

# Agricultural Business Council of Kansas City

## *Agricultural Business Council's Newsletter May 2008*

### **Of Fuel & Food Challenges: NCGA's Chairman to Speak at May 15 Luncheon (Register NOW!)**



Ken McCauley, chairman of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), will address the next luncheon meeting of the Agricultural Business Council, May 15, noon at the American Royal, 1701 American Royal Court.

McCauley, a native of White Cloud, KS, will talk about ethanol and the Farm Bill from both producer and leadership aspects.

- **Ethanol.** For many years NCGA has been the leading advocate for ethanol. With historic changes that the rapid development of ethanol has brought to the U.S. agricultural economy, the NCGA is also a leader in explaining to the public the benefits of ethanol.
- **Farm Bill.** With Congress poised to take final action on the Farm Bill, McCauley will provide a prognosis on the likely outcome and an overview of the measure.

Along with his wife, Mary, and son, Brad, McCauley farms 4,000 acres of corn and soybeans in northeast Kansas. McCauley, who has served on the Kansas Corn Commission in numerous leadership positions, served as NCGA's 2006-2007 president. Prior to that, he was vice chair of NCGA's Ethanol Committee and a member of the Research and Development Action Team. He currently serves on NCGA's Finance Committee and is liaison on NCGA's Biotechnology Working Group. "We encourage Ag Council members to book early, because we are expecting a full house and seating is limited," says Bob Petersen, chairman of the Ag Business Council. Reservations can be booked with Erica Venancio at [Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com](mailto:Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com). **The deadline is May 13 (5 p.m. sharp).** The cost is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. (Payment can be sent to the Ag Business Council or provided at the event.)

#### **MEMBERSHIP REMINDER!**

**Ag Business Council members are reminded to send in their membership renewal forms and 2008 dues. For details contact Erica Venancio at [Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com](mailto:Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com).**

### **Immigration Forum to Explore Area Impacts, June 12**

Among the issues facing American agriculture and food supply (and business in general), you'd be hard-pressed to find a more emotionally and politically charged issue than immigration reform. In an effort to explore the economic, social, and business ramifications of this issue, the Ag Business

Council, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, and the Home Builders Association jointly sponsoring an **Immigration Forum on Thursday, June 12**, 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Jack Reardon Center in Kansas City, KS. Set aside time, now, on your busy summer schedule to attend this event. Program and details will be available in the June Ag Council newsletter.

## This Mom's Day Weekend ... Salute the Hamburgers!

Okay. So, you already know this weekend is Mother's Day, but did you know that May is also National Beef Month? Tim Daugherty, Ag Council member and president of The National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame, encourages Council members to "Salute the Hamburger" by attending the Celebrity Hamburger Cook-off **this Saturday (May 10)** from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Center, (630 N. 126<sup>th</sup> St., Bonner Springs, KS).

And anyone can be the "celebrity." Anyone from backyard grill chefs to the "truly unskilled" is welcome to enter the cook-off, regardless of skill base or age, and participants can be individuals, families, or groups. Contest registration is open through Thursday, May 8 by calling 913-721-1075; rules are available at [info@aghalloffame.com](mailto:info@aghalloffame.com) or [www.aghalloffame.com](http://www.aghalloffame.com). Prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third place winners.

**You don't have to cook!** In addition to the hamburger cook-off there will be plenty of family-friendly fun — trivia contests, games, and all types of information available from various booths. All activities will take place at the Ag Center where visitors can tour Farm Town USA, ride the miniature train, explore the new exhibit on bees, visit the "new" Hall of Fame, or review agriculture of yesteryear in the Museum of Farming. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$6 for seniors; \$3 for children ages 5 to 16; and free for children under age 5.

## Sen. Brownback Says Environment to Take Center Stage

Sen. Sam Brownback, (R-KS), and former presidential candidate, told Ag Business Council members at its **April 11** meeting that — even though Congress would work hard to bring a bill to the floor — a one-year extension to the Farm Bill was "most likely."



The senator, who serves on the Appropriations, Judiciary, and Joint Economic committees, said legislators face many challenges in the year ahead. In the Senate, he foresees "an enormous global warming debate" with four potentially different outcomes: 1) a "cap and trade" system; 2) "taxation on carbon" emissions, 3) utilize "technology to reduce CO2," and 4) decide that "global warming is not occurring."

"In my mind, technology is the way to go, though there is still debate over whether man-made CO2 is the cause," relayed Sen. Brownback. Referencing the book, "The End of Environmentalism," he noted that because funding is being directed into new uses for agricultural by-products, there is a great opportunity for those in the Midwest to be a part of the solution. Brownback mentioned research on cellulosic energy for biofuels, and hosting a "new uses" conference for agricultural commodities (ex: "green concrete" or plastics made from ag-based commodities) as opportunities for growth in the region.

"Yes, we're going to use grain for fuel, but we're going to use other things too," noted Sen. Brownback. "We need to be sensitive to this globally. 'Grass to gas' seems to be the future."

Other issues to tackle in 2008 include: immigration reform, growing demand for food in China and Asia, and climbing fuel and feed costs for farmers. **(Mark Crouser, Fleishman-Hillard)**

## Corridor Conversations

### **Dr. Lonnie King says one world requires “One Health” initiative**

A storm is brewing, and shelter could be scarce as its forces lash out against the entire planet. “It’s the perfect microbial storm,” said Dr. Lonnie J. King, DVM, MS, MPA, DACVPM and director of the CDC’s National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-Borne and Enteric Diseases, as he presented his concerns about emerging new diseases during the late April KC Animal Health Corridor series *Corridor Conversations*.

He also described the One Health initiative that encourages collaboration between physicians and veterinarians in response to the microbial threat confronting the world’s growing animal and human populations.

As the world population approaches 6.5 billion people in the next 12 years – and the earth shrinks, figuratively – the demand for food will stimulate the spread and virulence of infectious diseases. According to Dr. King, it will take an additional 10 billion animals to feed the additional 2 billion people expected to inhabit the earth by 2020. Considering that well over 100 trillion microbes reside in each human and animal, the explosion of microbes will assume infinite proportions. “The winners here are the ecological gymnasts: the microbes that change, move, and cross species lines, and acquire resistance,” Dr. King claimed.

Illustrating the imminent threat of increasing food and vector-borne diseases, Dr. King said at any given time an estimated 40,000 ships are at sea, many of them moving livestock, produce, grain and other food stuffs. “But these vessels are also carrying cargo like old tires with trapped water that serve as incubators for larvae,” he noted, adding that annually 1.6 billion people travel internationally; and, as the avian flu virus showed, 747s “are just like Petri dishes.”

Dr. King pointed out that 75 percent of major new infectious diseases are zoonotic. Contributing factors to the perfect microbial storm include changing climate and ecological systems, diminished wildlife habitats, greater demand for meat, and variable social and political winds – along with the “uncanny ability” of microbes to adapt to evolving or devolving conditions. “Microbes are happy,” he quipped, “they travel anywhere they want.”

The outlook, however, is not dire and need not be fatalistic. Dr. King said the good news is science, medicine, and public health has a better understanding of prevention. Both animal and human health researchers have integrated their strategies to explore causality, treatment, and prevention. There has been increased application of comparative medicine in health care research, and about half (16) of the veterinary colleges in the U.S. now have public health programs in their curriculum.

Aware that his immediate audience represented the largest concentration of animal health companies in the world, Dr. King said the KC Animal Health Corridor could take a leadership role in exploiting the commercial opportunities surrounding the perfect microbial storm. The implication is that when research and development make good business sense, good public health results.

**(Dennis McLaughlin, McKinley Communications, Inc.)**

## **Ag Council Updates:**

- **Chairman Establishes 2008 Direction.** If the Ag Business Council board of director's has one challenge for 2008, it is to weave "agriculture" into the social and economic fabric of Greater Kansas City. During the board's first meeting in mid-April, **Bob Petersen, chairman of the**

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**Council**, told board members that the goal is to be an advocate for agribusiness within the business community.

"We want people to know agriculture is a driving force for the region's economy," said Petersen, "And Kansas City remains a major agricultural hub for the nation serving as headquarters for a number of nationally prominent businesses and the associations that represent them. We want to help spread the word that Kansas City is a good place for agriculture and its related food and transportation sectors to do business."

Petersen said 2008 is focused on four initiatives: 1) building upon the Council's legacy, which was established and nurtured by founder and former chair Gina Bowman; 2) creating public awareness; 3) communicating with Council members; and 4) providing monthly luncheons that not only provide "good networking opportunities, but continue to feature challenging speakers and relevant topics."

- **Communications Challenges.** The 2008 Communications Committee has accepted the task of developing a two-year communications plan that will be presented to the board. **Agi Schafer**, committee chair, says the board-appointed team will begin its planning process on May 15 (prior to the Ag Council luncheon) from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the American Royal. Questions? Contact [agi.schafer@fleishman.com](mailto:agi.schafer@fleishman.com).

- **Thanks Kris Perry!** **Kris Perry**, who has coordinated registration and other details for the Ag Business Council, has joined the Edward Jones company as branch office administrator where she will serve as the primary support to a financial advisor. She says, "I will not only be helping to grow a business, but making a real difference in peoples' lives." That's our Kris! Kudos and thanks for your past wonderful support. (Helping us out in the interim is **Erica Venancio who may be reached at** [Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com](mailto:Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com).)

## Upcoming Events:

- **May 14 – Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. Time:** 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. (includes lunch). **Location:** Axcet HR Solutions (Five Pine Ridge Place, 8345 Lenexa Dr., Ste. 100, Lenexa, KS). Cost: \$15. **Topic:** Raising Capital from Banks and the SBA, presented by Jeffrey Olsen, Business Sales & Consulting, LLC —Learn the key principles to package and shop a loan competitively and how to think like a loan officer or the SBA. Register: visit [www.kcchamber.com](http://www.kcchamber.com) or [russell@kcchamber.com](mailto:russell@kcchamber.com) / (816) 374-5472.

- **May 15 – Ag Business Council. Time:** Noon to 1:30 p.m. (lunch). **Location:** American Royal Administrative Offices. Cost: \$10 Ag Council members, \$15 non members. **Topic:** Ken McCauley, chairman of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), will discuss the Farm Bill and ethanol. Register: [Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com](mailto:Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com).

- **May 28 – Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. Time:** 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. **Location:** Chamber Board Room (911 Main St., 26<sup>th</sup> Fl.). Cost: \$15. **Topic:** Leading Through Breakdowns, presented by Todd Long, Pryor Center for Leadership Development, William Jewell College — Participants gain an understanding of people's automatic assessment, people's responses, how to gain composure, how to formulate solutions, and how to lead others through the process. Register: visit [www.kcchamber.com](http://www.kcchamber.com) or [russell@kcchamber.com](mailto:russell@kcchamber.com) / (816) 374-5472.

- **June 12 – Immigration Forum.** Sponsored by the Ag Business Council, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, and the Home Builders Association. **Time:** 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. **Location:** Jack Reardon Center in Kansas City, KS. Register: [Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com](mailto:Erica@petersenconsultingllc.com).

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- **June 16 to June 17– Livestock Publications Council Sales and Marketing Workshop.** **Time:** 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. **Location:** Residence Inn by Marriott, Kansas City Airport (10300 N. Ambassador Drive, Kansas City, MO) **Cost:** \$60 to \$125 (depending on membership status). **Room Rate:** \$115 / call 816-741-2300. **Topic:** How to Sell to an Eskimo – Participants gain an understanding of sales strategy that garner interest, how to make a cold call, and more. Details and Register: visit <http://www.livestockpublications.com/newsletter.php>.

- **July 26 to July 30 – Ag Media Summit.** **Location:** Tampa, Florida. (Saddlebrook Resort, Wesley Chapel, FL, located 30 miles north of the Tampa airport; 1-800-729-8383) **Room Rate:** \$129 single / \$199 suite. Details and Register: visit <http://www.agmediasummit.com>.

## People in the News

### Perspective: A Kansas-based “NBAF” Makes Sense

- **Ag Council Member, Ron Trewyn**, *who is vice president for research at Kansas State University, recently wrote this opinion piece regarding the benefits of bringing The National Bio and Agro-defense Facility (NBAF) to the Kansas-Missouri business corridor. Excerpts are posted below:*

With a project of the magnitude of the NBAF, there are bound to be questions about how it will affect the community and region, including, “How safe is it to study animal diseases in a location near people and animals?” Thanks to modern research methods and facilities, this research is extremely safe — and urgently needed. The NBAF will provide a modern and secure laboratory environment for protecting America’s farm animals and food supply. The facility will be built in accordance with the highest safety standards that have kept tens of millions of residents safe in places where labs studying diseases already exist.

That’s right. Federal labs in the middle of Frederick, MD, and Atlanta, GA, have worked on the most dangerous human diseases for decades. Not a single community outbreak has occurred in these cities. In addition, a lab in Winnipeg, Canada, studies the highly contagious foot-and-mouth disease virus just across the border from North Dakota. Foot-and-mouth disease has not spread to livestock outside that facility. The great news is that modern biocontainment technology has eliminated the need for locating animal disease research on an island, as was done decades ago at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, a few miles off the coast of New York.

**This brings us to today’s issue.** We know our nation needs to significantly upgrade its capacity to prevent disease outbreaks in animals, yet the half-century-old Plum Island Animal Disease Center is outdated and has limited capacity. It simply doesn’t have the research or diagnostic capabilities needed to address animal diseases that could be introduced into the U.S., which is why an advanced NBAF facility on the mainland is now on the slate.

Two years ago, the federal government asked communities with established animal research programs to step forward. Last summer, in recognition of our region’s expertise, a site on Kansas State University’s campus made the short list of potential places for the NBAF. Other sites are in Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Texas, all of which have prompted questions about bringing animal disease research to areas near livestock.

The fact is that research at the NBAF will protect those very animals. That’s the purpose of the NBAF — to develop vaccines and other counter-measures to animal diseases that threaten animal health, the U.S. food supply and U.S. economy, and the health of the American public.

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**The realities.** At the moment, our country does not have sufficient facilities to conduct research on many of the most devastating foreign animal diseases, some of which pose health risks to people as well. Thus, required vaccines cannot be produced in a timely fashion, and solutions to potential human health threats cannot be developed.

A decision to build the NBAF in an isolated location — away from animals and people — would significantly increase the cost of building, maintaining, and operating the lab, and would continue to limit the availability of researchers willing to do this important work — and there's no need to do so.

When you marry state-of-the-art biocontainment structures, solid physical security, and technological know-how with proven safety protocols and personal protection, research on animal and human diseases can be conducted safely in facilities located near animals and people. Protecting animals and people from disease — making communities more secure and safe — is the goal; and it is a challenge our country is ready and able to undertake. **(For more information, visit [www.nbafinkansas.org](http://www.nbafinkansas.org))**

## Trends

### Farmers Not Fall Guys

**C.W. Gusewelle**, a columnist for *The Kansas City Star*, recently urged readers to reject arguments that high food and gas costs are the price consumers pay for farm prosperity and the country's bio fuels policies. In a recent column, "In Talk of Fuel and Famine, Farmer Shouldn't Be Fall Guy," Gusewelle wrote, "blame for the crisis of rising food prices and widespread malnutrition among the world's poorest people is largely misplaced. Please understand, I'm not in favor of global hunger. But I do object to efforts to make the American farmer a fall guy for the problem. That simply does deliberate disservice to the facts."

Gusewelle noted, "Yes, processing corn to run engines instead of filling stomachs does impact supply — but only fractionally. The other factors that come into play are, in every case, more important. One is the problem of runaway population growth in many of the most impoverished countries. Those exploding numbers alone would guarantee world hunger under almost any circumstances. "Two, many of those countries are in climatically inhospitable regions — parts of the world where, by any reckoning, human survival is precarious. And with the changes in global weather patterns, such regions are expanding. **(Harry Watts, KS Farm Bureau written by the American Farm Bureau Federation)**

### Round 2: HSUS Videos "Downers" at Livestock Auctions

**The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)** held a press conference this week to announce that the organization has video footage of downed cows at livestock auction facilities in Maryland, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Texas. HSUS brought preliminary evidence of the abuse to the attention of U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer last week at a face-to-face meeting. The HSUS urged Secretary Schafer to expedite regulations that would require more humane treatment of animals destined for the food supply from farm to slaughter. The HSUS particularly urges USDA to stop downer cows from being slaughtered for consumption.

Newsletter produced by the Communications Committee, edited by Agi Schafer, Fleishman-Hillard,