



NEWSLETTER

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Sorghum Checkoff Launches Search for Class VII of Leadership Program Participants

Earlier this year, the Sorghum Checkoff launched recruitment for Class VII of the Leadership Sorghum program. Leadership Sorghum is a 14-month program designed to steward future farmer leaders in the sorghum industry. Through a blend of hands-on experiences, classroom learning and valuable networking opportunities, selected individuals will gain a deeper understanding of every aspect of sorghum, from seed to market and beyond.

"The design of the program is centered around farmers who are passionate and are looking for opportunities to grow in this industry," Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson said. "This investment in the program is not just an investment into individual class members but the U.S. sorghum industry as a whole. Those who choose to participate will walk away armed with the skills, knowledge and understanding to be the next generation that takes the sorghum industry to new heights."

Sorghum Checkoff criteria states that eligible applicants must be actively engaged in sorghum production within the U.S. and U.S. citizens. Fifteen growers will be accepted into

the highly successful program's seventh class.

"Watching each class member grow, learn and experience new things has been so fulfilling," Director of Emerging Markets & Grower Leader Development Shelee Padgett said. "We are equipping each Leadership Sorghum class with the tools to advocate for sorghum, take newfound knowledge back to their communities and further the industry by becoming involved in leadership positions across the industry."

Full consideration will be given to all applicants regardless of age, gender, race and/or occupation. Every effort will be made to select a class based on the applicant pool, which is representative of the entire sorghum industry, its diversity and rural community interests.

Applications for the program are available at LeadSorghum.com and are due by 5:00 pm CST on September 13, 2024. Accompanying reference forms must be submitted by the 5:00 pm CST September 13 deadline, as well. Following the application deadline, all applications and references will be reviewed by a selection committee. Finalists may be contacted via phone to arrange an interview.

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Sorghum Checkoff Embarks on India Exploratory Trade Mission

In order to create opportunities for United States sorghum in India, an exploratory trade mission to the country was funded primarily by the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, but also included the U.S. Grains Council and National Sorghum Producers. The trip took place from Jan. 13 to 20 and meetings were held in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Himatnagar, Mumbai, Pune, and Satara.

The recent exploratory trade mission to India encompassed a whirlwind of visits and meetings spanning six cities in just five days. Deliberations during these sessions were laser-focused on unlocking avenues for U.S. sorghum, with discussions ranging from its application in human consumption to industrial starch extraction, feed grain utilization and ethanol production.

One of the standout qualities of sorghum in this context is its distinction as a non-GMO option among U.S. commodities. This characteristic holds significant promise for gaining traction in markets, particularly in India, where the preference for non-GM products is paramount. Despite hurdles such as India's imposition of a hefty 50% tariff on U.S. sorghum and the absence of completed Pest Risk Assessments from both governments, the upward trajectory of food product demand in India remains evident.

The primary goal of this initiative is to meticulously explore and underscore the potential of sorghum as a dependable and advantageous source of both food and feed. Although India predominantly fulfills its sorghum needs through domestic production, recent mandates such as the E20 blend policy set to be implemented by 2025/2026 indicate a shifting landscape. With projections suggesting that demand for food and ethanol will outstrip grain production in India, there's a pressing need for sustainable and affordable feedstock options that also minimize environmental impact—where U.S. sorghum could step in as a viable solution.

Post-trade mission, the Sorghum Checkoff has laid out plans to disseminate industry samples and conduct comprehensive lab analyses of U.S. sorghum. These efforts are geared towards showcasing the specific attributes and benefits of our product. While acknowledging that this endeavor is part of a long-term strategy, it marks a significant stride forward. By consistently demonstrating how U.S. sorghum can address critical needs, producers can strategically position themselves for continued growth. This becomes especially pertinent as India's middle class expands and its biofuel industry matures, presenting a ripe market for U.S. sorghum.



Participants of the U.S. exploratory trade mission to India included: Norma Ritz Johnson, executive director at the United Sorghum Checkoff Program; Florentino Lopez, consultant at Creando Mañana; Adam Schindler, past chairman of the board at United Sorghum Checkoff Program; Craig Meeker, Meeker Farms in Wellington, Kansas; Shelee Padgett, director of emerging markets at the United Sorghum Checkoff Program; Jace Hefner, manager of global trade at U.S. Grains Council; Reece Cannady, regional director of South Asia at U.S. Grains Council; Amit Sachdev, regional consultant at U.S. Grains Council; Nayantara Anandani Pande, marketing specialist at U.S. Grains Council and Sonjoy Mohanty, senior ethanol advisor at U.S. Grains Council.

Sorghum Checkoff's Vision for a Sustainable Future Comes to Life with Newly Designed Web Pages

The Sorghum Checkoff reiterated its dedication to highlighting and promoting sorghum's vital role as a sustainable solution through a newly designed web page launched in February devoted to informing, educating and engaging both producers and consumers in understanding the environmental benefits of The Resource Conserving Crop®.

The updated web page offers a comprehensive overview of sorghum's sustainability story, emphasizing the contributions of sorghum farmers toward environmental conservation. By spotlight-

ing key facts and data points, consumers can dive deeper into the intricate narrative of sorghum's sustainability, linking to additional research and information available on the platform.

vation, soil preservation and wildlife protection," Sorghum Checkoff Executive Director Norma Ritz Johnson said. "Our industry recognizes the pressing need to amplify the message of sustainable agriculture, catering to diverse audiences including producers, consumers and industry stakeholders."

The updated landing page will feature Sorghum Checkoff's recently integrated video series to better enhance the users experience by providing dynamic insights into the sustainability practices of sorghum. Housed within the platform, these videos testify to sorghum's standing as The Resource Conserving Crop®.

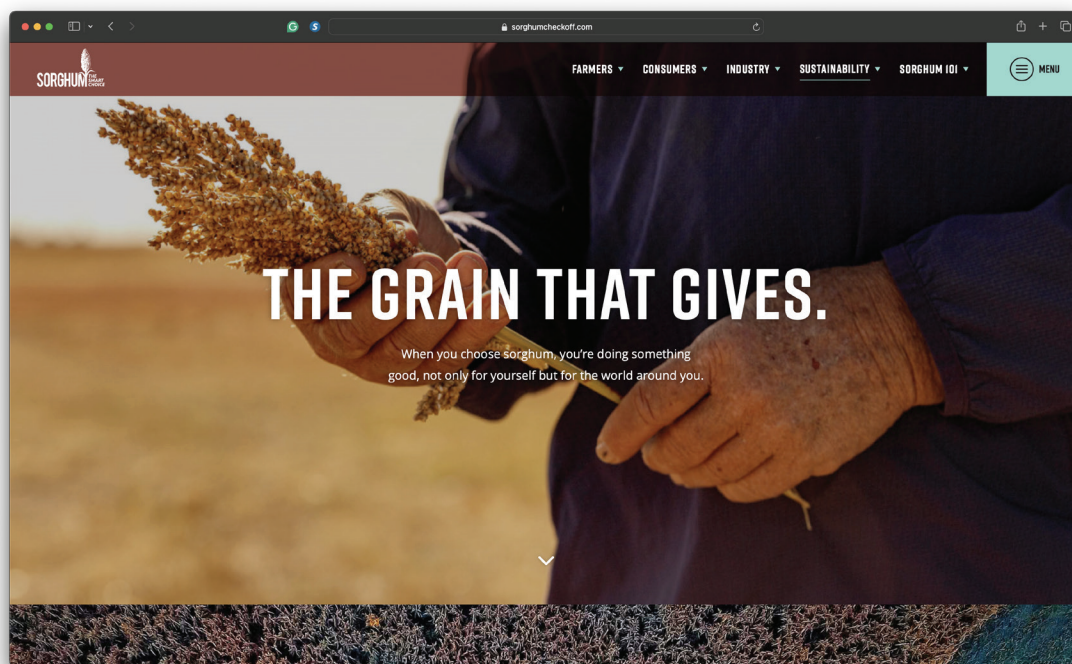
"Our investment in this updated platform signifies our commitment to serving as the central resource for information on sustainable agriculture," Sorghum Checkoff Director of Communications Clint White said. "Through engaging content and interactive components, we aim to captivate both producers and consumers and inspire them to explore the sustainable benefits of sorghum."

With a user-friendly interface and engaging

visuals, the revamped web page is a gateway to understanding sorghum's sustainability story. Learn more about how Sorghum Sustains® at [Sorghum Checkoff.com/impact](https://SorghumCheckoff.com/impact).

ing key facts and data points, consumers can dive deeper into the intricate narrative of sorghum's sustainability, linking to additional research and information available on the platform.

"The sorghum crop embodies sustainability, addressing critical concerns such as water conser-



SORGHUM DISH SHOWCASE
Sorghum Stuffed Peppers



SCAN ME



Sorghum Checkoff Welcomes Chase Obenchain as Corporate Chef Consultant

In January, the Sorghum Checkoff announced the addition of Chef Chase Obenchain as the organization's first Corporate Chef Consultant. With his extensive culinary background and a passion for sorghum, Chef Obenchain is set to bring a fresh perspective and innovative approach to the Checkoff's culinary initiatives.

Obenchain, originally from North Carolina, developed a passion for culinary arts at a young age. Graduating with distinction from the Culinary Institute of America, he holds a variety of degrees, including Baking, Pastry and Culinary Science, allowing him to shape his lifelong appreciation for sorghum in various culinary art forms.

Obenchain has dedicated his career to creating delicious and nutritious food that is accessible to all. His experience includes key roles in some of the world's leading Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) and ingredient companies. Notably, he also served as the Innovation Chef at Campbell's Soup Company®, contributing to the design, development and launch of multiple brands within their portfolio. He was also a Corporate Chef Consultant on the food-service team at Dole Packaged Foods®, spreading awareness and developing innovative ideas, recipes and menus.

"I am honored to join the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and contribute to the promotion

of this good-for-you grain," Chef Obenchain said. "This is an exciting opportunity to showcase sorghum's incredible possibilities for creating delicious and nutritious culinary experiences. I look forward to collaborating with the team and bringing fresh ideas to the table."

Chef Obenchain's culinary proficiency and innovative mindset will play a crucial role in continuing to advance the Sorghum Checkoff's goals and mission, highlighting sorghum's nutritional benefits in both the consumer and culinary world.

Discover recipes, nutritional details, and learn more about initiatives by the Sorghum Checkoff to enhance visibility in human food markets and maximize return on investment for sorghum farmers at SorghumCheckoff.com/consumers.



SORGHUM INDUSTRY EVENTS

May 27 Memorial Day
Office Closed

July 14-16 SNA - School Nutrition Association
Boston, MA

July 29-31 USGC Board of Delegates Meeting
Salt Lake City, UT

For more events, visit sorghumcheckoff.com/calendar

USCP MISSION

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



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