



News & Views

A Monthly Publication Dedicated to the Feed, Seed, Grain and Farm Supply Industries of Wisconsin

PLANT THE SEED AND NOURISH IT TO GROW

Greetings from the Wisconsin Agri-Service Association! In most parts of the state, the spring planting season is off and running, as farmers across all regions are planting the seeds for another growing season. With proper fertilization, pest control, and a lot of help from Mother Nature, those tiny seeds will miraculously grow into a healthy, bountiful crop.

In a way, the work being done at WASA is a lot like the work of those farmers. While Mother Nature may not play the same role for us as she does for farmers, planting the right "seeds" and nurturing them for growth are of the utmost importance for your association as well. The seeds? The seeds are you, our great members. The nurturing is the role your association must play in building programs, communicating important information, and working behind the scenes on your behalf to make each of our members the best you can be. And I am proud to say, the nurturing process is well on its way.

After several weeks of analyzing who WASA is and who we really need to be, on May 4th, your Board of Directors approved a couple of changes to your association's Mission Statement. While the words themselves may seem minor, we believe the message being relayed is huge. The new Mission Statement is much the same as before with the insertion of a few words (key changes are underlined). The new Mission Statement is:

The mission of WASA is to represent and provide programs and services that advance, protect, and develop the common interests of the feed, grain, seed, and farm supply industries of Wisconsin, and to bring all segments together as a strong, unified voice.

It is no secret that WASA represents a vast diversity of members, and while it is still important that we assist you with all of your individual

questions and needs dealing with regulations, legislation, etc..., our real purpose is to be a unifying agent to work on behalf of all of you. Whether big or small, coop or private, grain, feed, seed, or farm supply, we are here to promote your common interests and unify your voice. We are here to help do the things you can't do on your own. We believe this new Mission Statement better defines our role and responsibilities to you – our members.

Another piece of nurturing that is needed is keeping WASA fiscally sound. Unfortunately, this means that for the first time since 2006, we are forced to make some increases in your membership investment rates. With all the consolidations and buy outs in our industry, the decreased number of members along with the increased costs of doing business has forced us to make some increases. The thing we think you will like is the fact that we have restructured our investment rates solely based on the amount of business you do as a company, not on the number of branch facilities you have. Beginning June 1st, you can now list every one of your branch facilities in our directory and get all the benefits of membership at all of your facilities for no additional cost. The new investment forms for the 2011-12 year will be mailed out within a few days, so please be sure to send us all of your branch facility information.

A third piece of nurturing needed is to put together the best programs we possibly can to serve our members. We believe we have done that with changes we are making to our Safety Loss Control Program. Before, the basic safety program bought you a day or two of employee training and facility inspections. In the future, the basic program will buy you your choice from a menu of options, and you can choose which of those menu options are the most important to you. Another great thing is that if you want more than a day or two of personal service, you can pre-book and pre-pay as many days as you like at a reduced rate from before. Beginning the first few days of June, our Safety

Program Director, Jim Nolte, will begin calling all of our current Loss Control Program members to begin setting up appointments and informing you of the exciting improvements to our program (including the option of getting your manuals on CD).

Yes my friends, a great growing season is in front of us, and I can't wait to see what great things WASA can do for our membership in the months to come. In the meantime, if you have thoughts or suggestions that you would like to share about WASA, do not hesitate to contact me or a member of the Board of Directors. We would love to hear your opinions. I know you have heard me say this before, but I truly believe you have a lot to be proud of at WASA, and we promise to do our very best to make it even better in the future.

Sincerely,
Tom Bressner
Interim Executive Director

WASA GOLF "FORE" SCHOLARSHIP OUTING – MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Be sure to mark your calendar and reserve the date for the 2011 Scholarship Golf Outing! This year's event will be held on Thursday, September 8th at The Oaks Golf Course near Cottage Grove. The outing is always a great time (even if your score isn't that great), and it raises a lot of money for our scholarship program. Information will be sent out as the date draws closer, but be sure to save the date. We will look forward to seeing you there.

TREATED SEED – KEEP IT OUT OF THE FOOD CHAIN

As we said in the opening of this newsletter, the planting time of year is exciting. However, if you are in the grain or feed business, the season following planting can be a real challenge. It is the time of year that a farmer might accidentally mix his leftover seed into a load of grain being delivered to the grain elevator or feed mill, not remembering that the seed is treated with pesticides. For your liability sake as well as the security of the entire food chain, please train all your employees to do a visual check of all grain delivered to your elevator or feed mill this time of year, and make sure that no treated seed makes it into your receiving pit. If you see a load of grain that contains treated seed, reject the load, explain to

him why it is being rejected, and have him contact his seed specialist on what he needs to do to properly dispose of the contaminated grain.

JAPAN'S TRAGEDY – HOW DID IT AFFECT AGRICULTURE?

We are all aware of the triple tragedy that hit Japan back in March, when the earthquake, tsunami, and the problems with the Fukushima nuclear plant occurred, but what we didn't hear is what affects these disasters had on agriculture in Japan.

Philip Seng, president and CEO of the U.S. Meat Export Federation spent 10 days in Japan in April. Following are some of his comments.

About 175 ports in Japan were damaged by the tsunami. "These ports were for fishing and unloading grain including feed that was produced in other parts of Japan, unloaded and then trucked or railed." The 20 kilometer area of the nuclear evacuation region included 4,000 cattle, 30,000 hogs and 600,000 chickens. They all had to be abandoned. "This area produced 16% of the pork in Japan, 12% of the beef, 20% of the poultry, and 17% of the dairy."

FEDERAL BUDGET AND HOW USDA FAIRED

The final budget deal for the remainder of Fiscal year 2011, worked out between Congress and the White House does not spare agriculture in the cuts made to federal programs. While education, labor, and health programs took the hardest hits in funding, reductions in USDA programs were also significant. Reductions included:

- Farm Credit Programs were reduced by \$433 billion.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service was cut from \$1.008 billion to \$890 million. This will effect funding in a number of conservation programs.
- Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Programs were reduced by \$855 million in funding.
- Foreign Food Assistance was reduced by \$273 million
- Research funding for the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute

of Food and Agriculture was cut by \$190 million.

- The Agricultural Marketing Service funding was reduced by \$11 million.
- All together, overall cuts at USDA are \$3 billion below the prior year, down by about 13%.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

The Mississippi River has the third largest drainage basin of any river in the world behind the Amazon and the Congo.

During the flood of 1927, the Mississippi reached 3 million cubic feet per second at the mouth of the Arkansas River. A couple of weeks ago, the Mississippi peaked at 1.6 million cubic feet per second, when the Corps of Engineers opened some of the 10 ton gates of the Morganza Spillway in order to lower the crest heading toward Baton Rouge and New Orleans. These gates were built north of Baton Rouge after the 1927 flood. Many of the barge loading stations on the Mississippi and its tributaries are now underwater, or sandbagged and closed. It is expected that the river transportation system will not return to normal until some time well after wheat harvest.

JUST FOR FUN – DID YOU KNOW?

In this world of information overload, we are often overwhelmed with documents and “stuff” that we need to analyze, file and remember. Well just once, wouldn’t it be nice to get some interesting information that is totally useless and no one expects you to remember? Well this is your lucky day. Following is a list of interesting, but totally useless facts. Enjoy... and then forget about it.

If you took the original standard “Slinky” and stretched it out, it would measure 87 feet.

How valuable is the penny you found laying on the ground? If it takes just one second to pick it up, a person could make \$36 per hour just picking up pennies.

The Luxor Hotel (shaped like an Egyptian Pyramid) in Las Vegas is 36 stories tall and has the sides of the Pyramid covered with glass. If each piece of

glass was laid side by side on the ground, the glass would cover more than 13 acres of space.

The Nike “swoosh” was designed by University of Oregon student Carolyn Davidson in 1964, four years after the company was founded (originally called Blue Ribbon Sports). Ms. Davidson was paid \$35 for her design.

One cord of wood can make 7.5 million toothpicks.

Pittsburgh is the only city where all of their professional sports teams have the same colors (Black and gold – Pirates, Steelers, Penguins).

It would take 11 Empire State Buildings, stacked one on top of the other, to measure the Gulf of Mexico at its deepest point.

And finally, if you have three quarters, four dimes, and four pennies, you have \$1.19. You also have the largest amount of money in coins without being able to make change for a dollar.

WASA DIRECTORY UPDATE

The following updates should be made to your WASA Directory.

New:

Koffman Industries, LLC
3861 W 111th Ave.
Westminster, CO 80031
Phone: (612) 360-1711

Lansing Trading Group
10975 Benson Drive
Suite 400
Overland Park, KS 66224
Phone: (913) 748-3083

Changes are indicated in bold. As additions or changes are made throughout the year, we will notify you here in *WASA N & V*.

Welcome aboard new members!