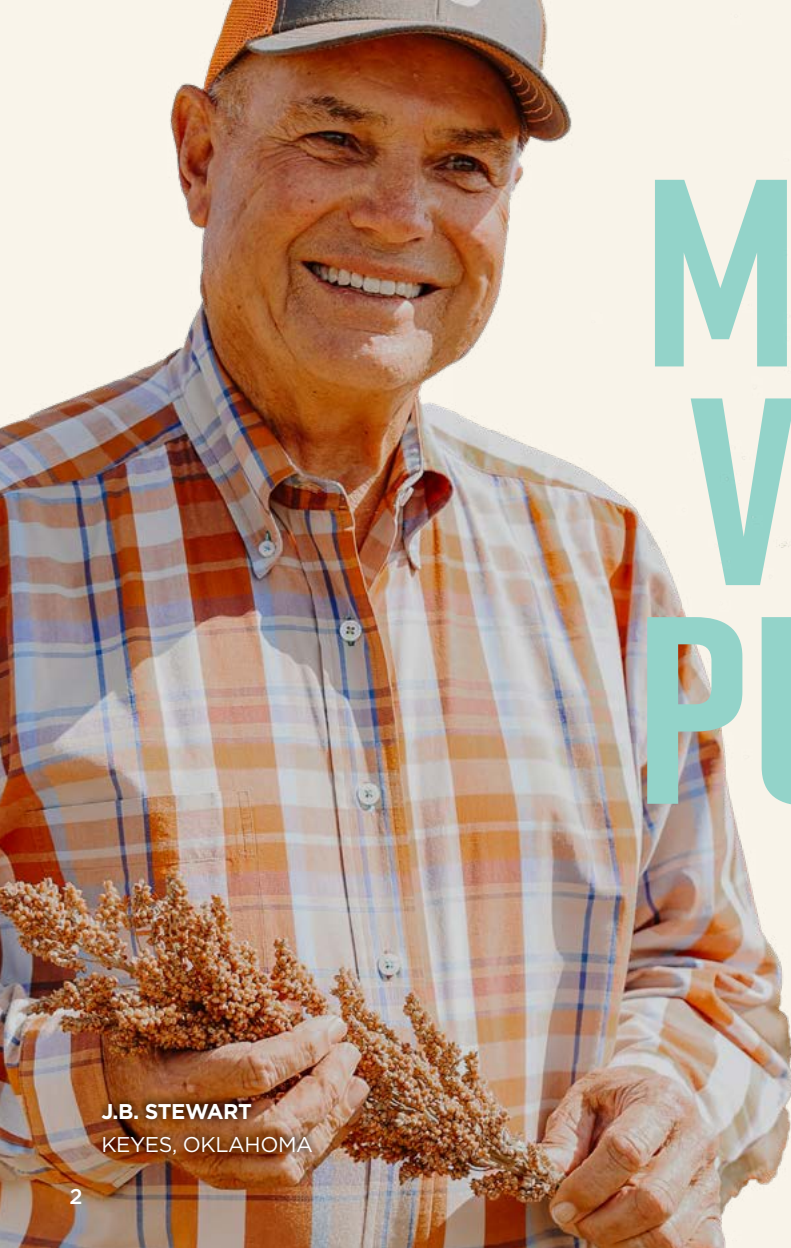




2023



SORGHUM CHECKOFF ANNUAL REPORT



J.B. STEWART
KEYES, OKLAHOMA

OUR MISSION, VISION & PURPOSE

Mission: The Sorghum Checkoff commits to reveal the potential and versatility of sorghum through increased shared value.

Vision: Sorghum producers benefit from an innovative and competitive industry.

Purpose: We exist to do as a group what we cannot do individually.

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Did You Know

Popped sorghum, with its smaller kernels and mild flavor, is ideal for products like granola bars and candies where traditional popcorn is too large. Its tender texture and absence of hulls also make it a tooth-friendly choice.

LETTER FROM OUR PAST CHAIRMAN

I am honored to address you as the Past Chairman of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, reflecting on the significant strides we have made together in the sorghum industry. As we celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication and resilience of our sorghum community.

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed CEO, Tim Lust. As we mark the 2023 year, it is impossible to overlook Tim's incredible impact on our industry during his 30 years of unwavering commitment. His leadership, vision, and tireless efforts have been instrumental in shaping the success of the Sorghum Checkoff. Tim, your passion for sorghum has been a driving force, and we are profoundly grateful for your three decades of outstanding service.

This past year holds a special signif-

icance for the Sorghum Checkoff as we commemorate the 15th anniversary. Fifteen years of collaborative efforts, innovation and shared commitment have transformed the sorghum landscape. We have witnessed remarkable growth, expanded markets, and embraced sustainable practices, all of which have solidified sorghum's place as a cornerstone of the agricultural industry.

Reflecting on the challenges of 2022, we weathered a historic drought that tested the resilience of our sorghum producers. In the face of adversity, our community demonstrated remarkable strength and adaptability. The collective response to the drought showcased the spirit of collaboration that defines our industry, as producers, researchers, and stakeholders worked together to implement strategies for water conservation, crop management, and sustainable practices.

Sorghum Checkoff has achieved remarkable milestones and embarked on innovative initiatives. Notably, we unveiled a tailored curriculum for grades Kindergarten through 12th, aiming to instill a deeper understanding of sorghum from an early age. Collaborating with Google, we tapped into their expertise to enhance digital marketing efforts, ensuring broader consumer awareness of the diverse applications and benefits of sorghum. Our international endeavors included a significant trade mission to China, fostering relationships and exploring new markets for US sorghum. Simultaneously, efforts to boost Kansas commodity transportation were initiated, addressing crucial logistics to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of sorghum delivery within the state. These initiatives exemplify the USCP's commitment to education, global outreach, and strategic partnerships, positioning sorghum for continued success and growth in the ever-evolving agricultural landscape.

As we turn the page and look toward the future, it is evident that the Sorghum Checkoff Program remains committed to fostering innovation, sustainability, and growth within our industry. Our collective efforts have positioned sorghum as a ver-

satile and sustainable crop, contributing to food security, renewable energy and environmental conservation.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere thanks to all who contribute to the success of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. As we celebrate our achievements and overcome challenges, I am confident that the sorghum community will continue to thrive, guided by our shared commitment to excellence.

ADAM SCHINDLER
Past USCP Chairman



2023 FINANCIALS

Total Revenue

Total
Collections
\$8,088,795

Closed
Contract
Funds
Returned
\$27,443

Investment
Income
\$443,821

Total
Income
\$8,562,434

Total Expenses

Market Development **\$2,127,253**

Crop Improvement **\$1,119,142**

State Funding Passback **\$1,821,750**

Sustainability **\$755,238**

Administrative **\$740,360**

USDA Oversight and Reserves **\$162,004**

Total Expenses **\$6,725,747**



7.2

million acres of
grain sorghum were
planted in the U.S.



6.1

million acres of
grain sorghum
were harvested



308K

more forage acres in
2023 as compared
to 2022



47

states planted
sorghum in 2023.
Kansas planted 3.6M



\$485

farmers received an
average farm price
per bushel



BOYD FUNK
GARDEN CITY, KANSAS

Did You Know...

Kansas holds the top position as the leading state in grain sorghum production, accounting for 46 percent of the total planted acres. Kansas farmers contribute to this by producing 185 million bushels annually.

State Passback

1

KANSAS

\$1,046,887

2

TEXAS

\$563,919

3

COLORADO

\$73,683

4

NEBRASKA

\$65,485

5

OKLAHOMA

\$56,635

OUR LEADERS

The Sorghum Checkoff is led by a 13-member producer board of directors. Board members are nominated by their qualified state organizations and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Sorghum Checkoff Board Member Appointment 2023



BRIAN ADAMEK
Victoria, Texas



SCOTT IRLBECK
Lubbock, Texas



DAVID K. SCHEMM
Sharon Springs, Kansas



TRACY ZINK
Indianola, Nebraska

2023 Board Officer Positions



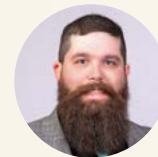
KENDALL HODGSON
Little River, KS
Chairman



ETHAN MILLER
Columbia, Missouri
Vice Chairman



KIM BALDWIN
Inman, Kansas
Treasurer



ZACK RENDEL
Miami, OK
Secretary

U.S. Grains Council Board of Directors



VERITY ULIBARRI
Melrose, NM
Vice Chairwoman



JIM MASSEY
Robstown, TX
Sorghum Sector Director

Leadership Sorghum

The Sorghum Checkoff is developing the next generation of leaders for the sorghum industry with its Leadership Sorghum program.



**APPLY
Now**

Scan to learn more about
Leadership Sorghum.

30 YEARS OF DEDICATION

United Sorghum Checkoff Program and National Sorghum Producers CEO, Tim Lust, marked 30 years in the industry in 2023. Beginning part-time in 1993 and transitioning to full-time post-MBA, his passion for sorghum stems from its sustainability amidst water depletion on Texas farms. Lust entered the sorghum industry serendipitously, driven by a casual conversation about a job opportunity. Throughout the years, he has played a pivotal role in transforming the sorghum sector, leading initiatives like the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and reshaping industry practices. Emphasizing collaboration and resilience, Lust strives to mentor the next generation of leaders and address industry challenges.



2023 HIGHLIGHTS

USCP National Sponsor of American Heart Association's® Healthy for Good™ Initiative

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) partnered with the American Heart Association's Healthy for Good™ initiative to emphasize sorghum's heart health benefits. As a national sponsor, the USCP aimed to encourage Americans to prioritize heart health through sorghum, a versatile, nutritious, and naturally gluten-free grain. The collaboration, aligned with the American Heart Association's focus on smart eating habits, showcased sorghum's role in maintaining healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Together, the Sorghum Checkoff and the American Heart Association ran a media campaign, reaching over 670 million people with information on sorghum's nutrition benefits and recipes, available in both English and Spanish.

Investing in Future Generations: USCP Unveils Curriculum for Grades Kindergarten through 12th

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) achieved a milestone by launching the Farm-to-School Curriculum in July. Led by Director Lanier Dabruzzi, the initiative integrated sorghum science and production into K-12 classrooms nationwide. Aligned with educational standards, the curriculum provided teachers with a toolkit for a deep understanding of sorghum's sustainability. Students from Kindergarten to 12th grade engaged in growing and tasting sorghum, explored its global significance, and considered its potential as a renewable energy source. This initiative contributed to agricultural literacy, aimed to inspire future generations, and fostered appreciation for sorghum-based foods, showcasing the USCP's commitment to sorghum education.



**CHECK
OUT**

Explore heart-healthy sorghum recipes on our YouTube channel for delicious and nutritious meal inspiration!



**LEARN
MORE**

Explore tailored curriculum content and activities for K-12 students – enrich learning experiences now!

Thousands of NJ Students Enjoy Earth Day-Inspired Menu Featuring Sorghum

To celebrate Earth Day, Pomptonian Food Service collaborated with the United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) to launch a special menu that offers a taste and educational lesson in sustainability and nutrition. The Checkoff's recipe for Cowboy Caviar was served to 125,000 students across 109 New Jersey school districts. Both students and teachers enjoyed the dish and learning about sorghum's story. The publication, Foodservice Director, featured a story about the event, putting a real-life example of sorghum's versatility and acceptability of students in front of the country's school foodservice decision makers.

USCP Celebrates 15 Years of Innovation

Celebrating its 15th anniversary, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) highlighted significant strides in advancing sorghum profitability. With a focus on research and international market expansion, the USCP invested over \$46 million in strategic projects, contributing to key milestones such as weed control breakthroughs and increased sorghum production.

USCP Taps Into Google's Expertise to Grow Consumer Awareness

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) partnered with Google to elevate sorghum awareness through innovative digital marketing. The campaign, titled "Sorghum. Food's Best Kept Secret," emphasized sorghum's sustainability and health benefits. Viewed on The Sorghum Checkoff's YouTube channel, the campaign was powered by Google Ads. USCP also collaborated with PR agency Padilla Speer Beardsley, Inc. to position sorghum as the go-to grain for everyday cooks, highlighting its nutritional benefits and sustainability. The partnerships aimed to make sorghum a preferred choice for healthier and sustainable meals.

This successful partnership with Google has played a pivotal role in enhancing sorghum's visibility and appeal in the digital landscape.

- **Impressions:** 103 million
- **Views:** 19 million
- **Clicks to website:** 268,000
- **Conversions:** 201,000
- **Relative search lift from search campaigns:** 1200%

Sorghum Checkoff Hosts Successful Export Sorghum Event

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program, in partnership with the U.S. Grains Council and state organizations, organized the Export Sorghum seminar, attracting over 150 international attendees. The event facilitated exploration of sorghum markets, trade opportunities, and U.S. production insights. Tailored tours to key universities and production sites strengthened relationships between international buyers and U.S. stakeholders.

Post-event, follow-up meetings were planned to capitalize on business opportunities.

Participants: 147

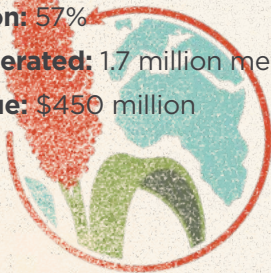
Countries represented: 10

Location: Houston

Exports as a percentage of U.S. sorghum production: 57%

Sales generated: 1.7 million metric tons

Sales value: \$450 million



Export Sorghum

USCP Staff Represents The U.S. Sorghum Industry During The U.S.-Chile Agribusiness Trade Mission

In 2023, Shelee Padgett and Brent Crafton represented the U.S. sorghum industry at the USDA Agribusiness Trade Mission to Chile. Led by Under Secretary Alexis Taylor, the mission coincided with the 200th anniversary of U.S.-Chile relations and the 20th anniversary of the U.S.-Chile-Free Trade Agreement. The delegation toured key sites and met with industry leaders, exploring opportunities in Chile's animal protein and food processing sectors, which both heavily rely on imported ingredients. Discussions with major companies revealed interest in sorghum as a sustainable alternative feed ingredient. USCP staff will continue to support new contacts, providing technical information and exploring applications in pet foods and human consumption in Chile and Peru.





Cultivating Growth: US Sorghum's Trade Mission to China

In April 2023, the U.S. Grains Council Trade Mission to China, led by USCP Board Member Kim Baldwin, marked a crucial endeavor for U.S. sorghum producers. The mission, following the relaxation of China's "Zero-Covid Policy," aimed to revive and expand trade relationships. The team's strategic approach involved engaging with Jiangnan University to understand the role of U.S. sorghum in baijiu production, a cornerstone of Chinese alcohol consumption. Additionally, one-on-one meetings with key sorghum buyers in South China showcased the exceptional quality of U.S. sorghum, as highlighted in the 2022/23 U.S. Sorghum Crop Quality Report. The report not only demonstrated that U.S. sorghum consistently exceeded grading requirements, but also emphasized the stability of its quality, a key factor in securing Chinese buyers who expressed a distinct preference for U.S. sorghum.

The mission further solidified the importance of long-term relationships between U.S. suppliers and Chinese buyers. Despite facing challenges during the pandemic, the dedication of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and the U.S. Grains Council in maintaining open lines of communication was evident. The report's positive impact, coupled with emerging opportunities in diversified sectors such as ruminant feed for beef production and China's growing aquaculture and pet food industries, positioned U.S. sorghum producers for sustained success in the dynamic and competitive Chinese market. The mission's overall goal was to establish a foundation for future transactions and strengthened partnerships, recognizing the need for continual efforts in the ever-evolving landscape of international trade.

**LEARN
MORE**

USCP Board Member Kim Baldwin recounts her experience on the US Sorghum Trade Mission to China.



Amplifying Global Presence at Global Sorghum Conference

The Sorghum Checkoff attended the 21st Century Global Sorghum Conference, a premier event for the sorghum industry, bringing together a significant international assembly of 406 participants from 43 countries and 147 different institutions. Our participation in this conference emphasized our ongoing commitment to enhancing producer value through collaboration, research, and innovation in the global sorghum industry. The diverse mix of international experts provided a unique platform for the exchange of ideas and best practices, fostering the advancement of the sorghum sector.

The conference's wide reach and robust engagement highlighted the escalating global interest in sorghum, revealing a wealth of opportunities for producers. As the leading authority for U.S. sorghum, the United Sorghum Checkoff Program's alignment with industry trailblazers and innovators at such influential forums strengthened its mission to champion and bolster the sustainable and profitable expansion of the domestic sorghum industry, to the ultimate advantage of our producers.

During the trip, CEO Tim Lust took the opportunity to conduct farm visits across

Europe, a notable extension to the conference participation. Immersing himself in different agricultural settings, Lust observed the varying methods of sorghum production internationally. He noted, "It was always exciting for me to see how similar, yet different sorghum production is around the world."

TTU Named Host for Third Global Sorghum Conference in 2026

Texas Tech University will host the Third Global Sorghum Conference, a partnership initiative between the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, the National Sorghum Producers, and the university itself. The event aims to bring together global experts to advance sorghum research and industry development, driving producer value and profitability. The conference will cover key sorghum-related topics and encourages international collaboration to benefit sorghum farmers worldwide. The initiative aligns with the United Sorghum Checkoff Program's mission to boost producer profitability and create new markets.



**LEARN
MORE**

Stay updated on the 2026 conference with event, speaker, and registration info.

Sorghum Shines as Premium Pet Food Ingredient

The Sorghum Checkoff successfully raised awareness for sorghum as a premium pet food ingredient through a targeted influencer marketing campaign. Focused on Millennial and Gen X dog owners, the initiative recognized pets as an integral part of the family budget, appealing to those seeking the best for their furry companions. The campaign featured six videos from three influencers, generating significant impressions, reach, engagements, video views, and link clicks.

Videos: 6 (from 3 influencers)

Impressions: 853,798

Reach: 666,001

Engagements: 408,876

Video views: 813,603

Link clicks: 1,373

Driving Outstanding Results in Earned Media Initiatives

In a strategic collaboration with Padilla, a leading agency specializing in PR, strategic communications, and brand storytelling, we have embraced a continuous earned media strategy to build trust and amplify brand awareness among

key consumer targets. Since March 2023, our partnership has delivered outstanding results, showcasing the effectiveness of our earned media initiatives. Metrics highlight our success, including an impressive 400% return on investment, securing 23 unique featured articles providing valuable exposure, achieving over \$759k in ad value equivalency, garnering a remarkable 334 million impressions, and securing 15 placements in top-tier outlets. This collaborative effort with Padilla has played a pivotal role in elevating our brand presence and achieving significant milestones in brand recognition and financial impact.

At a summit hosted by Tulsa Ports, Catoosa, Sorghum Checkoff discussed enhancing Kansas commodity transportation through Oklahoma ports. Presentations highlighted strategies for increased port utilization. The summit revealed potential for sorghum farmers, anticipating higher demand for Identity Preserved (IP) sorghum shipments. The port, eager to expand its water-based business, is exploring new opportunities, such as container shipments. Looking ahead, Sorghum Checkoff will coordinate with businesses for a collaborative meeting at the port, exemplifying our commitment to partnerships and innovative avenues for sorghum producers.



FIFTEEN YEARS OF INNOVATION | 2008-2023



OUR VALUES

We focus on providing a sustainable return on investment for sorghum producers as a primary consideration.

We commit to effectively leverage producer dollars to enhance the opportunity for producer profitability by advancing demand for sorghum through research, promotion and information.

We will provide leadership and vision for the sorghum industry.

We will be transparent so our integrity is clear and recognized.

We strive to be the foremost resource of relevant and meaningful information about sorghum.

We aspire to be a catalyst for positive change that develops a dynamic sorghum industry that benefits producers.

SORGHUMCHECKOFF.COM

4201 N. INTERSTATE 27
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79403
(806) 687 8727

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