

Vol. 3, No. 5

Cochran to Address 2006 Annual Meeting

U.S. Senator Thad Cochran is scheduled to address the 85th Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation to be held Saturday, Dec. 2, through Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson. Cochran is keynote speaker at the Saturday General Session, which begins at 6 p.m.

At presstime, the tentative schedule looks like this:

Saturday, December 2

7 a.m. until 9 p.m.	Farm Bureau General Store
8 a.m. until 5 p.m.	Registration
8 a.m. until 8 p.m.	Young Farmers & Ranchers Silent Auction
9 a.m.	Talent and Miss Farm Bureau-Mississippi Contests
10 a.m.	Young Farmers & Ranchers Discussion Meet
1 p.m.	County Recognition Program
6 p.m.	General Session The Honorable Thad Cochran United States Senate

Sunday, December 3

7 a.m. until 9:45 a.m.	Young Farmers & Ranchers Silent Auction
7 a.m. until 9:45 a.m.	Farm Bureau General Store
8 a.m.	Farm Bureau Issues Meeting
8 a.m.	Women's Business Session
10 a.m.	Worship Service
Noon until...	Farm Bureau General Store
1 p.m.	General Session Business Session

October 2006

Multi-State Dairy Meeting in Jackson

Dairy farmers throughout the Southeast, and especially in Mississippi, have faced severe financial hardship for the last two years. The hurricanes that impacted our state last year dealt a devastating blow to an already strained industry.

Higher input costs such as fuel, fertilizer and electricity, along with drought conditions and sharp decreases in milk prices, have caused a decrease in farm income of 30 to 40 percent.

In an attempt to revitalize the dairy industry, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation hosted a meeting of ten Southeastern states to build a coalition to improve conditions in the Southeast.

The mechanism selected to provide the additional milk sales revenue is to increase the Class I price differentials by adding a diesel fuel surcharge to more correctly reflect the cost of transporting milk in the Southeast. Currently, these milk shipping costs are being paid by dairy farmers as milk is imported into the Southeast to satisfy the milk supply deficit experienced from July through December each year.

Mississippi Farm Bureau is working hard to maintain a viable dairy industry in our state. Without local dairy producers, not only will consumers pay more for a gallon of milk due to transportation costs, but quality will also decrease.

Waide Receives MSU President's Award

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation President David Waide received the Mississippi State University (MSU) College of Veterinary Medicine's "President's Pegasus Award" during ceremonies held on campus in September.

The award is presented by the president of Mississippi State University to the person who has demonstrated

outstanding achievement in teaching, research and/or service on behalf of the university and veterinary medicine. The award is presented only in those years when a deserving recipient has been identified.

MSU President Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong cited Waide's exemplary service to state agriculture in his role as president of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, the state's largest volunteer ag organization with approximately 240,000 members statewide.

Waide is serving his fifth term as federation president. He is a member of the board of directors of the American Farm Bureau Federation and president of Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company. He is a West Point row crop and cattle farmer.

Fire Prevention Message

It is a common fact that October is historically one of the driest months of the year. Even though we have had some afternoon showers and localized rain recently, many parts of the state are still very dry.

Depending on where you are located in the state, some areas are anywhere from 10 to 15 inches below normal rainfall for the 2006 calendar year. With dry weather and low fall humidity on top of a rainfall deficit, like we have now, it will not take long for wildfire conditions to create problems for fire crews around the state.

The Mississippi Forestry Commission asks that you please be careful with outdoor burning and obey local fire ordinances and county burn bans. Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006) was a record year for wildfires. Mississippi had 5,977 forest fires that burned 124,833 acres. These numbers are approximately four times higher than normal. Hurricane Katrina increased the forest fuel load in South Mississippi by ten times the normal amount of fuel on the forest floor.

Visit the Mississippi Forestry Commission's Web site for burn ban information at www.mfc.state.ms.us or contact Jimmy Mordica at 601-583-4240.

Beef Checkoff Task Force

Last week, the Industry-Wide Beef Checkoff Task Force completed four recommendations for strengthening the Beef Checkoff Program, providing more stakeholder input and making it more inclusive.

The mission of the Task Force was "to review, study and recommend enhancements to the Beef Promotion and Research Act and Order for the purpose of strengthening the checkoff for the common good of the beef industry." The group met three times this summer to discuss the various possible changes and implications to the checkoff.

The recommendations are:

- An opportunity to petition for a referendum. The beef referendum process should be revised to provide producers the opportunity to petition every five years for a referendum on continuing the checkoff. Ten percent of beef producers signing the petition at county offices will trigger the USDA to conduct a vote within a year. This is similar to the soybean referendum model.

- An adjustment of the checkoff rate. To assure strong demand-building initiatives for the beef industry in the future and to offset twenty years of inflation, adjust the per head checkoff rate to \$2. The 50-50 split between State Beef Councils and Beef Board would remain the same. The industry will need to approve any checkoff rate change through a referendum.
- Enhanced understanding of the Federation of State Beef Councils. The Federation of State Beef Councils should give priority to enhancing its identity in order to strengthen beef industry stakeholder understanding of the Federation. Options such as changing its name from The Federation Division to The Beef Checkoff Federation could be considered.
- Making the checkoff more inclusive. Any reference to the charter date of an established national non-profit industry-governed organization should be eliminated from definition (1260.113c) in the Beef Promotion and Research Order. This will make the checkoff program more inclusive.

Each of the four recommendations was passed by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the Task Force. These recommendations will now be presented to national and state beef organizations, which will consider them as they develop future policy regarding the checkoff.

Increase in Human Cases of West Nile Virus

In Mississippi, there have been a total of 131 cases of West Nile Virus in humans which resulted in four deaths. This is twice the number that was reported for the same period last year, according to officials with the Mississippi Department of Health.

Mississippians can take the following simple precautions to reduce their risk of contracting West Nile Virus: (1) Remove sources of standing water; (2) Avoid mosquito-prone areas, especially at night when mosquito activity is highest; (3) Wear protective clothing (such as long-sleeved shirts and pants) when in mosquito-prone areas when possible; and (4) Apply a mosquito repellent according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Symptoms of West Nile Virus infection are often mild or flu-like and may include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, a rash, muscle weakness or swollen lymph nodes. In a small number of people, infection can result in encephalitis or meningitis, which can lead to paralysis, coma and possibly death.

For more information on West Nile Virus, mosquito-borne viruses and the latest WNV statistics, the public can visit the Mississippi Department of Health's Web site at www.HealthyMS.com or call the West Nile Virus toll-free hotline from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. at 1-877-WST-NILE (1-877-978-6453).

Landowner Workshop Scheduled

Mississippi State University Extension Service has created the Natural Resource Enterprises Program to assist private

landowners in developing alternative or supplemental means of income on their land. Examples of such enterprises include: fee hunting and angling, trail riding, bird watching, and agro-tourism.

The Natural Resource Enterprises Program will hold a Landowner Workshop on October 10th at the Central Mississippi Research and Extension Center. Topics to be covered include revenue potential, legal and accident liability, developing and operating an enterprise, marketing, laws and regulations, and cost-share programs. The afternoon session will be held in the field and will focus on wildlife habitat management.

The workshops are open to all who might have an interest in alternative enterprises. Landowners who are interested can register online at www.wildlifeworkshop.msstate.edu or call (601)-325-3174. There is a \$25 registration fee. This fee will include a meal and all the information that will be presented during the workshop. Registration closes one week prior to workshop.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please pass this along to them. If you should have any questions, you can contact Brook Stuart at 601-977-4243 or Adam Rohnke at 601-857-2284.

USDA Extends Deadline for Emergency Grazing on CRP Acres

On Sept. 15, 2006, USDA extended the window for emergency livestock grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land for farmers and ranchers affected by drought. The original deadline for emergency grazing was Sept. 30, 2006. The date has been extended to Nov. 30, 2006.

Mississippi has 27 counties that qualified for this emergency program. No additional counties were added due to the extension. USDA also announced that CRP rental payments will be reduced by only 10 percent instead of the standard 25 percent on CRP lands that are grazed in 2006.

State Resolutions Meeting, Women's Leadership Conference, other events

Mark your calendar for these events:

Nov. 2 State Resolutions Meeting, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Building, Jackson; **Nov. 10-11** Women's Leadership Conference, Hilton Hotel, Jackson; **Nov. 16-23** Farm City Week;

Dec. 2-3 MFBBF Annual Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Jackson; **Jan. 7-10** AFBF Annual Convention, Salt Lake City, Utah;

Feb. 1 Legislative Reception, Dennery's, Jackson; **Feb. 4-10** Food Check-Out Week; and **Feb. 6** Food Check-Out Day.

\$250 Prize Drawing

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBBF) members who pay their 2007 membership dues by Oct. 31, 2006, are eligible to be included in a drawing for a \$250 debit card.

Eight paid 2007 membership numbers, one for each MFBBF region, will be drawn at the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting.

The winners will be notified Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2006.

Winners do not have to be present to win – the only stipulation is that their 2007 membership dues were paid by Oct. 31, 2006.

Discounts on Medical Services

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation members can now enjoy discounts from certain providers of medical services. These include: New Benefits Prescription; Coast to Coast Vision Plan; Beltone Hearing; Vitacost Vitamins; and Liberty Diabetic Plan.

You simply use your prescription discount card, available from the MFBBF Member Benefits Program, and enjoy immediate discounts. Call Dedra Luke at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4169, for more information or visit the Web site at: www.passkeysolutions.com

High-Speed Internet Services

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and Agristar Global Networks have teamed up to offer Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation member families and businesses major discounts on high-speed internet services.

Agristar's high-speed internet can reach every Mississippi Farm Bureau member throughout the state that DSL and cable can't. It utilizes satellite technology and can provide each subscriber with super-fast, always-on broadband connection and email for up to five people per account.

Agristar can offer substantial discounts to all members. As a commitment to continued value for Farm Bureau members, Agristar Global Networks has extended its \$125 mail-in rebate for new customers. The rebate offer is good through Oct. 31, 2006.

You also receive one free month of service if total contract monthly service fee is prepaid in full and a \$50 rebate from Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBBF). Please be aware that the \$50 MFBBF rebate checks for new subscribers will be mailed to the individuals at the end of each business quarter and after verification of at least a 31-day subscription from Agristar.

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation wants to provide a program to all members that will encourage utilization of broadband technologies to access the worldwide web.

Agristar delivers timely ag business and economic reports, localized weather, market data and analyses, and other multimedia programming.

Complete installation is provided within two weeks of contacting Agristar, and technical support is available 24/7 from a U.S.-based call center.

Equipment, installation and start-up is \$599. Monthly service starts at \$59.95.

For more information, contact Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Member Benefits at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4169, or Agristar Global Network at 1-888-777-0440, or you can visit www.agristar.com

Mini Pocket Light

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation is offering a new item for its members – the US2AAA Mini Pocket Light – and the cost is just \$10.

The US2AAA High-Intensity Mini Pocket Light is small, lightweight and powerful. The removable hat-clip feature

allows attachment to virtually any hat visor for hands-free use that puts light right where you need it – in the direction of your vision.

It is perfect for keychains, purses, toolboxes and glove compartments.

For more information, contact the MFBF Safety Program at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4242.

Agri-View Schedule

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation's television program, *Agri-View: A Look Around Mississippi Agriculture*, will feature Mississippi's pork industry on its next program on Nov. 28 at 5 p.m. See it all from raising baby pigs to the final processing.

The program airs on RFD-TV and can be seen on Channel 9409 on Dish Network and on Channel 379 on DirecTV.

ATV Discount Coupon

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and Got Gear Motorsports, LLC, in Ridgeland have teamed up to offer Farm Bureau members an exclusive \$500 discount coupon on the purchase of new ATVs and 4-wheel utility vehicles.

This discount only applies to ATVs that are 400 cc or greater and does not apply to any other special promotions. This offer expires 12-31-06. Got Gear is a dealer of Yamaha, Kawasaki and Polaris ATVs and 4-wheel utility vehicles.

To receive the \$500 discount coupon, you must call Dedra Luke at 601-977-4169, or toll-free, at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4169, with your Farm Bureau membership number. Upon

verification of your membership, a coupon will be mailed to you.

Please be aware that you cannot go directly to Got Gear to receive this discount without your coupon.

Get Your Christmas Gifts at Annual Meeting

The Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation State Women's Committee will set up a "General Store" at the 85th MFBF Annual Meeting in Jackson on Dec. 2 and 3.

Proceeds from sales of items will go toward funding the Berta Lee White Scholarship. The General Store will sell homemade breads, cakes, jams, jellies, candy, afghans, earrings, hair bows, wreaths, Christmas tree decorations, cookbooks and other items.

The Young Farmers and Ranchers Program will again host silent and live auctions. All of the proceeds from the auctions help students with the rising costs of tuition. This year, Farm Bureau awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to students attending a Mississippi university or community college and majoring in agricultural-related fields.

Remember to bring your checkbook to the Annual Meeting. Do some of your Christmas shopping and give our ag students a gift that keeps on giving.

For more information about the General Store, contact Women's Program Coordinator Clara Bilbo at 977-4245. For more information about the live and silent auctions, contact YF&R Program Assistant Nancy Britt at 977-4230. Or call, toll-free, 1-800-227-8244.



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