

Cold, Drought Tolerant Sorghum One Step Closer to Fields

Recent research funded by the Sorghum Checkoff is getting closer to finding cold and drought tolerant sorghum hybrids that could help increase sorghum yields in the future.

World Food Prize winner, Gebisa Ejeta of Purdue University, is working on a project to develop a commercialized cold tolerant sorghum hybrid. The objective of this project is to transfer cold tolerant genes from a Chinese cold tolerant line to selected sorghum inbred lines to create a hybrid that can germinate in cooler soil. This will give sorghum farmers a longer growing season and potentially increased yields.

South Dakota sorghum farmer, Jerry VanZee, said although research takes time, the Sorghum Checkoff's work with researchers is helping to bring improved genetics and better management tools to growers.

"Cold tolerance is a big step for sorghum," VanZee said. "Here in South Dakota, as well as some southern states, we could get a lot more out of our sorghum if we could plant a few weeks earlier. This type of research will help make sorghum more profitable to grow." Researchers have found two new genetic

crosses that will be advanced rapidly into early generations of what could be a commercialized cold tolerant sorghum hybrid. All of the advanced generations from the summer 2010 research have been planted at the Puerto Rico winter nursery for the winter months.

Gloria Burow of USDA-ARS in Lubbock, Texas, is also involved in cold tolerant sorghum hybrid research. While Burow and Ejeta are working independently on two different populations of sorghum, they are seeing similar results and comparing those results to better understand the genetics.

"It is encouraging that we have identified the same specific region of the chromosome as that of Dr. Ejeta's group to study cold tolerance in sorghum," Burow said. "There is open communication between us and the researchers at Purdue and we are sharing information to further our studies."

In addition, USDA-ARS researcher, John Burke, has been working to develop a drought tolerant sorghum hybrid. Burke has discovered eight genetic lines that that maintained green leaves in low light. Although sorghum is a naturally drought tolerant, increased drought tolerant genetics would increase yields. These genetic lines mean researchers are one step closer to developing an even more drought tolerant sorghum hybrid.



SORGHUM CHECKOFF

MISSION:

Investing your Sorghum Checkoff dollars to increase profitability for the sorghum industry.

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INDUSTRY EVENTS CALENDAR

April 20-21	Mid-South Ruminant Nutrition Conference, Grapevine, Texas
April 28	Oklahoma Sorghum Commission Meeting, Oklahoma City, Okla.
June 27-29	International Food Aid Conference Kansas, City, Mo.
June 27-30	Fuel Ethanol Workshop Indianapolis, Ind.

Tools for Yielding Success

Tools are an important part of any profession, especially farming. As a farmer, you use tools everyday that help make your operation more efficient, organized and profitable. The Sorghum Checkoff offers many helpful production tools accessible from your pickup or your computer. From webcasts to production guides, the checkoff is putting hundreds of resources at your fingertips to improve yields and increase profits.

Sorghum Profitability Calculators



The Sorghum Checkoff has released three sorghum profitability calculators that help growers determine the value sorghum can offer to their operation. The calculators give farmers the ability to determine their potential return on investment with sorghum, identify their market expansion opportunities, and compare the value of additional marketplaces.

"These interactive models allow growers to input their own information to find out what sorghum can do to improve their bottom line," said Florentino Lopez, Sorghum Checkoff marketing director. "These calculators give growers a clearer picture of their sorghum market opportunities and help them make more money in the marketplace."

The sorghum profitability calculators are available online and on DVD, and can be requested by calling (877) 643-8727.

To download the calculators online, visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com, and use the *Sorghum Production* tab to access the sorghum profitability calculators.

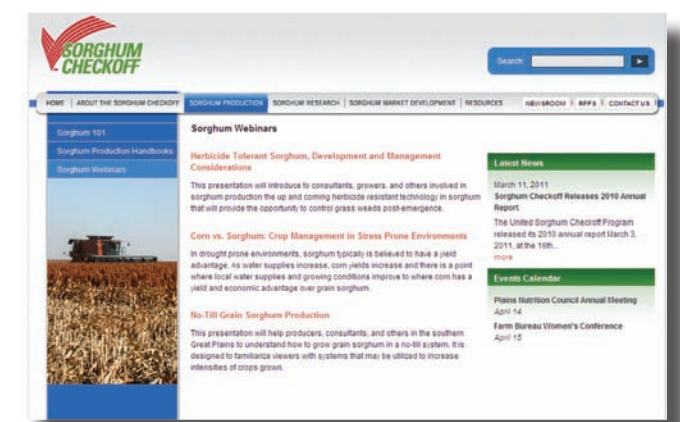
Sorghum Webcasts

Also available to growers are three webcasts on sorghum crop management brought to you by the Sorghum Checkoff.

The webcasts cover weed management practices, no-till grain sorghum production, and a profitability comparison of sorghum and corn, particularly in stress-prone environments.

"Whether it be utilizing good stewardship practices for the new post-emergent weed and grass control technology, or increasing yields through no-till systems, these webcasts offer something for every sorghum farmer," said Bill Kubecka, Palacios, Texas sorghum grower.

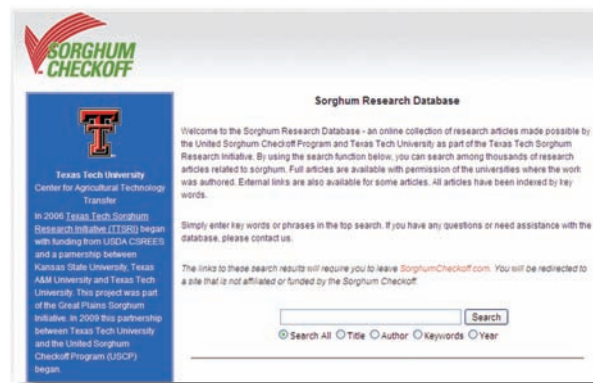
To access the webcasts, visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com/sorghum-webinars.



More Profit Yielding Tools

The Sorghum Checkoff and Texas Tech University have created a database of thousands of research articles and reports about sorghum. Anyone may search articles about forage, grain, water use and many other topics regarding sorghum from the Sorghum Checkoff website. Farmers can utilize this tool to learn more about research conducted in their regions and the potential they could see from their crops in the future.

SorghumCheckoff.com also offers many print products online. Regional production guides offer advice on fertilizer applications, irrigation and pest control. While these guides are available from the Sorghum Checkoff in booklet form, they are also posted online for an immediate go-to source of information about farming sorghum. Guides can be found under the *Sorghum Production* tab of the website.



For livestock producers, getting the most efficient production possible is a must for a successful business. The Sorghum Checkoff has published four livestock production guides to inform livestock producers exactly how sorghum can decrease inputs, while retaining the production they get with other grains. These feeding guides are available under the *Sorghum Market Development* tab on www.SorghumCheckoff.com.



Anyone may download the guides to have an instant source of information regarding sorghum in livestock production.

The livestock feeding guides are also available in Spanish, Chinese and French, with more languages in translation. By producing international versions of the livestock feeding guides, the Sorghum Checkoff hopes to promote the use of sorghum in livestock feed around the world. These versions are available on the checkoff website or from the U.S. Grains Council at www.grains.org.

In addition to each of these tools, sorghum producers may also find many technical documents on www.SorghumCheckoff.com to address a variety of issues that may arise on their farm. Each of these documents is produced by the Sorghum Checkoff and backed by research from universities, USDA and many other credible organizations.

Sorghum Checkoff Board Meeting set for April

The Sorghum Checkoff will hold its next board of directors meeting in Manhattan, Kan., April 26-27, 2011.

The goal of the April board meeting is for the board of directors to re-evaluate the past three years of operation and decide on a post-referendum plan of action. For more information regarding the board meeting visit www.SorghumCheckoff.com.

Smooth Sailing at Commodity Classic



The 16th Annual Commodity Classic kicked-off in Tampa, Fla., on March 3, 2011, with the theme *Smooth Sailing*. The Sorghum Checkoff hosted a booth at the trade show, which was open March 3-5 to meet with growers and discuss their needs.

Staff and board members spent time in the booth presenting information and meeting producers from across the nation. Classic attendees were treated to popped sorghum in the Sorghum Checkoff booth to increase awareness of sorghum as a healthy food.

During Commodity Classic, the National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and the National Sorghum

Producers came together to discuss industry-wide challenges and how to address those challenges in the best interest of agriculture. The 2012 Commodity Classic will be held in Nashville, Tenn., March 1-3.

2010 Annual Report Now Available

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program released its 2010 annual report March 3, 2011, at the 16th Annual Commodity Classic in Tampa, Fla. The annual report is a summary of the checkoff's accomplishments over the past year and the impact checkoff dollars have had on the sorghum industry.

"Last year was a productive year for the Sorghum Checkoff as we completed many projects and reached several goals," said Chairman Bill Kubecka, a sorghum farmer from Palacios, Texas. "We have worked to bring DuPont's post-emergent herbicide technology and best management practices to test plots across the Sorghum Belt. We have also opened many new markets and have expanded existing markets for U.S. sorghum."

The Sorghum Checkoff funded research in 2010 to develop cold and drought tolerant sorghum hybrids to increase yields. Other funded projects are investigating sorghum's value as an aquaculture feed as well as its

use in industrial adhesives. Checkoff funds are also being used to identify methods of stabilizing sweet sorghum syrup for use in ethanol and other industrial products. Each of these projects will continue into 2011 for further research and development.

"Although it takes time for many projects to make it to the market, the checkoff board and staff have worked together with great efficiency to see that producers have more profitable sorghum as soon as possible," Kubecka said.

