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## NAFA - Year in Review



# Alfalfa Gaining Recognition

## NAFA, RMA Officials Meet to Address Forage Crop Insurance Deficiencies

A contingent of NAFA members and staff traveled to Kansas City in April to meet with officials of USDA's Risk Management Agency to begin discussions of improvements needed in the Forage Production APH program for a more efficacious yield-based crop insurance product. In 2011, acres enrolled in the Forage Production APH crop insurance program were estimated to be less than 10%. Conversely, the participation rates of crop insurance for covered commodities such as corn, wheat, and soybean, are all above 80%, demonstrating the lack of confidence in the Forage APH crop insurance program as a wise economic choice when considering risk protection.

RMA officials were eager to hear from NAFA and agree that the program could be modified to make participation more appealing. A number of issues were discussed including:

1. methods to improve forage price discovery
2. premium coverage for purer stands of alfalfa (80-90%) where the producer has documented yield measurements
3. expand the states and counties in which the program is available
4. enterprise units
5. insurance coverage based on stem counts rather than stand age
6. being able to insure spring-planted forages at a reduced coverage rate
7. the availability of higher coverage levels

In addition to the APH Program improvements, discussion also focused on the possible development of new insurance products such as a revenue protection product that could address quality issues such as rained on hay and other perils affecting revenue. NAFA received confirmation in late-September that the administration has made the alfalfa/forage crop protection tools a priority.

### Administration identifies alfalfa/forage crop protection tools a priority!

## Moran Amendment Passes with Senate Farm Bill

In what was quite possibly the first time the word "alfalfa" was mentioned on the floor of the U.S. Senate, Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) addressed members informing them of the virtues of the nation's 4th most valuable crop in his attempt to generate support for his amendment #987. The amendment, which easily passed by a margin of 72-18, directs the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) to conduct research and development regarding a policy to insure alfalfa and issue a report describing the results of the study.

### Alfalfa discussed on Senate floor

## NAFA Chair Presents at USDA's 2013 Ag Outlook Forum

Robin Newell, DuPont Pioneer senior forage business manager and National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance Chairman, participated as a luncheon speaker at USDA's 2013 Ag Outlook Forum "Managing Risk in the 21st Century," held in Arlington, VA., February 21-22, 2013.

USDA has hosted the Agricultural Outlook Forum since 1923 to provide farmers and ranchers, government, and agribusinesses with sound information for decision-making. In recent times, the alfalfa industry has not been asked to be a participant in this Forum.

Among this year's distinguished speakers were Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Deputy Agriculture Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, and Former Senator and DLA Piper Senior Policy Advisor Thomas A. Daschle.

Among the 25 breakout sessions were risk-management sessions and 85 distinguished experts in the fields of international trade, forestry, conservation, transportation, energy, nutrition, local foods, and food safety. The Forum continues to feature the traditional USDA commodity supply and demand and food price outlooks as well.

Newell's presentation was titled *Forages Outlook: Is the Game Changing with Drought, High Feed and Commodity Prices, and Ag Policy?* The Forum brought together key decision makers providing the opportunity for Newell to heighten the awareness and recognition of the nation's 4th most valuable crop.

**NAFA 2012-2013 Annual Report available at: [www.alfalfa-forage.org](http://www.alfalfa-forage.org)**