “I object.” If that occurs, the rule can be suspended only by a motion to suspend the rules.”

2. As presiding officer, what would you do if the point of order to which a member had risen was not appropriate? (64)

Answer: Page 56 from 1994 Edition of “Mastering Parliamentary Procedure”

“When a point of order is not clearly supported by an authority or is not considered appropriately raised, the Chair may rule, “The point of order is not sustained.” Reasons for this decision should be given. Any member not agreeing with this decision may Appeal from the Decision of the Chair.”

3. How many amendments can a single motion have on the floor at one time? (46)

Answer: Page 46 from 1994 Edition of “Mastering Parliamentary Procedure”

“A motion may not have more than two amendments on the floor at the same time.”

4. What are some valid reasons for the presiding officer to turn the Chair over to another person? (71)

Answer: Page 70 from 1994 Edition of “Mastering Parliamentary Procedure”

“Turning over the Chair to another presiding officer should be done only at the completion of an item of business. Exceptions are when the Chair wished to discuss a motion, or when it could become embarrassing to preside, or when the Chair must leave the meeting in a hurry.”

5. Name four countable voting methods. (21)

Answer: Page 21 from 1994 Edition of “Mastering Parliamentary Procedure”

“Countable voting methods include: raising hands, standing, marking paper ballots, calling the role of members, circulating a mechanical voting device”

2004 District Radio Broadcasting
Radio Copy

Basis for air rule not good, says Woteki

The major assumption used in recommending a hydrogen sulfide standard is “not good,” the Iowa House Agriculture Committee was told last week.

Dr. Catherine Woteki, dean of the college of agriculture at Iowa State University (ISU), told representatives that ISU makes recommendations based on the best science available.

In February 2002, an ISU-University of Iowa task force recommended that Iowa establish a hydrogen sulfide standard of 15 parts per billion (ppb) at separated locations.

“Since then, there is new information from monitoring studies,” Woteki said. She said it shows that the assumption in the task force report—that hydrogen sulfide and ammonia are present continuously at high levels—is not good.

“We now believe the recommendation that the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), which is part of the Centers for Disease Control, recommendation is more appropriate,” she said. The ATSDR develops standards to protect vulnerable groups.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is holding public hearings on setting a hydrogen sulfide standard at 15 ppb.

Values Fund board invests in biotech, farm ventures

The Iowa Values Fund board last week approved \$17.4 million in funding for nine Iowa companies that are working to design new biotech crops, create new markets for farmers and find a cure for cancer.

The Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) also announced it is awarding \$1.5 million to 19 companies located in all four corners of the state.

Altogether, these 28 new business projects will create and retain 1,740 jobs in Iowa and result in more than \$426 million in capital investment, said Gov. Tom Vilsack at a new conference Feb. 19.

“Today’s announcement represents the largest single day and month in the history of our state in terms of economic development,” Vilsack said.

He said the funding of these projects will help build a new Iowa economy that moves beyond commodity production and into value-added agriculture.

The Iowa Values Fund board awarded the largest amount of funding to New Link Genetics based in Ames. The pharmaceutical company, which received \$6 million, has developed vaccines that build the immune systems of cancer patients.

Clinical trials for the company's lung cancer vaccine are under way at the National Cancer Institute, and a trial for the breast cancer vaccine will begin this spring in Des Moines.

New Link Genetics will use the funds to undergo a \$186 million expansion, creating employment for 350 Iowans with an average wage of \$24.95 per hour.

DNR air quality rules come under fire

A proposed standard to measure hydrogen sulfide emissions from livestock operations received no support Feb. 17 at the first of five public hearings.

More than 100 people crowded into a classroom at the Iowa Lakes Community College in Spencer told state environmental officials their health effects standard of 15 parts per billion (ppb) averaged over one hour is unwarranted and lacks good science.

None of the Iowans commenting supported the rule.

Speakers said the rule will add to the burden of regulations on livestock producers and could help drive the industry elsewhere.

"If the governor wants to grow the economy, he's going to need a real big Iowa Values Fund to replace livestock," warned Jeff Rehder, a Hawarden cattle feeder and a fourth generation farmer.

Rehder and others told the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) the proposed standard lacks support of scientists. Iowa State University, which was part of an ISU-University of Iowa task force that reviewed various studies and recommended standards in February 2002, now disagrees with the 15 ppb that was recommended. ISU says 30 ppb should be the standard.

Under SF 2293, the DNR is to conduct a field study to determine if emissions from livestock operations are causing a material and verifiable impact on human health.

The DNR says it needs a standard of 15 ppb daily maximum one-hour average to serve as "a bar" for its studies.

Hydrogen sulfide standard threatens rural economy

In Sioux County, livestock is the kingpin driving the county's economy.

But bankers, agronomists, nutritionists and others supplying inputs to livestock producers feel threatened by a continuing stream of state environmental rules.

"We know of no one who has been hurt by hydrogen sulfide," said Gene Vermeer, 48, of Sioux Center who feeds about 900 head of cattle annually. Vermeer is president of the Sioux County Cattlemens Association.

He has non-farm neighbors and has never received a complaint about his operation.

But he's also proactive in treating animal manure by not spreading when wind direction might carry odor to someone's home and watching so that manure isn't spilled on roadways.

"We're afraid of the rules we'll be dealt to control it, that they'll shut us down, fine us or make it so we can't function," he said.

He believes the DNR is being unreasonable in selective use of studies on which its proposal is based and is not using good science.

A more reasonable standard for hydrogen sulfide would be 70 ppb for two weeks, he said.

Jury rules Tyson manipulated fed cattle markets

By Dale Johnson

Cattle producers won a major victory last week when a jury ruled that Tyson Foods, Inc. manipulated cash markets for fed cattle.

The federal jury awarded \$1.28 billion in the precedent-setting decision after finding in favor of cattlemen on seven issues in a national class action lawsuit (Pickett vs. IBP, Inc.). With interest and attorney fees, the impact could reach \$2 billion.

Tyson Foods, which purchased IBP in 2001 and renamed Tyson Fresh Meats, said the verdict will not impair its liquidity or affect its operations. The company, which is the largest cattle processor in the United States, said it will ask the judge to set aside the verdict, and will appeal if that motion is rejected.

David Domina of Omaha, the plaintiffs' lead counsel, said the verdict is important for cattle producers.

“It means the cattle business has a real chance to remain in the hands of independent producers and not fall solely to contract growers controlled by integrated slaughterhouse companies,” he said.

Antitrust experts and agricultural law specialists have called the case “the most important case in American agriculture in over 80 years.”

The lawsuit was filed in 1996 by six cattle producers—Henry Lee Pickett of Fitzpatrick, Ala., Mike Callicrate of St. Francis, Kan., Pat Goggins of Billings, Mont., Johnny Smith of Ft. Pierre, S.D., W.J. Rothwell Ranch Co. of Hyannis, Neb. and Chris Abbott of Hyannis, Neb.

They alleged that wrongful use of captive supplies of contracted cattle from Feb. 1, 1994 to Oct. 31, 2002. Captive supplies include cattle forward contracted, formula arrangements, packer-owned, packer-financed, packer-to-packer arrangements and other packer-controlled inventories, supplies that are owned by the packer more than 14 days prior to slaughter, according to a definition used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The producers claimed that IBP lined up captive supplies that could be used to decrease cattle demand and prices in the cash market. They said this penalized producers who did not want to commit forward or were not given similar marketing contracts. It also violated the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921, which was passed when five major packers reportedly controlled about two-thirds of the market.

Notices of the class action were mailed to 30,842 cattle producers and 4,234 feedyards, which were also represented in the case.

The trial began Jan. 12 in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama in Montgomery, Ala.

It included testimony from several experts, including economists, one of whom said the contracts had driven down cattle prices by 5.1 percent, or nearly \$2.1 billion, during the 7.5-year class action period.

USDA releases first estimate of 2004 corn, soybean crops

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) last week released its first forecast of supply, demand and prices for U.S. corn and soybeans during the 2004-2005 marketing year, which begins Sept. 1.

At its annual Agricultural Outlook Forum, the USDA projected 2004 U.S. corn production at 10.4 billion bushels, up from last year's record corn crop of 10.1 billion bushels.

The USDA said 2004 U.S. soybean production will total 2.93 billion bushels, up from 2.42 billion bushels in 2003.

Both corn and soybean acreage are expected to be larger than last year. The USDA said farmers will plant 80.5 million acres of corn in 2004, up from 78.7 million acres in 2003. Soybean acreage will total 74.5 million acres, up from last year's 73.4 million acres.

These acreage numbers will likely change when the USDA releases its prospective plantings report, which is based on farmer surveys, on March 31.

The USDA forecast ending stocks of U.S. corn at 821 million bushels during the 2004-2005 marketing year, down from the projected 2003-2004 ending stocks of 901 million bushels.

The growing U.S. ethanol industry is expected to use an additional 150 million bushels of corn from the 1.15 billion bushels used the previous year, the USDA said.

U.S. corn exports will also increase by 100 million bushels to 2.1 billion bushels in the 2004-2005 marketing year, the USDA said.

The USDA said total U.S. corn usage in the 2004-2005 marketing year, projected at 10.5 million bushels, will exceed production.

For soybeans, the USDA forecast 2004-2005 ending stocks at 210 million bushels, up from 125 million bushels in 2003-2004.

U.S. soybean exports are projected to increase by 160 million bushels in 2004-2005 to 1.06 billion bushels. The USDA expects overall U.S. soybean usage to total 2.85 billion bushels in 2004-2005, up from 2.48 billion in 2003-2004.

The USDA forecast 2004-2005 soybean prices at an average of \$5.90 per bushel, down from \$7.25 per bushel in 2003-2004. Average corn prices are projected at \$2.60 per bushel in 2004-2005, up from \$2.45 per bushel the previous year.

Cattle on feed

Cattle producers were hesitant to place more cattle on feed in January due to market uncertainty from the first U.S. case of mad cow disease, according to the USDA's Feb. 20 cattle-on-feed report.

The USDA said cattle placements in feedlots totaled 1.75 million head in January, down 16 percent from a year earlier. Trade analysts said the USDA's estimate represents the lowest number of placements since 1996.

Fed cattle marketings in January were also the smallest since 1996 at 1.78 million head, down 10 percent from 2003, the USDA said. Trade analysts were expecting an 11.5 percent reduction in marketings.

Cattle disappearance due to death loss or movement from feedlots into pastures totaled 94,000 head during January, up 25 percent from 2003, the USDA said.

The USDA estimated the number of cattle and calves on feed in feedlots with more than 1,000 head at 11.1 million head on Feb. 1, up 4 percent from a year earlier.

In Iowa, the number of cattle on feed in feedlots with more than 1,000 head totaled 380,000 head on Feb. 1, down 3 percent from last year, the USDA said.

Cattle placements in Iowa feedlots totaled 59,000 head in January, down 14 percent from 2003, the USDA said. Iowa fed cattle marketings totaled 47,000 head in January, down 35 percent from a year earlier.

Corn prices

The market for U.S. corn could expand in the 2004-2004 marketing year if supplies are available, said Darrell Good, a University of Illinois Extension marketing specialist.

“Without a significant increase in acreage, and a repeat of the record acreage yield of 2003, U.S. production in 2004 could easily fall short of the current and expected rate of consumption,” Good said.

“The current environment of small stocks and growing consumption could result in extremely volatile and generally high prices as the 2004 planting and growing season unfolds, and perhaps well into the 2004-2005 marketing year.”

Good said corn prices could move to levels not experienced since the mid-1990s if prices aren't derailed by widespread animal disease problems or similar events that undercut demand.

Soybean futures

Chicago Board of Trade soybean futures rallied on the morning of Feb. 20 to the highest level since May 1997 after worries about Brazil's soybean crop.

March soybean futures closed at \$8.93 per bushel on Feb. 20, after hitting \$8.98 per bushel.

On Feb. 19, Brazil reduced its forecast of the 2003-2004 soybean crop to 57.66 million metric tons (2.12 billion bushels), a record crop but well below the USDA's forecast of 61 million metric tons (2.24 billion bushels).

The reduction comes as U.S. soybean supplies are expected to fall to a 27-year low by Aug. 31.

Milk production

U.S. milk production increased in 2003 despite a small decline in the number of dairy cows, according to the USDA's milk production report released Feb. 17.

The USDA estimated 2003 U.S. milk production at 170.3 billion pounds, up 0.1 percent from 2002.

Production per cow averaged 18,749 pounds, up 141 pounds from 2002. The USDA said average annual milk production per cow has increased 16 percent since 1994.

The number of milk cows on U.S. farms averaged 9.08 million head in 2003, down 0.6 percent from 2002, the USDA said.

In Iowa, milk production totaled 3.78 million pounds in 2003, down 0.6 percent from 2002, the USDA said.

Production per Iowa cow averaged 18,806 pounds in 2003, up from 18,201 pounds in 2002. The number of milk cows in Iowa averaged 201,000 head in 2003, down from 209,000 head in 2002, the USDA said.

Mad cow strain

European scientists said last week they had found a new variation of mad cow disease in two Italian cattle.

The brains of cattle with the new variation look different from cows with the classic form of mad cow disease, called bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), the researchers said.

Iowa beef checkoff passes ag committee

An Iowa checkoff program on beef would re-start, if the federal mandatory checkoff is ended, under legislation approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee Feb. 18.

Senate File 2144 doesn't start a new checkoff, but recommences a checkoff program that Iowa cattlemen had in place prior to the federal mandatory checkoff, which started on Oct. 1, 1986. The legality of the national mandatory beef checkoff of \$1 per head, which funds beef demand-building education, research and promotion activities, is being challenged in court.

In June 2002, a U.S. District Court in South Dakota ruled that the beef checkoff was unconstitutional and violated producers' right to free speech.

A U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the ruling and, in October 2003, denied a rehearing.

Cattle would be assessed 50 cents per head with checkoff funds overseen by a producer-elected Iowa Beef Industry Council. The bill makes the checkoff mandatory in Iowa, but producers could request refunds.

The state checkoff would be in effect for four years before producers could petition for a reverse referendum.

A similar bill (HSB 603) is to be considered by the House Agriculture Committee this week.

Truck weights

Also introduced last week was a bill (HSB 651) to increase the maximum gross weight limit to 90,000 pounds for vehicles hauling grain between Sept. 1 and Nov. 14. Weight limits would be maintained on bridges.

The measure would eliminate yearly special proclamations by the governor to aid grain movement.

Changes in Iowa law providing tax incentives to gasoline dealers whose volume of ethanol-blended fuel is more than 60 percent of total volume has been approved by the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

The bill (SSB 3102) requires a minimum 10 percent blend after Jan. 1, 2007 and establishes a 20-cent per gallon excise tax after July 2007. It also provides for E85 ethanol-blended gasoline and creates an E85 storage tank incentive program.

The House of Representatives also passed a concurrent resolution urging federal funding for the Historic Preservation Fund and the Historic Barn Preservation Fund.

Measure establishes separation distances for rural homes from livestock

New homes in rural Iowa could be no closer than 3,000 feet to a livestock operation July 1 under a bill introduced in the Iowa Legislature last week.

The “setback” distance is designed to protect livestock operations from nuisance lawsuits over odor, noise and dust that may occur from a livestock operation.

Violations could result in fines of \$750 for the first offense and up to \$1,000 for each additional violation.

“The setback concept for new rural residences from livestock operations is similar to the setback concept for livestock operations from residences and other public areas,” explains Joe Johnson, IFBF director of state legislative affairs.

“A new residence built after July 1, 2004, would have to be a minimum of 3,000 feet, or a little over one-half mile, from any confinement or open feedlot under this bill.”

The only exception would be a written waiver signed by the owner of the new residence and the owner of the livestock operation. The waiver would be filed with the county recorder.

Voting delegates from 100 county Farm Bureaus adopted policy at the Iowa Farm Bureau’s annual meeting in December saying that producers need protection

Spurring the measure is a nuisance lawsuit filed in Madison County by a couple who built a new house across the road from a 300-head swine operation owned by a young farm couple.

Tryout to send Blakeman to Europe

BY LEE BARFKNECHT



WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Two years ago, when Omaha attorney Clete Blakeman became a full-time Big 12 football official, he did what many college officials do.



Clete Blakeman, a head linesman for the Big 12, will officiate pro games in Germany and Scotland.

He also applied for work in the NFL.

And like most other college officials, he went about his work without thinking much more about it.

So seeing an e-mail from the NFL in early January caused Blakeman some initial confusion.

But the former Nebraska quarterback went from puzzled to pleased upon reading these words:

"Congratulations. We've assigned you to an NFL Europe crew."

"I won't say this was totally out of the blue," Blakeman said Tuesday. "But it was pretty close.

"When it happened, all I could say was, 'Wow!' "

Adding to Blakeman's excitement about his three-game assignment in Germany and Scotland is his crew chief - Ed Hochuli, who refereed the Super Bowl on Feb. 1.

"He's really a good teacher," Blakeman said. "Guys have told me I'll learn more in two weeks with Ed than I probably have in the 17 years I've been doing this."

Blakeman's NFL tryout comes with the full blessing of Tim Millis, the Big 12's supervisor of officials who worked NFL games himself for 13 years.

"Tim told me, 'It's good for you and good for us,' " Blakeman said. "The more snaps you see, the better you get.

"I'm not looking to get out of the Big 12. I could stay in this league the rest of my career and enjoy the heck out of it. But this is a great experience and a chance to learn from other people."

Blakeman, 39, played football at Nebraska in the mid-1980s after an all-state career at Norfolk (Neb.) High. He was a Husker backup to quarterback Steve Taylor in 1986 and 1987, but he led NU to victories three times when Taylor was sidelined with injuries.

In 1988, while in law school, Blakeman began officiating. He joined a high school and small-college crew run by his father, Glen, a golf pro.

Four years ago, Blakeman earned part-time work in the Big 12, then drew a full schedule two years ago.

Blakeman said he doesn't know for sure, but assumes that an NFL supervisor scouted his work in the Big 12 last season and recommended him.

In NFL Europe, Blakeman will have the same job - head linesman - he does in Big 12 games.

The head linesman straddles the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped, oversees the chain gang, is the final arbiter of what down it is and helps with penalties such as encroachment, pass interference and intentional grounding.

Blakeman said he's not looking to become a referee, who leads an officiating crew.

"I enjoy being a head linesman," he said. "I like the look I get at the game and my responsibilities from that position."

In about two weeks, Blakeman will take part in a four-day clinic in Tampa, Fla., where all six NFL Europe teams hold training camp.

Then comes his first trip to Europe. He will officiate games May 1 in Frankfurt, Germany; May 2 in Berlin; and May 9 in Scotland. Other members of his crew are from Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida and Alabama.

Blakeman said Hochuli already has called him to welcome him to the crew, plus he sent a homework assignment - the NFL rule book.

"I'm trying to learn their rules," Blakeman said. "One of the biggest differences in the down-by-contact rule.

"I'm so used to seeing guys who go down on their own being called down that it's really going to be different. But this is going to be fun."

Stewart won't testify at stock fraud trial

NEW YORK (AP) - Martha Stewart will not take the stand in her own defense at her stock-fraud trial, her lawyer said Tuesday.

Martha Stewart

Attorney Robert Morvillo said Stewart's defense team would call just one witness - a former lawyer who attended an interview she gave to investigators in 2002. That witness is expected to testify Wednesday morning.

Lawyers for Stewart's former stockbroker, Peter Bacanovic, presented their last witness Tuesday and will rest their case today as well. Bacanovic spokesman Lou Colasuonno said Tuesday that the broker's defense team believes "the government hasn't made its case."

Earlier Tuesday, prosecutors aggressively attacked the credibility of a business manager for Stewart, who helped the defense Monday when she said Stewart's broker had mentioned a desire to unload Stewart's ImClone shares at \$60 or \$61.

DeLuca, who handles finances for Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia and for Stewart, also testified that Stewart billed her company for the luxurious vacation she took just after selling her ImClone Systems stock in 2001. DeLuca testified she was instructed to submit the vacation for reimbursement as a business expense.

While DeLuca did not specifically say Stewart ordered the reimbursement, she has said she reports directly to Stewart.

"I did not make an independent assessment," she said. "I'm given information, I submit it, and somebody else is the one who reviews it and rejects or accepts it."

Poultry Bans Stings Some U.S. Farmers

By T.A. BADGER

AP Business Writer

SAN ANTONIO (AP) - America's poultry growers are feeling increasing pain as more of the nation's trading partners ban imports of U.S. chickens, turkeys, eggs and other products following the discovery of a dangerous strain of avian flu in Texas.

On Tuesday, South Korea and the European Union banned all poultry imports from the United States, while Mexico banned most U.S. imports.

The three nations bought U.S. poultry meat products totaling \$340 million last year, nearly 20 percent of the \$1.8 billion worth of such exports by American producers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Earlier this month, Russia, China, Japan and other major importers imposed localized trade bans after a less potent form of bird flu turned up in Delaware and Pennsylvania.

"Every new media report is like throwing gasoline on a flame," said Toby Moore, a spokesman for the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council, a trade group based in Stone Mountain, Ga. "Even consumers here are asking, 'Is it safe to eat chicken?' It's not like there's arsenic in it."

Russia, which received nearly a quarter of all U.S. poultry meat exports in 2003, has so far limited its ban to Texas products, but it is weighing whether to widen it to the entire United States.

James Grimm, executive vice president of the Texas Poultry Federation, said his membership of about 1,200 growers has annual exports between \$150 million and \$200 million.

"It does leave a huge economic impact on us," he said of the export bans.

The poultry bans follow recent import bans by more than 50 countries on U.S. beef and cattle following the discovery of a single case of mad cow disease in Washington state in December.

Exports represent about 10 percent of the nation's \$40 billion beef industry.

Rising concern about chicken is also prompting some major growers who supply domestic markets to reassure Americans that their brands are not tainted by disease.

"At this time, no Tyson flocks have been diagnosed with (avian influenza), either in Texas or in the other areas of the U.S.," Tyson Foods, the nation's largest poultry producer, said Tuesday.

"Nonetheless, the companies in the commercial poultry industry are taking the finding very seriously and will adopt every possible measure to ensure the disease remains isolated."

The USDA said Monday that Texas agriculture officials took the most important steps to control a highly contagious strain of avian flu found last week in Gonzales County, about 60 miles east of San Antonio.

All 6,600 birds in the infected flock were quickly killed, and the Texas Animal Health Commission began sampling poultry on farms within a 10-mile radius of the farm where the disease was found. And two live-bird markets in Houston where the disease was also found have been shut down.

Carla Everett, a commission spokeswoman, said Tuesday that no new cases of avian flu have been found in the state.

The flu found in Texas is not the same strain that has killed at least 22 people in Asia, said Dr. Ron DeHaven of the USDA. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says it poses little threat to humans.

"We just got caught up in a triple-witching hour," Moore said. "Our cases came on the heels of the Asian outbreaks and bans flying everywhere, and countries just overreacted."

The Texas cases are the first U.S. incidence of bird flu considered "high-pathogenic," or very lethal to poultry, since 1983-84.

In that outbreak, which mainly affected Pennsylvania and Virginia, what looked to be a mild strain was not treated aggressively and it morphed into a form far more deadly to birds. It took about two years and \$70 million to wipe out the disease, with more than 20 million chickens killed in the process.

China Sets Import Rules on Biotech Crops

BEIJING (AP) - China has issued permanent rules on importing genetically modified soybeans and other crops, ending a longstanding trade dispute with the United States.

The Ministry of Agriculture said it was approving five genetically modified crops - soybeans and two kinds each of corn and cotton - and said suppliers could apply immediately for import permits.

The rules, announced Monday on the ministry's Web site, replace a series of temporary import regulations announced in early 2002 and repeatedly extended.

China issued the temporary rules after an earlier set of regulations prompted complaints by U.S. and other suppliers that they were unclear and could obstruct trade.

Most U.S. soybeans are genetically modified. American trade officials have visited Beijing repeatedly, lobbying the Chinese government to issue permanent regulations.

The issue was especially critical to American and other farmers because of China's booming market for farm goods.

In 2002, China imported 12.4 million tons of soybeans - equal to its entire domestic production.

From January to May last year, imports tripled from the same period the previous year.

China has promised to drop most barriers to imports of farm products under commitments to the World Trade Organization. Cheaper imports are expected to force wrenching changes in China's farming industries, but Beijing hopes lower prices and more competition will help drive economic development.

The new rules take effect April 21, the day after the last set of temporary import regulations expires.

The rules require foreign suppliers to apply to the Ministry of Agriculture for safety certificates and meet labeling guidelines. The ministry promised to issue permits within 20 days to those who qualify.

Researchers work

to solve pharma crops risks

By Tim Hoskins

Iowa Farmer Today

AMES — The future of pharma crops seems to be moving forward, despite challenges over the past couple years.

The main commercial challenge is how to contain plants raised for pharmaceutical purposes.

In the past couple years, there have been some contamination cases in the Midwest, which have raised questions if pharma crops should be grown in the region.

Despite the controversy, pharma crop research is continuing, says Stephen Howell, director of the Plant Sciences Institute at Iowa State University.

He thinks the future of pharma crops will shift to biological containment because physical containment is not enough.

“Someone will screw up somewhere, that is why you build biological containment into the system,” he says.

Organisms such as E. coli and yeast are routinely used in labs to produce proteins and enzymes needed to manufacture pharmaceuticals, Howell explains. However, the

See page 4: Pharma ...From page 1

E. coli and yeast used in labs are designed so they cannot survive outside a lab environment.

Biological containment includes the use of male sterile corn and different crops planted in a buffer that surrounds a pharma crop area.

Howell notes current male sterility in hybrid corn is fine. Most seed companies tend to select male sterile corn on yield.



Stephen Howell, director of the Plant Sciences Institute at Iowa State University, checks rice in a growth chamber. The rice might be grown in the Midwest as a buffer to pharma crops.

IFT photo by Tim Hoskins

However, pharma crop researchers might select for more male sterility and take the yield drag because they are not overly concerned about yields.

A Plant Sciences Institute researcher is working on using rice as a buffer crop around the pharma-crop field.

The idea in the rice research is to develop a variety that can be grown in the Midwest. There would be no risk of the corn pollen mixing with the rice variety.

Farmers who have permits to grow pharma crops are required to have a one-mile buffer around those crops.

That buffer was designed to provide zero risk of contamination the U.S. Food and Drug Administration set, Howell explains.

He says zero risk is considered impossible in the scientific community, although the risk might be very small.

Howell thinks the permits to grow pharma crops should be done on case-by-case basis, depending on the risk.

One low-risk crop would be growing corn altered to contain an enzyme that helps cystic fibrosis patients digest food. The protein occurs naturally in the human stomach and has no ill effects if consumed by people, he explains.

The USDA is deciding if a risk-based system should be used when issuing permits for pharma crops.

In this system, growing permits would be issued based on the level of risk the traits might spread to conventional plants.

Overall, Howell does not think much Iowa farmland will be used to produce pharma crops.

ISU has a machine to help remove the protein and do analysis. That machine can process pharma crops from only 640 acres per year, he explains.

“The limiting factor for pharma crops is the huge processing costs,” Howell says.

However, he thinks transgenic crops might have more potential for industrial uses instead of pharma crops.

When growing transgenic crops for pharmaceuticals is perfected, crops would be raised for specific industrial traits, Howell predicts.

Tim Sullivan, ISU industrial specialist, says some transgenic crops eventually will be used for industrial purposes.

He thinks transgenic crops are the “next step” in making products out of biomass.

The industry is waiting until questions about transgenic crops are settled before moving forward, Sullivan says.

**Iowans cultivate
trade with Cuba
By Tim Hoskins
Iowa Farmer Today**

JOHNSTON — Iowa corn growers might have more to gain from the possible opening of trade with Cuba than other states do.

Iowa ranks third after Arkansas and California as the state most likely to benefit from trade with Cuba, according to a study conducted for the Cuba Policy Foundation.

The report by Parr Rosson and Flynn Adcock of Texas A&M University estimates Iowa potentially could export \$70.6 million worth of ag commodities to the island country.

Don Mason, director of grower services for the Iowa Corn Growers Association (ICGA), can be credited for Iowa’s high standing.

Mason, who grew corn and soybeans and raised hogs in Sac County for 26 years, first traveled to Cuba in 1995.

That first trip was made while he was pursuing his MBA degree at Iowa State University. He was chosen to travel with some professors because of his knowledge of pork production and ability to speak Spanish.

Mason taught livestock production seminars to Cubans as they were rebuilding their livestock industry after the economy bottomed out.

The economy bottomed out in 1993 after the fall of the Soviet Union. Livestock production fell to only a fraction of what it was when the economy was supported by the Soviet Union.

Mason's next trip to Cuba was in 1998 when he helped deliver a small donation of corn from the Iowa Corn Promotion Board to a group of rabbit farmers near Havana.

DURING THIS trip, he met with Pedro Alvarez, chairman of Alimport, which is in charge of importing ag products into Cuba.

In 2000, the Iowa Corn Promotion Board helped host two groups of Cubans visiting Iowa. Included in the groups were some of Alvarez's chief assistants.

Also in 2000, the loosening of the trade embargo allowed for cash sales of food and ag products to Cuba.

In 2001, Cuba purchased about \$4.5 million worth of food from the United States after Hurricane Michelle hit the island nation, which is 90 miles away from Florida.

IN 2002, Mason traveled to Cuba for the first U.S. food trade show in Havana.

During the trade show, Mason put an ICGA pin on Cuban President Fidel Castro's suit jacket.

He also got a business card from Castro that he keeps on his desk.

In October 2003, Mason again traveled to Cuba to teach livestock producers how to use dry distillers grains.

He was able to use research contacts he has gathered over the years to present new ideas to Cuban farmers.

"Relationships are important in international trade," he said.

Although the relationships Mason has made in Cuba are business, he said both sides continue to nurture the relationship.

“Cubans are nice people,” he said. Most harbor no ill will toward the United States. They just don’t like the trade embargo, Mason noted.

He has worked with the Cubans because he thought it would be a good thing to get ahead of the curve with the country. He has expected the trade policy with Cuba to change.

International trade relationships take time to develop, Mason noted. Therefore, it is important to be in a country before it becomes a market.

During his visits with Cuban officials, Mason noticed the country is a natural market for the United States and Iowa. “What they need is what we have,” he said.

Pork is the favorite meat of Cubans, Mason explained. Corn and soybean meal are needed because they have little grain production to provide livestock feed.

He said the United States has a competitive advantage with selling food and ag products because freight costs to Cuba are \$15/ton less than other countries.

F.C. Stone, an Iowa company, was one of the first firms to do business with Cuba after the trade embargo was loosened, Mason said.

In 2002, the United States sold \$138 million worth of food and ag products to Cuba. That number increased to nearly \$250 million in 2003.

Mason predicted the Cuban market could total \$1 billion in sales with the United States getting at least \$500 million of that. He thinks the trade policy towards Cuba would gradually change either by allowing travel there or by allowing more sales.

Traveling to Cuba could increase ag exports there, Mason said. It is estimated lifting the travel restrictions would mean 2 million tourists a year would visit Cuba.

Loosening the trade embargo on other industries also could help, he noted. Mason observed many Cuban farmers using tractors and farm equipment made in the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

“It (the farm equipment) wasn’t very good when it was made. It certainly isn’t in good shape now after being used 20 to 30 years,” and spare parts are unavailable, he said.

Open trade with Cuba would not produce much competition with U.S. ag products, Mason said.

Cuban officials see the world sugar market to be too competitive for them and cannot support the Cuban economy, he explained.

Their citrus production has a different season than the U.S. season, so they might be able to import some products during the U.S. off-season.

Opening trade with Cuba would make some changes within the country, Mason said.

“I don’t think that Castro’s government can support 2 million tourists a year without making some changes.”

He argued opening trade would give the Cubans a different way to see life and bring changes, just like it did in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Mason said if something did not work in a few years when he tried different practices on his farm, he stopped doing it. He said the Cuban trade embargo has not worked for 41 years, and it might be time to try a different approach.

**Livestock shows
move to curb cheating**

**By Jeff DeYoung
Iowa Farmer Today**

WIOTA — Chance Will says he has witnessed cheating at livestock shows. It's almost commonplace at some of the larger shows, says the Cass County 4-Her.

"You can walk down the aisle and see someone with a needle, using something to calm down a wild steer," he says. "Or, you see someone with paint when you are not supposed to use it, or some places where

Story posted 7/3/03



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they had removed an ear tag.

"There's cheating everywhere, but hopefully it will stop here."

"Here" is Iowa, and dishonesty in the show ring was front and center last August when Iowa State Fair officials questioned whether the grand champion 4-H market steer was the same animal that was nose-printed at a December 2001 county fair weigh-in.

More questions arose regarding the grand champion and reserve champion 4-H market lambs.

County fair officials pulled hair for DNA testing when he weighed in show steers last December, says Will, who graduated this spring from Atlantic High School.

"Before, you had the non-removable tags, but this year they also took hair for DNA," he says. "After what happened at the State Fair last year, I think you are going to see more of that."

Will has shown cattle at county and state fairs, the Iowa Beef Expo, AkSarBen in Omaha, and the American Royal in Kansas City. He says cheating is more common at the larger shows.

"There aren't as many people to watch you at the larger shows. At the small shows, there are people around all the time to make sure people aren't cheating," he says.

"In the past, you could spend a lot of money on a club calf, and because there weren't very many high-quality animals at the show, it was easier to win.

"Now, people are spending a lot of money on calves, but everyone else has a top calf, too, so there is more pressure to do something against the rules."

Focusing on DNA testing, rather than ear tags, should curtail most of

the cheating in the state's show rings, says Denise Schwab, Iowa State University Extension 4-H youth development specialist in Ames.

Schwab says Iowa county fairs have taken measures to reduce, if not eliminate, cheating in the show ring.

"We have moved to the DNA and nose-print system, and we feel real confident that this will take care of it," she says.

"Texas has had three years of experience with the same system, so we could look at how that worked and what they had learned."

Nose prints and DNA samples were taken at the winter weigh-ins, Schwab says.

"We took them at the same time they were tagged, and those samples will be stored," she says. "At fair time, we will take another sample and compare it to make sure it matches what we got in December."

Exhibitors pay \$5 per head for the DNA sample. Schwab says the fee pays for the sample, supplies and ear tag.

"In the past it was a dollar or so, and we did have some complaints, but now that people understand why it had to be done, they seem willing to pay that expense," she says.

Will says 4-Hers in his county are given rule books and are told by fair officials to read them.

One big change, he says, is the rule allowing only immediate family members to fit cattle.

"You could see where it would be hard for someone to do the fitting when they don't have much experience," he says.

Will says some of his show calves have come from his family's cow/calf operation, while he has purchased others. He hopes to make a

career of raising and selling club calves while he works full time for A-1 Cattle Co. near Anita.

Showing livestock is still intended to be a family experience, Schwab says. The bulk of 4-H'ers and their parents are honest and obey the rules, she says.

"There are just a few, and what happened last year at the State Fair was a shock to all of us," Schwab says. "We need to provide a level playing field for everyone, and cheating is something we just won't tolerate."

Will says it was just a matter of time before questions were raised about livestock identity at the State Fair. In a way, it might have helped in the long run, says the Southwest Iowa youth.

"I think the DNA identification will solve the problem," he says. "Now, if someone thinks you cheated, you can pull the sample and see. There's just no way around the DNA."

Broadleaf crops designed to resist broadleaf herbicides

By Jeff DeYoung

Iowa Farmer Today

Story posted

1/30/04

You're out there in the corn field, putting down Banvil or some other herbicide to get rid of the weeds.

Right across the fenceline, you see a soybean field with its own weed pressure.

You think to yourself, "Wouldn't it be nice if I could just spray that field without having to change herbicides?"

If Don Weeks and his team have their way, those days might be just around the corner.

Weeks, a University of Nebraska biochemist, heads a research team that has designed broadleaf crops — such as soybeans, cotton and tobacco — that are resistant to Banvil and other herbicides that use dicamba.

"It's one of those things that you work on for quite a long time, but you won't know if it works until you actually see it," Weeks says.

"But, with the soybeans we have planted and sprayed with dicamba, they are fully resistant at 5 pounds per acre."

Weeks knew it would be easier to develop new broadleaf technology, rather than a new herbicide.

He says dicamba is considered environmentally friendly because it breaks down quickly and easily in the soil and on the plants.

The team used a microorganism they found in the soil at a dicamba manufacturing plant and used it to help identify and isolate the gene that deactivates the dicamba.

"Corn and wheat have an enzyme system that can break down

dicamba, so it would be very difficult to change the chemistry of the herbicide,” Weeks says. “We wanted to insert the gene that breaks down the dicamba into a broadleaf plant.”

Once the gene was isolated, using a tobacco plant at first, researchers inserted genes into the plant’s chromosomes.

Weeks says researchers discovered the gene also could be modified, targeting the chloroplast’s DNA in the plant.

Photosynthesis occurs in the chloroplast, Weeks explains.

He says chloroplast genes come from the maternal side of the plant, not through pollen. So, when the modified gene is inserted into the chloroplast DNA, it can’t be carried through pollen drift or insects.

Tobacco was used because it is easy to manipulate genetically. Weeks says the process takes a little longer with soybeans.

“But, once we have a plant and the gene in it, that trait is stable for several generations,” he says. “It’s just a matter of increasing the seed output.”

Weeks says soybean plants have been tested with equal success in greenhouses and fields.

Dicamba-resistant tomatoes also have been grown. Weeks adds researchers hope to use the same process cotton and canola.

He says tobacco plants have been sprayed with the equivalent of 25 lbs. of dicamba or 50 times the usual field application.

“Those plants have shown little or no damage, as did the soybean plants spraying 5 lbs. per acre,” Weeks says.

He says the university is patenting the new technology.

“Depending on the partners we have in the fold, my guess is that it

will be five to seven years before it might be commercially available,” Weeks says.

“It’s certainly exciting technology.”

Weeks says dicamba-resistant broadleaf plants are part of the new technology that should make farming easier.

“We are seeing plants that are resistant not only to herbicides but pests as well, such as SCN-resistant soybeans, and the technology that resists corn rootworm will make a big dent in the seed corn market,” he says.

“There are a lot of changes going on right now that are going to benefit farming and agriculture in this country.”

Pork groups may merge if checkoff unconstitutional

*Story posted
2/6/04*

**By Gene Lucht
Iowa Farmer Today**

DES MOINES — With unresolved court cases hanging over virtually every mandatory commodity checkoff program, pork producers are grappling with an uncertain future.

Leaders of the National Pork Producers Association (NPPC) and the National Pork Board told Iowa farmers last week they are discussing plans for forming a single organization if the Supreme Court rules the present mandatory pork checkoff program is unconstitutional.

“It is damn hard to plan for the future when we don’t know what the future is,” says Glen Keppy, a Davenport producer and NPPC chairman, referring to the uncertainty over possible court action.

The challenge, Keppy says, is if the court reaches a decision, the organizations might have as little time as 45 days to adapt to the ruling.

But, that ruling also might not come for two or three years.

Because of those questionable time lines, Pork Board and NPPC leaders are trying to put a plan in place so they could act quickly.

“I really do not know what the new organization would look like yet,” stresses Craig Christensen, head of the Pork Board.

The hope was for formation of a single pork organization, which would require voluntary transitional funding, Keppy and Christensen told voting delegates at the Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA) annual meeting Jan. 27.

“We’re having a discussion within the family about how to make things better,” Keppy says.

A joint committee comprising Pork Board and NPPC members is working on the contingency plan.

They presented a rough draft to delegates last week and likely will revise if it goes to the delegate bodies of the Pork Board and the NPPC during the National Pork Forum in Atlanta in March.

Then, a revised version might be available by World Pork Congress next summer.

The Pork Board collects the mandatory checkoff of 40 cents for each \$100 on the sale price on hogs.

Depending on hog prices, that amounts to \$35 million to \$50 million per year.

The money is used for research and promotional campaigns, such as the “Pork, the Other White Meat” campaign.

Checkoff money cannot be used for lobbying or political activity.

Iowa is one of several states with a law that would put a statewide voluntary checkoff program in place if the national mandatory checkoff ends.

However, as part of their proposal, national leaders are discussing a 5-cent reduction in the mandatory checkoff when voluntary producer payments to the organization exceed \$4.5 million annually.

"These are uncharted waters," Keppy says.

Meanwhile, voting delegates at last week's IPPA meeting also voted on other resolutions. They voted to:

- Urge Iowa producers to voluntarily discontinue the use of growth-promoting antibiotics in swine finishing rations;

- encourage contract growers to participate in the voluntary

producer-consent program at a rate of 5 cents per pig marketed (compared with 10 cents for noncontract growers) with a minimum contribution of \$100 annually;

- ▶ instruct Congress and the USDA to look into subsidized agriculture in Canada to ensure Canadians aren't selling hogs in the United States for less than in Canada;

- ▶ support enactment of a state law that would be comparable to the Federal Packers and Stockyards Act, to prohibit unfair practices by packers and processors;

- ▶ support state or federal legislation that might encourage incremental increases in the number of hogs marketed under competitive bidding conditions, as opposed to contract production; and

- ▶ reject a resolution that called for creation of a committee to determine whether IPPA should withdraw from the NPPC.

Although many members conceded they have had numerous differences with the NPPC on issues over the years, the final vote was overwhelmingly in favor of staying in the national organization.

Slaughterhouse disputes USDA claim BSE Holstein was lame

By Shannon Dininny

Associated Press Writer

MOSES LAKE, Wash. — Standing in front of their family business, the owners of a small slaughterhouse that killed a Holstein with the nation's first case of mad cow challenged the government's assertion the animal couldn't walk.

On the Web

USDA BSE information:

<http://www.usda.gov/BSE/>

The cow walked off a truck at Vern's Moses Lake Meat Co. and exhibited no signs of the central nervous disorder, said Tom Ellestad, who co-manages the plant.

The issue is important because USDA officials who monitor meat plants target "downer" cattle — animals that are injured or exhibit symptoms of disease — for testing of mad cow. Critics have argued that the agency also needs to test healthy animals as a safeguard against the brain-wasting illness, which can incubate for four or five years.

Ellestad said Wednesday there is a strong possibility the illness never would have been detected had his company not tested it as part of a voluntary program to check healthy animals for the disease.

"No one would have ever known," he said while flanked by his wife, sons, brother and parents. "Their premise for testing is false. The whole industry has been injured, and not just the meat industry — the livestock industry — because of shortcomings in USDA's policy."

Ed Loyd, a USDA spokesman, denied Ellestad's claims. The department has said a veterinarian at the plant tagged the cow as a downer.

"Our records clearly indicate that this animal was not able to walk," Loyd said.

Loyd said the department's inspector general's office is investigating how the case was handled.

The announcement came a day after a U.S. House committee challenged the USDA's claims that the cow was lame.

Ellestad earlier provided an affidavit of his claims to the watchdog group Government Accountability Project. That group provided the information to the U.S. House Government Reform Committee, which

Story posted
2/19/04

challenged the department's claims in a letter sent Tuesday to Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman.

Eating meat from animals with mad cow has been linked to a rare but fatal condition in people, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, although no cases have been traced to U.S. beef. More than 35 countries have banned imports of U.S. beef products.

Polk County

Tonight: cloudy. Low in the upper 20s. East wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday: mostly cloudy. High in the upper 30s. East wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday Night: partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Low in the mid 20s. Southeast wind 5 to 10 mph.

Thursday: mostly sunny. High in the mid 40s. South wind 10 to 15 mph.

Thursday Night: mostly clear. Low around 30. South wind 10 to 15 mph.

Friday Through Saturday: partly cloudy. High in the lower 50s. Low in the lower to mid 30s.

Saturday Night And Sunday: partly cloudy. Chance of rain. Low around 40. High in the mid 40s. Precipitation chance 40 percent.

Sunday Night: cloudy. Chance of rain and snow. Low around 30. Precipitation chance 40 percent.

Monday: cloudy. Chance of light rain and light snow. High in the lower 40s. Precipitation chance 30 percent.

Monday Night And Tuesday: partly cloudy. Low in the upper 20s. High in the lower 40s.

National Weather Service**Man In Critical Condition After Grain Elevator Explosion*****Employee Inside Elevator Shaft At Time Of Explosion***

Diane Kockler, Staff Writer

POSTED: 9:18 am CST February 24, 2004

UPDATED: 6:26 pm CST February 24, 2004

CLARION, Iowa --

Video



[Slideshow: See Damage](#)

[Video: Hear From Eyewitness](#)

[Video: Doctor On Scene Talks About Explosion](#)



One man was severely burned in a grain elevator explosion and fire in Clarion shortly after 7 a.m. Tuesday.

The manager of the North Central Co-op on Northwest 4th Avenue said an explosion blew off the head house on top of the elevator (pictured, left), where some machinery is kept. The elevator is located on the northwest side of town.

An employee was inside the elevator shaft at the time of the explosion. He suffered severe burns and was flown to an Iowa City hospital.

Dr. Tim Nagel, who helped the man when he first came out of the building, told NewsChannel 8 the worker is in critical condition. His name has not been released.

Nearby homes were evacuated for several hours, but the residents were allowed to return home Tuesday afternoon.

Wireless Internet service is down in town because the tower was on top of the elevator.

Emergency crews are searching for a cause.

Clarion is about 35 miles northeast of Fort Dodge.

Producers brace for bird flu effect

By **COLLEEN KRANTZ**

Register Staff Writer

02/22/2004

Iowa's turkey and egg producers are bracing for any economic fallout that could follow the recent discovery of a mild version of avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu, among several East Coast chicken flocks.

Already, 18 countries have temporarily banned the importation of poultry products from either the entire United States or from Delaware.

Iowa's poultry industry leaders are glad that since September the state has had a mandatory statewide surveillance program under which chickens and turkeys are tested for avian influenza before being shipped to market or moved. A similar nationwide program is being discussed.

"It's unfortunate that some will paint the whole country with one brush, because we have an active surveillance program and have tests to show we don't have it here in Iowa," said Dr. John Schiltz, the state veterinarian.

The avian flu found on the East Coast is not the same type of bird flu that has killed people in Asia.

"I do hear a lot of confusion among the public about it," Schiltz said. "We need to make sure they understand that this is not the strain of avian influenza they are battling in Asia. There's no evidence it causes problems in humans."

The problems in Asia and concerns about the possibility of the mild version of the virus mutating explain why Delaware officials are being more aggressive with this outbreak than with previous U.S. outbreaks, he said.

The chicken flocks at two Delaware farms where the virus was either confirmed or suspected have been destroyed. Numerous other measures have been implemented in Delaware to prevent the avian flu from spreading. The mild version of the virus has also been found at four live chicken markets in New Jersey, although those occurrences have yet to be confirmed by federal officials.

Some of the testing is being done at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

If no other new cases appear, the nation's trade partners will probably drop their temporary bans and the damage will be minimal, said Mark Fischer, a meat and livestock marketing manager with the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

"The whole thing could blow over in a few weeks," he said.

Iowa is the nation's leader in egg production, but only a small percentage of those eggs are exported, Fischer said.

Bird Flu 101

Worldwide, there are many strains of avian influenza virus that can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese and a variety of other birds.

Low pathogenic avian influenza is the type recently found on the East Coast.

- * The virus occurs in wild birds, and therefore is unlikely to be eradicated. Most years, the low pathogenic avian flu occurs in domestic poultry flocks somewhere in the United States, especially when the birds are raised outdoors. Iowa hasn't had a reported incident in recent years.

- * There is no evidence that it can harm humans.

High pathogenic avian influenza is the type infecting birds and some people in Asia.

- * It is much more likely to kill domestic poultry and can sicken or kill people.

- * The United States has not had an incidence of high pathogenic avian influenza for 20 years.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Exports are more important to Iowa's turkey producers. Mexico, which has a ban in place for Delaware-produced poultry products, is a big importer of U.S. turkey.

"Avian influenza makes us all nervous," said Don Daufeldt, who raises 125,000 turkeys annually on his rural West Liberty farm.

Poultry facilities in some other parts of the country are more closely located than they are in Iowa, Daufeldt said. With the farms more spread out in Iowa, transmission of illnesses becomes less likely.

Iowa also does not have any of the "live markets" for poultry that are believed to have played a role in the East Coast outbreaks, said Dr. Darrell Trampel, a poultry diagnostician at Iowa State University. He isn't aware of any poultry or poultry products coming into Iowa from Delaware or New Jersey.

The avian flu situation serves as a reminder to strictly follow measures designed to protect flocks from illness, said Jefferson resident Mark Friedow, who works with Sparboe Foods, the nation's fifth-largest egg producer.

"We are careful about who enters any of our farms, and that's just good business because people and trucks and materials can transmit certain viruses," Friedow said. "But when you have situations like in Delaware you relook at your bio-security and make sure it's at its highest level."

Reporter Colleen Krantz can be reached at (515) 284-8147 or ckrantz@dmreg.com

Pickles remains disqualified

Board won't reverse decision on Pickles

By JERRY PERKINS

Register Farm Editor

02/21/2004

The Iowa State Fair Board refused Friday to reverse its decision that disqualified Pickles as the grand champion 4-H steer at the 2002 fair.

The board's unanimous decision came after a half-hour closed meeting in which the board discussed legal issues in the case.

Pickles was disqualified two days after winning the grand champion ribbon in 2002. The decision came after questions were raised about the steer's identity.

An expert told the board that nose prints showed the steer was not the same one that owner Jenna Sievers of New Liberty weighed in for Scott County 4-H officials eight months earlier.

Sievers, now 17, and her parents asked for and were granted an emergency order that allowed Pickles to be sold at the fair's Sale of Champions. The \$12,800 that Sievers would have received for Pickles has been held in escrow until the identity dispute is resolved.

Last November, state Administrative Law Judge John Priester ruled that the Fair Board had incorrectly disqualified Pickles and sent the case back to the board for further review.

The board last week heard the legal arguments about whether Pickles really is Pickles.

After the vote to reverse Priester's ruling, Fair Board member Robert Schlutz of Columbus Junction said the board based its decision on three factors:

* Nose prints taken by Scott County 4-H officials on Dec. 28, 2001, of a steer the Sievers claim was Pickles did not match nose prints taken after Pickles won.

* There was "a very unreasonable" discrepancy in weight registered by the steer between the December weigh-in and at a livestock show 30 days later.

* The Sievers family did not explain why the nose prints were different and offered no evidence that they were from the same steer.

"This was an easy decision, as far as we're concerned," Schlutz said.

Fair Board President C.W. Thomas of Guthrie Center said the board wants to "keep the playing field level" for all livestock contestants.

The Pickles saga

Aug. 14, 2002: Pickles, a 1,295-pound crossbred steer, is chosen as the grand champion 4-H market steer at the Iowa State Fair.

Aug. 16, 2002: State Fair officials question the steer's identity, take the championship title away, and try to keep Pickles from the fair's Sale of Champions.

Aug. 17, 2002: Pickles' owners obtain an emergency court order forcing the fair to allow Pickles to be sold. The proceeds from the auction, \$12,800, are being held in escrow.

October 2003: A state administrative law judge hears testimony concerning the identity dispute.

Nov. 26, 2003: The administrative law judge rules Pickles was incorrectly disqualified. The case goes back to the State Fair Board.

Feb. 20, 2004: The State Fair Board disregards the judge's report and upholds its 2002 decision. Pickles' owners now are weighing a possible court challenge.

In October 2002, two months after the controversy erupted, the board enacted requirements that all 4-H market beef, sheep and swine entries must have hair samples taken for DNA testing and that beef and sheep entries must have nose prints taken, too.

If nose prints do not match, the board will require that the hair samples be tested for DNA to make sure the animals weighed in are the same animals shown at the fair.

State Sen. Bryan Sievers, Jenna's father, said the family has not decided whether to appeal the board's decision in district court.

"When I told Jenna about the board's decision, she said, "Hey, let's keep fighting this, Dad," " Sievers said. "We're frustrated with the Fair Board's decision to crush the spirits of a 17-year-old."

Sievers said his daughter is focused on her role as a starting guard for Durant High School's girls' basketball team, which plays tonight in a tournament game against West Liberty.

Cyclones seek review of controversial plays

Morgan asks Big 12 to look into four plays in Saturday Iowa State loss to Kansas.

By **ANDREW LOGUE**
Register Staff Writer
02/24/2004

Ames, Ia. - Iowa State coach Wayne Morgan has asked the Big 12 Conference to review at least four plays from Saturday's overtime basketball loss at Kansas.

"There were a number of plays in that game that were things that I had not seen before," Morgan said.

Among the moments Morgan wants examined from the Jayhawks' 90-89 victory:

- * A game-tying three-pointer from Kansas' Keith Langford that forced overtime.
- * A first-half sequence during which the Jayhawks made a three-point basket when the Cyclones should have been shooting a free throw.
- * A disputed out-of-bounds call that gave Kansas possession of the ball.
- * An intentional foul call on forward Damion Staple just before halftime.

Iowa State was clinging to a 72-69 lead when Langford made his only three-pointer with 28 seconds left in regulation.

Morgan said videotape showed the shot should be ruled a two-point basket, because Langford's foot was on the three-point line.

The Cyclones could have asked officials for a review, but Morgan and his staff did not question the play at that time.

"We were on the other end of the floor so we didn't see it and we didn't protest it," Morgan said. "Our kids who were playing defense, none of them said "Hey that's a two. Challenge it." "

Talk immediately after the game focused on an error that led to a three-point basket late in the first half.

Iowa State center Jared Homan was supposed to shoot two free throws after being fouled in the act of shooting. When Homan missed his first attempt, Kansas rebounded and raced down the floor.

J.R. Giddens converted a shot from the left wing that put the Jayhawks ahead, 37-24.

Once referees were made aware of the error, Homan was allowed to shoot another free throw. Giddens' three-pointer, however, still counted.

Cyclones' athletic director Bruce Van De Velde said Monday that he has filed a complaint with the Big 12.

"I'm expecting some type of action," Van De Velde said.

The conference's head of officials, though, said what he knew as of late Monday indicated referees acted properly - although he has yet to review the tape.

Dale Kelley, Big 12 coordinator of men's basketball officials, said referees likely followed proper procedure by allowing Kansas' basket to stand because of the "second live ball" rule. That rule states that once a ball is considered "live" again after the play in question, the outcome can't be changed.

"The officials handled their aspect properly, as far as I know right now," Kelley said.

Iowa State officials said videotape showed no Cyclone player had reached the baseline to inbound the ball, though, when referees stopped play to discuss the situation.

Senior guard Jake Sullivan ended up with the ball near the free-throw line .

"We came down the court and we said, 'What are you doing? He had two free throws,'" Morgan said. "They said, 'It's your ball, but we've got to count the three points.'" "

If the officials had recognized the mistake, they could've blown the whistle at any time. Kelley also said the official scorekeeper and timer, assigned by Kansas, should have helped prevent the mistake.

Doug Beene, who has worked Kansas games for 41 years, said Monday he simply followed officials' instructions.

When a referee showed two fingers - indicating two free throws - Beene said he flashed two fingers back toward the official.

"I'm mimicking what he's doing," Beene said. "I have no idea what happened. At the point the rebound happened, the guy next to me and I said, "We must have screwed up." "

Beene said he thought Homan had been fouled in the act of shooting, but figured the officials' ruling had changed.

He wrote down in the scorebook that Homan would get two free throws, then erased it after Giddens' basket.

"My reaction was, it must have been a one-and-one, because the ball was in play," Beene said. "The refs a lot of times correct each other."

Rick Wulkow, who officiated college basketball for 17 seasons, said referees usually talk with scorekeepers before games and ask them to help keep track of free throws.

"I've heard officials tell them, "If we're supposed to be shooting, get on the horn and let us know about it," " said Wulkow, an assistant executive director for the Iowa High School Athletic Association. "Nobody gave them any help on this thing."

Beene said he did not stop the game because he thought officials had changed their minds.

"My view is sometimes blocked by the trailing official," Beene said. "I was just unaware if he did signal."

Van De Velde was not at the game, but said videotape showed official Tom O'Neill indicating Homan would be awarded two shots after being fouled.

Kelley said the result of Iowa State's inquiry could be nothing - if it's ruled officials handled calls correctly - all the way to suspension. The outcome of the game, however, cannot be changed.

Decisions on the calls by officials O'Neill, Danny Hooker and Paul Janssen will be made by Kelley, with the Big 12 commissioner and head of basketball operations.

Janssen, who lives in Orange City, declined to comment Monday when contacted by The Register.

"Everything can go through the conference," Janssen said.

Van De Velde said he expected to receive a response from the Big 12 within 48 hours.

Morgan said he hopes filing a complaint will prevent similar situations.

"The result of the game is not going to change," Morgan said. "We lost the game. But in terms of looking at that and trying to correct it in the future and possibly notifying all the other officials this type of thing can happen, that'll be done."

Assistant sports editor Bryce Miller contributed to this article.

Cyclones grounded by uninvited guest

Iowa State hit the highway Saturday night when an uninvited guest forced the basketball team's charter plane to be grounded in Lawrence, Kan.

The Cyclones were supposed to fly home after a 90-89 overtime loss at Kansas, but representatives from Fina-Air reported seeing an unknown person board the plane while they were outside fueling.

"This guy just kind of helped himself on a plane," said Lloyd Hetrick, owner of Hetrick Air Services.

Authorities arrested Gary Dean Patterson, 28, and charged him with two counts of criminal trespassing and one count of disorderly conduct.

Lawrence police used dogs to search the plane but didn't find anything suspicious, Sgt. Paul Fellers said. The man had tried to board another plane at the airport, but crew members stopped him before he made it inside.

When the team bus arrived at Lawrence Municipal Airport, coaches decided to drive instead.

"I didn't mind," freshman guard Will Blalock said. "As long as we got out of there."

January cow numbers up

Written: 2004-02-19 00:00:00.0

Posted at: 19-FEB-04 08:14 a.m. CDT

By: Rich Posson

Ag-Financial Strategies

- USDA 20 states milk production for Jan down .9 % at 12.502, total down 1.3% at 14.388.
- Per cow production was up .3% at 1620 vs 1615 last year.
 - * Cow number was up 5000 head compared to Dec 03 and down 92000 head from a year ago.
- Milk futures rock on.
- Milk to feed spot market continues to be pinched by higher grain futures.

Milk - The production report for Jan milk was bullish and futures have reacted accordingly. There were revisions for 2003 where almost every month for per cow, national, total and cow numbers were revised higher. This was bearish and Dec revision was fair amount. But trade as unlikely to be concerned of more milk and cattle found for last year as after all it was last year. 2003 finished up .1% for production of milk.

Cow number for Jan was up for first time in 11 months. We have been warning of a cyclical turn around of cow number. One month is not enough evidence but could be said to be a clue. Some day cattle will come across the border into US but not today. Some day mega expansion will be underway at the producer level but not today.

Milk futures maintain recent up trend for price and volatility expanded going into report as the buy side was willing to entertain a what if a bullish report. But could the trade now adopt the buy the rumor sell the news opinion?

Technical analysis such could occur short term in that market is quite overbought both short term and intermediate term. Watch 15.30 in the Sep.

Risk management analysis suggests such could occur as producer now has profitable price to sell, hedge.

Models suggest an intermediate L2 top that occurs 4 to 6 times per year as due this month. Offers at least a short term correction into an intermediate bottom say for Mar.

Cheese - Barrel CME cheese price traded between 1.25 and 1.30 for a few weeks and these two price levels are close to technical retracement levels of the decline from last year's high into Nov bottom of last year. Now that barrel has traded above the 1.30 level and models as not quite ready to call an intermediate top and cheese is lagging news, news speculation and futures trade. We assume chance for trade to around 1.36 which is another retracement level and a favorite scale level from our research. Seems as though market will want to take a rest shortly.

Butter -

Models for butter are now watchful for a L2 minor intermediate top and chance for short term correction. Support is 1.58 but that seem too low at this point. Models forecast chance for still higher price following the L2 top with trade as likely higher into Apr for first chance for a L1 major intermediate top and another opportunity for a peak of the now extended 3 yr cycle. Market at the CME was just shy of our first target level of 1.70 but we have a target range of 1.70 to 2.20.

Feed cost - Models forecast a brief but sharp sell off in soymeal and corn futures and into an intermediate bottom, L2. This should provide another buy opportunity but strategy becomes more important the higher any market moves. The cheap prices are long past but there is plenty of potential for higher to much higher if not record high prices in the future. Much depends upon weather as for how high. Model farm maintain 100% coverage for corn for 2004 and 50% for 2005. Rolled out of Mar.

Stock market - An intermediate model bottom was put in place this month for the DOW stock index and trend is forecast as higher into late Mar for a major intermediate top and first chance for a peak of 3 yr and 6 yr cycles. Expect a Fed based rate hike by summer. And if a large decline in stock market then will likely learn of dairy demand slippage by yearend. Realize election years offer supporting probability to market and Eco but no one has ever been able to convince us that high probability is the same as a "sure thing", so we will stick with cycles and the models.

Heading toward \$10 beans

Written: 2004-02-24 00:00:00.0

Posted at: 24-FEB-04 01:28 p.m. CDT

By: Craig Coberly

Well, my associates and friends the "bean counters" were correct. Beans pushed through important resistance and they're off on a major rally. Tight US supplies, strong world demand and decreasing S. American crop estimates make up the ingredients of what could be a very, very strong rally.

CORN (May) – Corn, at the moment, is the laggard. It continues to struggle, seemingly being pulled grudgingly higher by beans and wheat. This fits with my analysis that corn is close to a rather important top.

Marginally higher prices are certainly possible, even likely, in the short-term. But, before the next major rally, I look for corn to spend a few weeks moving sideways to lower. I emphasize that I don't expect prices to collapse; I expect sideways to lower.

BEANS (May) – With the push through resistance, the price pattern for beans quickly unfolded into one that supports an outlook for much higher prices in the short-term. For the fundamental reasons everyone is aware of, this could be a major rally.

The question on everyone's mind is – "How high can beans go?" We'll track the rally as it develops and make modifications and revisions as necessary, but as I see things right now, I suspect we'll be close to \$10.00 before we seriously start looking for topping signals.

WS_GR711

So.St.Paul, MN Tue Feb 24, 2004 USDA Market News

Chicago Board of Trade Futures Settlements

| | Settlement | Contract Change | High/Low High | Low |
|--------|------------|--------------------|------------------|----------|
| Wheat: | | | | |
| Mar 04 | 3.92 1/2 | up 1 1/2 | 4.21 1/2 | 3.01 1/2 |
| May 04 | 3.98 1/2 | up 1/2 | 4.13 | 3.02 |
| Jul 04 | 3.96 1/2 | up 1 3/4 | 4.00 1/2 | 2.96 |
| Sep 04 | 3.98 | up 1 | 4.01 | 3.24 1/2 |
| Dec 04 | 4.06 | up 2 | 4.10 | 3.21 1/2 |
| Mar 05 | 4.07 1/2 | up 1 1/2 | 4.08 | 3.38 |
| May 05 | 3.92 | up 1 | 3.92 | 3.69 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Corn: | | | | |
| Mar 04 | 2.90 3/4 | up 3 1/2 | 2.91 | 2.19 |
| May 04 | 2.97 3/4 | up 3 3/4 | 2.98 | 2.24 1/2 |
| Jul 04 | 3.00 1/4 | up 3 3/4 | 3.00 1/2 | 2.27 3/4 |
| Sep 04 | 2.94 1/2 | up 3 3/4 | 2.95 | 2.32 1/2 |
| Dec 04 | 2.92 1/4 | up 4 | 2.92 1/2 | 2.32 1/2 |
| Mar 05 | 2.94 | up 3 1/2 | 2.94 1/4 | 2.39 1/2 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Oats: | | | | |
| Mar 04 | 1.51 3/4 | up 1/2 | 1.64 3/4 | 1.31 |
| May 04 | 1.57 1/4 | up 1 1/2 | 1.64 | 1.24 1/2 |
| Jul 04 | 1.60 3/4 | up 3/4 | 1.67 | 1.47 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Soybeans: | | | | |
| Mar 04 | 9.29 3/4 | up 18 1/4 | 9.31 | 5.08 |
| May 04 | 9.26 | up 19 | 9.27 | 6.25 |
| Jul 04 | 9.07 1/2 | up 19 1/2 | 9.08 1/2 | 5.20 |
| Aug 04 | 8.66 1/2 | up 20 | 8.67 | 5.59 |
| Sep 04 | 7.97 | up 21 | 7.98 | 6.70 |
| Nov 04 | 7.27 | up 22 | 7.29 | 4.95 1/4 |
| Jan 05 | 7.26 1/2 | up 22 1/2 | 7.27 | 5.72 |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| Soybean Meal: | | | | |
| Mar 04 | 280.30 | up 5.60 | 280.50 | 152.50 |
| May 04 | 280.30 | up 5.70 | 280.80 | 153.00 |
| Jul 04 | 274.80 | up 6.30 | 275.50 | 152.50 |
| Dec 04 | 213.70 | up 8.60 | 214.50 | 150.00 |

Soybean Oil:

| | | | | |
|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Mar 04 | 34.10 | up .44 | 34.12 | 19.00 |
| May 04 | 33.92 | up .37 | 34.00 | 19.01 |
| Jul 04 | 33.52 | up .47 | 33.58 | 19.01 |
| Dec 04 | 28.42 | up .60 | 28.65 | 18.98 |

Source: USDA Market News Service, So.St.Paul, MN
651/451-1565

www.ams.usda.gov/LSMNPubs/index.htm/WS_GR711.txt

Certain precision farming practices are worth it, study finds

Adoption of precision farming technologies and practices is on the rise, particularly on large farms, among full-time farmers, and among farmers who are younger than 35, according to a new survey of Ohio farmers. While farmers are increasingly turning to georeferenced grid soil sampling, variable rate fertilizer applications, yield monitors and lightbars, they have been slower to embrace variable rate seeding, application of pesticides, and GPS or sensor-directed spraying. Overall, however, most farmers say the precision farming technology they use pays off.

The benefits of adopting precision agriculture technologies far exceed the cost of using them, according to survey. The survey, which analyzed the adoption and use of 18 precision farming components, found that over half of the 1,250 respondents believed their overall precision farming system was useful enough to justify the costs.

Respondents also said precision farming components, such as variable rate application of lime, phosphorus and potassium, georeferenced soil sampling and satellite field photography were beneficial to their farming operations.

Marvin Batte, the Ohio State University professor and agricultural economist who led the study, said that such results might aid in the decisions of those farmers looking to adopt such technologies.

"The survey shows how others who adopted this technology are evaluating it and what individual components they are finding most useful," said Batte. "It also helps growers make careful decisions on what technology to adopt so that it fits their operational needs. Not every precision agriculture component is for every farmer."

Following is a rundown of some of the more interesting findings:

- Precision farming adoption has increased. About 30% of farmers surveyed had adopted at least one precision farming component, about eight percentage points higher than the percentage found in a similar 1999 study.
- The average adopter uses about four precision farming components.
- The most widely adopted precision agriculture components were georeferenced grid soil sampling, variable rate application of lime, phosphorus and potassium, and the use of a yield monitor, all of which increased in use by an average of 7 to 12% since the 1999 study.
- More than 5% of respondents have adopted some form of guidance system. In 1999, such technology was virtually unheard of and unattainable, says Batte. "You can say that such technology is being adopted rather briskly," he says.
- The rate of adoption and use of precision agriculture technologies is dependent upon a variety of characteristics, such as the size of the farm, age of the farmer and his/her employment status.
 - Larger farms lead the way in use and adoption of precision agriculture.
 - For variable rate application of P, K and lime, which usually is priced on a per acre basis, adoption rates are just over twice as large for the largest farms relative to the smallest sales group.
 - For technologies such as yield monitor, GPS receiver, and precision guidance where a fixed investment is required, adoption is 10 to 15 times greater for the largest than for the smallest farms.
- Fifty-eight percent of those surveyed who have adopted one or more precision agriculture components have gross farm sales of over \$500,000 a year.
- Farmers age 35 or younger tend to adopt such technologies much more quickly than those in older age groups. Nearly 50% of young farmers have adopted precision agriculture technologies, as opposed to 31% of those aged 50-65.
- Farmers who work full-time on their farm are more likely to adopt precision agriculture technologies than those farmers who work part-time on the farm or work full-time at another job.
- Some technologies that farmers have not embraced include variable rate seeding, variable rate application of pesticides and GPS or sensor-directed spot spraying of pesticides and herbicides.

Batte speculates the rate of adoption of such components is slow because not enough information is available to make recommendations or accurately apply applications for maximum benefit.

Batte will discuss the results of the survey at the Conservation Tillage and Technology

Conference in Ada, Ohio February 27.

The Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference will be held Feb. 26-27. It is being sponsored by Ohio State University Extension, Northwest Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Districts, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency and the Ohio No-Till Council.

For a copy of the agenda, registration information, or directions to Ohio Northern University, visit <http://hancock.osu.edu/ag/ctc/ctc.htm> **02/16/2004 01:09 p.m.CDT**

Weather Market Commentary

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Weather forecasts for Argentina will be considered as more bearish today, as a rainfall threat has entered the forecast picture for this coming Saturday. From now through Friday it still looks like a stressful situation for the Argentine soybean crop, with dry weather and warming temperatures; highs could be 90 degrees or higher in significant parts of their growing region from tomorrow through Saturday. There then will be a rainfall threat on Saturday as a piece of energy aloft moves quickly through the region. Probably southern parts of the growing region will be favored for the rains, which could be locally heavy but will most likely not be the widespread soaker than is needed. Temperatures will return to pretty warm/hot levels for the first half of next week, with another rainfall threat for Argentina still indicated for about March 4. There is no change in the weather outlook for Brazil. It still looks like we will be deep into the month of March before a good rain event again arrives for southern growing areas of Brazil, and by that time the crop will probably be beyond the stage of getting much benefit from the rain. Northern growing areas of Brazil again saw locally heavy (unwanted) rains the past 24 hours. It will stay pretty wet there through tomorrow, then improved harvesting weather is still indicated for later this week and into next week.