



NAFA - Year in Review

National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance 2011-2012 Annual Report



D.C. Fly-In participants

NAFA Drives Industry Recognition on Public Policy & Research

Alfalfa is key to sustainable agricultural systems and is an economic engine in rural communities - its value for soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, energy savings, crop rotation, and wildlife habitat is unsurpassed. However, alfalfa must offer a competitive value for farmers in order to provide these benefits and maintain or expand its acreage base. Being recognized in policy and research funding decisions is critical in keeping pace with other cropping choices. That was the message that National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA) members took to Washington, D.C., as it hosted its 2nd Annual "D.C. Fly-In" where nearly 50 NAFA members, representing 14 states, worked the Hill with the mission of building recognition for the nation's 3rd most valuable field crop.

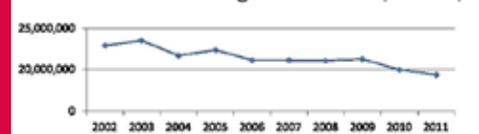
Focusing specifically on House and Senate Agriculture and Agriculture Appropriations Committee members, the message to lawmakers focused on the 16% decline in alfalfa acreage over the last 10 years and the importance of equitable funding for public research when compared to other large crops such as corn, soybean, and wheat. The disparity in USDA-ARS research funding is significant and while it is not the only factor, NAFA believes the lack of public research plays a role in the steady decline in alfalfa acreage. Not only is public research lacking at USDA-ARS, but the commitment to the alfalfa/forage industry is also waning at land grant institutions through USDA-NIFA.

Besides Congressional meetings, NAFA met with: 1) EPA to continue a dialogue about crop protection tools for the alfalfa seed industry, the PESP (Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program) for alfalfa seed, and the Renewable Fuels Standard II (RFSII) for alfalfa/forage; 2) Brandon Willis, Senior Policy Advisor to Secretary Vilsack, to talk about the state of the industry and farm bill issues; 3) USDA-NASS to talk about alfalfa/forage statistics; and 4) USDA-ARS to discuss how best to use limited research funding to the greatest benefit of the alfalfa/forage industry.

The "Alfalfa on the Hill: Bluegrass Style" reception, a popular D.C. Fly-In highlight, gave Congressional members and their staff the opportunity to visit informally with NAFA members about alfalfa and forage. Over 220 staff and members attended the event.

In total, NAFA participated in more than 110 meetings, educating Congressional members and agency staff about the importance of the nation's 3rd most valuable crop and the urgency in being recognized in policy and research funding decisions.

U.S. Alfalfa Acreage 2002-2011 (-15.7%)



Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

FY '12 USDA Research Expenditures by Crop

Crop	\$million	Scientist Years	# of Projects
Corn	44.6	109.9	108
Cotton	42.6	104.2	68
Wheat	42.1	95	145
Soybean	34.5	82.9	84
Apple	9.9	24	26
Tomato	8.5	19.7	43
Sorghum	8.4	22.3	27
Greens/leafy veg	6.9	15.4	19
Alfalfa	3.7	9.9	14
Sunflower	3.2	8.1	8
Carrot	0.8	1.6	5
Canola	0.7	1.6	5

Source: Agricultural Research Information Service

Monsanto Hosts NAFA Summer Tour, Board of Directors Meeting

NAFA board members met at Monsanto Headquarters in St. Louis, MO, for its annual summer board meeting on June 27 & 28. As host, Monsanto provided a tour of its research facilities and a thorough presentation of its product pipeline.

NAFA's summer board meeting featured:

- RMA's Forage (Alfalfa) Seed Crop Insurance Pilot Program Update by Terrence Katzer of USDA's Kansas City RMA office. RMA's pilot program was expanded last year to include written agreements in states which were not part of the original pilot area.
- Bart Fischer (Chief Economist, House Agriculture Committee - Majority Staff) and Anne Simmons (Senior Policy Advisor, House Agriculture Committee - Minority Staff) joined via conference call providing insight into the House Agriculture Committee's Farm Bill negotiations.
- Fred Luckey, former Bunge CEO and current Chairman of Field-to-Market, presented the mission and objectives of the Field-to-Market project.
- Monsanto arranged an intensive media training session for board members from Ted Hansen of O'Malley Hansen Communications which demonstrated the importance of message focus and consistency.

NAFA would like to specially thank Doug Rushing, Steve Welker, and all of the folks at Monsanto for providing a tour of Monsanto's research facilities and for their hospitality in hosting NAFA's summer board meeting.



NAFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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DuPont Pioneer

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USDA-ARS

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University of California

Dan Undersander- Ex Officio
University of Wisconsin

Doug Walsh-Ex Officio
Washington State University

MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure the ability of all segments of the alfalfa and forage industry to compete effectively and profitably, domestically and abroad. The objective of NAFA is to be a forum for consensus building among the various stakeholders and to be an effective advocate on behalf of the alfalfa and forage industry.

EDUCATION

2012 Variety Leaflet

NAFA's 2012 "Winter Survival, Fall Dormancy, and Pest Resistance Ratings for Alfalfa Varieties" was published in the November issue of Hay & Forage Grower magazine. Referred to as the Variety Leaflet, it gives marketers the opportunity to list alfalfa varieties approved by the National Alfalfa Variety Review Board. The variety leaflet is a valuable resource for alfalfa producers looking for information on the varieties which may perform well in their particular region. The 2012 leaflet contained information on 215 alfalfa varieties from 28 companies. The Variety Leaflet is available for purchase or download on the NAFA website at www.alfalfa.org.



AITs - Philadelphia, PA

NAFA's highly respected and popular Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar (AITs) was held on November 15-17, 2011, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Philadelphia, PA. The 2011 AITs featured the latest information with regard to genetics, varieties, seed production, growth and development, soils, fertility, management, and a host of other topics intended to give participants the knowledge they need to make the most of their alfalfa investment. The 2011 seminar featured the following nationally recognized speakers: Dr. Garry Lacefield, University of Kentucky; Dr. Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Randy Shaver, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Marvin Hall, Penn State University; and Dr. Neal Martin, U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center, Madison, Wisconsin.

POLICY INITIATIVES

ALFALFA & FORAGE RESEARCH PROGRAM (AFRP)

Senator Tim Johnson Initiates Letter of Support for AFRP

U.S. Senator Tim Johnson (SD) initiated a letter among his Senate colleagues in support of funding for AFRP. The AFRP, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill under the High Priority Research and Extension Area, is intended to address some of the industry's most important research needs including improving alfalfa/forage yield, improving biomass and persistence, reducing pest pressures, determining the bioenergy potential of alfalfa and other forages, and reducing losses during harvest and storage.

Funding for the AFRP was a focus of NAFA's recent Washington D.C. Fly-In as participants met with members of the House and Senate Ag Appropriations members to stress the need for research funding to address the industry's most important issues.

Senator Johnson's letter, sent to the Chairman (Senator Herb Kohl - WI) and ranking member (Senator Roy Blunt - MO) of the Senate Ag Appropriations Subcommittee, urged the Committee to fund the program at a level of \$3 million for fiscal year 2013. The letter was also signed by four other Senators including Senator Jeff Bingaman (NM), Senator Maria Cantwell (WA), Senator Tom Udall (NM), and Senator Tom Harkin (IA). The effort by Senator Johnson represents continued progress in the effort to secure funding for the AFRP in Washington.

FARM BILL

NAFA Chair Provides Written Comments to Senate Ag Committee Farm Bill Hearing

NAFA Chairman David Miller (Pioneer) provided written comment to the Senate Agriculture Committee for its hearing on Risk Management and Commodities in the 2012 Farm Bill held on March 15. The hearing was held to evaluate the need for and cost effectiveness of risk management tools available to farmers and how the federal government can provide appropriate risk management tools while making the best use of limited resources.

Chairman Miller's Farm Bill comments focused on a number of topics including crop insurance, which many in the industry believe is inadequate. While crop insurance provides coverage for alfalfa

and forage crops, Miller indicated the current program could be improved to provide an incentive for more producers to participate in the program as a viable risk management tool.

Currently, crop insurance for alfalfa and forage crops doesn't provide an equitable guaranteed price, doesn't accurately consider yield base, and is viewed as too expensive for the level of coverage available. This results in the unintended consequence of a shift in acres away from alfalfa and forage crops to other crops which are perceived to have greater risk mitigation due to the certainty of indemnities in case of losses or, in some cases, offer more attractive revenue protection options.

In another area of concern to the industry, Miller expressed NAFA's apprehension with the possibility of re-coupling farm payments to crops actually planted. Since alfalfa is not a program crop, and would have no established target price, any such program would hold the potential to distort future planting decisions and negatively affect the alfalfa and forage industry even though prices are not expected to decline in the foreseeable future.

CROP PROTECTION TOOLS

EPA

NAFA continues to foster its relationship with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials and NAFA's official liaison Linda "Pineapple" Murray. NAFA, in an effort to enhance its oversight efforts, established two internal committees, hay and seed, to monitor product re-registration and phase-out activities at EPA. Both seed producers and forage producers are encouraged to contact NAFA with a list of crop protection tools important to their operation; NAFA will add those products to its list of products to be monitored and supported.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

NAFA Fosters Coexistence

NAFA continues to foster industry coexistence between producers of genetically enhanced, conventional, and organic alfalfa seed production by facilitating the formation of grower opportunity zones (GOZs), seed grower defined geographies within which growers elect to focus on the production of either APS or GE alfalfa seed (including RRA).

AP-SENSITIVE GOZ

This is a zone for seed production of APS alfalfa seed and conventional alfalfa seed. As outlined in NAFA BMPs for Roundup Ready Seed Production, RRA seed production would not be allowed in an APS GOZ. The following APS GOZs have been grower requested/approved:

Part of Canyon & Owyhee Counties, ID; Malheur County, OR (January, 2012)
Park County, WY (January, 2012)

GE GOZ

This is a zone for seed production of GE and conventional alfalfa seed that is destined for markets that are not APS. APS alfalfa seed production would not be practical in a GE GOZ. As outlined in NAFA BMPs for Roundup Ready Seed Production, Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) certified seed production isolation requirements apply between GE and conventional seed within a GE GOZ. NAFA Best Management Practices for Roundup Ready Seed Production isolation requirements apply between a GE seed production field in a GE GOZ and the nearest conventional seed production field outside the GOZ border. The following GE GOZs have been grower requested/approved:

Part of Canyon County, ID (July, 2011)
Walla Walla County, WA & Umatilla County, OR (July, 2011)
Orovada Valley, NV (August, 2011)
Lovelock Valley, NV (August, 2011)
Box Elder & Cache Counties, UT (August, 2011)
Jerome & Minidoka Counties; part of Twin Falls County, ID (August, 2011)
Oneida & Franklin Counties, ID (August, 2011)
Big Horn County, MT (August, 2011)
Washakie County, WY (August, 2011)
Malheur County, OR (September, 2011)
Fremont County, WY (September, 2011)
Heart Mountain area, WY (December, 2011)
Carbon County, MT (January, 2012)
Mesa County, CO (September, 2012)
Canyon County, ID (October, 2012)

2011-2012 MEMBERS/SPONSORS

\$20,000+

Cal/West Seeds
 Dairyland Seed Co.
 DuPont Pioneer
 Forage Genetics International
 Monsanto

\$10,000 - \$19,999

America's Alfalfa
 CA Alfalfa Seed Prod. Research Brd.
 CROPLAN
 DEKALB
 Hay & Forage Grower
 NEXGROW
 WA Alfalfa Seed Comm.
 W-L Research

\$5,000 - \$9,999

ID Alfalfa & Clover Seed Comm.
 John Deere
 Producer's Choice
 S & W Seed Co.
 Western Ag Enterprises

\$1,500 - \$4,999

CA Alfalfa & Forage Association
 J.R. Simplot
 MacDon Industries Ltd.
 Midwest Forage Association
 MT Alfalfa Seed Committee
 NE Alfalfa Marketing Association
 The Samuel Robert Noble Foundation
 WA State Hay Growers Assoc.
 WY Alfalfa Seed Council

\$500 - \$1,499

American Seed Trade Association
 Calibrate® Technologies
 Colorado Hay & Forage Assoc.
 FMC
 Harvest Tec
 ID Hay & Forage Association
 MI Forage Council
 Nelson Irrigation Corp.
 Novazymes BioAg Inc.
 NV Alfalfa Seed Commission
 Oregon Hay & Forage Assoc.
 San Joaquin Valley Hay Growers Assoc.
 Summit Meadow Farm
 Summit Seed Coatings

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RESEARCH

D.C. Fly-In Delegates Focus on the Importance of Research Funding

NAFA's D.C. Fly-In gave participants the opportunity to meet with policymakers to stress the urgent need for research funding for alfalfa and forage crops. While other program crops such as wheat, corn, and soybean enjoy strong research support among lawmakers and the administration, alfalfa and forage crops remain relatively overlooked when it comes to dedicated research funding. In an effort to reverse this imbalance, NAFA members met with a number of Capitol Hill and agency officials stressing the need for alfalfa/forage research funding, specifically the Alfalfa & Forage Research Program (AFRP), Prosser Station, U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center, and the Logan Bee Lab. NAFA members met with USDA's ARS, NIFA, the White House, and Congressional offices to keep alfalfa and forages front and center as research policy decisions are made.

Prosser Research Funding

NAFA has been working with USDA-ARS to secure a permanent full-time scientist at the Prosser Research Unit. ARS sought input from NAFA industry members to serve on the search committee. In May, ARS posted the position of Research Geneticist in Prosser, WA, to work on alfalfa and forage crops.

The major duties of the position will be to conduct molecular biology and genetics research aimed at developing molecular markers for resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses in alfalfa and other forage crops including genetics of disease resistance, enhanced water use efficiency, and tolerance to salinity and heat stresses in alfalfa and other forage crops with emphasis on marker development, linkage mapping, and Quantitative Trait Loci (QTL) analysis. Other responsibilities include defining research approaches, conducting and directing overall research, and providing technical advice in the area of marker development for resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses in alfalfa and other forage crops to other scientists and industry stakeholders.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Hay & Forage Grower Magazine

NAFA renewed its agreement with Hay & Forage Grower magazine as its official publication. A column is featured four times a year with news relating to current NAFA initiatives and interviews with national policymakers. 2011-2012 articles included:

- NAFA & the Alfalfa Industry Leading the Way in Coexistence (*August*)
- NAFA...Growing Results (*November*)
- NAFA Earns \$\$ for Research (*March*)
- Senate Budget Chair Shares Thoughts on Agriculture (*May*)



Senator Kent Conrad featured in May article.

Field-to-Market Fieldprint Calculator

As a member of Field-to-Market, NAFA started the process of adding alfalfa to Field-to-Market's Fieldprint Calculator in an effort to help producers estimate and provide indicators to improve upon the environmental, economic, social, and health outcomes of producing crops in the United States.

Field-to-Market (FTM) is a diverse alliance of organizations working together to create opportunities across the agricultural supply chain for continuous improvements in productivity, environmental quality, and human well-being. FTM provides collaborative leadership that is engaged in industry-wide dialogue, grounded in science, and open to the full range of technology choices.

The Fieldprint Calculator is a free online tool for growers to voluntarily and securely analyze how their management choices impact natural resources and operational efficiency. The Fieldprint Calculator is a simple tool designed to help producers begin to look at how their production operations impact the sustainability of their farm. It provides general information based on the practices that are mostly likely to influence energy use, climate impact, soil loss, and water use. After completing the questions, producers can quickly assess whether their "fieldprint" value is smaller or greater than county, state, and national averages. Furthermore, by selecting different answers to the same questions, producers can see the movement in their fieldprint blue triangle relative to the static state and national orange triangles.

The Fieldprint Calculator is meant to be an educational resource to prompt growers to think about their operations and how their practices relate to natural resource management and sustainability. It will not provide them with a precise evaluation, but allow them to generally benchmark their performance against county, state, and national averages. It also helps them to look at different scenarios of practices and see how those changes may affect their overall outcomes.

NAFA board members recognize that more and more end-users are demanding information relating to the environmental, social, economic, and health components of crop production from their suppliers and that alfalfa can play an integral role in improving the overall environmental footprint of production agriculture. NAFA believes participating in Field-to-Market and the Fieldprint Calculator will serve in part to enhance alfalfa's reputation as one of the most environmentally friendly crops on the landscape.

Crops are added to the Fieldprint Calculator on an individual basis. Currently, the only crops that are included are cotton, corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, and potatoes. As it grows in popularity, more crops are likely to be added.