



Weekly Update from the Texas Seed Trade Association

Member News

We sincerely thank all our conference sponsors and attendees of The Texas Seed Trade Association Annual Membership & Policy Meeting

Additional news The Texas Seed Trade Association office has received several unsolicited memorials in honor of **Rusty Smallwood**. Thank you to those who have generously sent memorials. The executive committee and the board of directors have had some discussions about starting a memorial to Rusty via an endowed scholarship. This seems entirely appropriate as Rusty spearheaded our primary scholarship fundraiser, the corn-hole tournament, the last three years, and through his service as a dedicated association board member, Rusty was always a strong promoter of our scholarship activities.

If you would like to make a memorial scholarship contribution in Rusty's name please consider the TSTA Foundation, P.O. Box 1588, Goldthwaite, TX 76844.

Attorney General Ken Paxton Sues Biden Administration to Stop New Radical Emissions Rule

from the Texas Attorney General's Office

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has sued to prevent an expansion of authority by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") by means of a rule aimed at regulating methane and other emissions from sources in the oil and natural gas industry.

EPA's new rule establishes onerous emissions standards for the oil and gas industry that would require producers to drastically update infrastructure. Additionally, the rule usurps the States' role in establishing emissions standards for existing sources and establishes new guidelines that mirror the Federal standards for new sources. EPA's rule violates fundamental principles of federalism by forcing the States to adopt Federal standards as their own in an unlawful attempt to regulate existing sources.

The rule has been developed despite the Clean Air Act's clear requirements for findings as to specific emissions and emission sources. Instead of making such findings, the EPA relies upon its past rules that Texas and other states challenged as illegal. Attorney General Paxton filed the petition for review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

"The EPA is once again trying to seize regulatory authority that Congress has not

granted,” said Attorney General Paxton. “I am challenging this blatant overreach by the Biden Administration and will continue to defend vital sectors of the Texas economy.”

CORN GROWERS: EPA’S NEW TAILPIPE STANDARD WILL HURT FAMILY FARMS

Source: National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) news release

The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) expressed grave concern and disappointment today with the Environmental Protection Agency's final 2027-2032 emissions standards for sedans and light- and medium-duty trucks.

The plan still relies almost exclusively on the use of electric vehicles, requiring that a majority of the specified fleets are electric in less than a decade. A decision of this magnitude will have long-lasting negative implications for the rural economy because it ignores the benefits of ethanol.

"We are deeply concerned and disappointed that EPA has chosen to force a one-size-fits-all solution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ignore the readily available solution that biofuels like ethanol bring to the table," said NCGA President Harold Wolle. "This decision will not only severely hamper the administration's ability to reach its own climate goals, but it will also hurt family farms and rural communities that rely heavily on the sale of biofuels. On top of that, it will remove consumer choice from the market."

Given that for the past 15 years more than one-third of the corn produced each year has been used in ethanol, Wolle's concerns are shared by many experts.

Economists Jeffrey Stokes and Jim Jansen, writing for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, recently noted this magnitude of structural loss in corn demand could lead to a permanent 50% decrease in the price of corn causing the top five corn-producing states (Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Indiana) to collectively lose well over \$100 billion in farmland value from corn acreage alone. The authors noted that such a decline would have profound implications for the financial viability of Midwestern farming operations and the nation's food supply.

Corn growers have been on the forefront of the campaign to lower emissions. For example, NCGA has urged Congress to pass the Next Generation Fuels Act, which would set a new, cleaner standard for fuel that capitalizes on American-grown biofuels. The organization has also pushed for consumer access to higher blends of ethanol at the pump.

Currently, around one percent of the cars on the road are electric vehicles. Increasing that number significantly will require major infrastructure developments and improvements in a short amount of time, something concerning to a majority of consumers, as shown in a recent survey, sponsored by NCGA and conducted by Morning Consult.

Results from a recent survey showed that Americans have concerns on a range of issues involving electric vehicles, including the accessibility of charging stations, and 72 percent say vehicles that are compatible with biofuels should remain available to consumers.

To view that survey [click here](#).

Farmers have pointed to California to illustrate the difficulties that come with an overreliance on electric vehicles. The state, one of the most prominent in the push for electrification, has spent years at the forefront of the transition to EVs, spending enormous political capital and billions of dollars to encourage its citizens to embrace electric vehicles. Yet, by the end of 2022, only 2.6% of the state's light-duty vehicles were electrified.

The desire to significantly reduce GHG emissions and address climate change has been a marquee issue.

Editor's Note: For those not particularly paying close attention the US EPA has been out of control under the current administration - this is but the latest example. Meant to drive car and light truck sales to 70% electric vehicles by 2032 these new regulations are based largely on fantasy. No one believes the infrastructure for charging the number of EV envisioned can possibly be in place in eight years. EV sales are in a downturn just now based on consumers rejection of the technology. EV manufacturers have scaled back production due to their own skepticism over the developing technology, supply chain issues, costs, reliability of their product, and tanking sales.

Rice Tec has an opening for a production agronomist in Brazoria County. Please contact the TSTA office if you are interested or know of someone who may be.



News Bits

Source: Feeding the Economy news release

Washington, D.C. - Today, 32 food and agriculture groups released the eighth annual "Feeding the Economy" report, a historic farm-to-fork economic impact study that helps to estimate the direct and indirect economic contributions of the food and agriculture industries on jobs, wages, economic output, and business taxes.

The 2024 report's findings show that the total economic impact for the food and agriculture-related industries grew 11.8% over the last year, reaching \$9.63 trillion. This represents 20.01% of total U.S. output.

The study also drills down to highlight the impact of this sector to include:

*Total Jobs: 48,665,870 (up 19.53% since the 2020 report)

*Total Wages: \$2.77 trillion (up 33.82% since the 2020 report)

*Total Taxes: \$1.25 trillion (up 36.91% since the 2020 report)

*Exports: \$181.36 billion (down 2.70% since the 2020 report)

There were almost the same number of jobs in agriculture (2.49 million) and manufacturing agricultural products (2.46 million). The number of direct jobs in food and agriculture was up almost 800,000 since the 2020 report (up 20%).

From the 2020 Feeding the

Pansies named newest Texas Superstar - Plants add versatility, range of color to landscapes

Texas A&M AgriLife

The newest [Texas Superstar](#) plant – the pansy – is a versatile, tough, durable cold-hardy ornamental that provides color during an otherwise drab time of year.

Pansies are one of the most popular annual garden flowers for the landscape, said Paul Winski, [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) horticulture program specialist in the [Texas A&M Department of Horticultural Sciences](#).



Pansies offer a wide range of color for cool-season landscapes. Their toughness and versatility are two reasons pansies were named a Texas Superstar plant. (Texas A&M AgriLife photo by Paul Winski)

They come in a wide range of colors, including shades of purple, blue, yellow, orange and white. The flowers typically have a dark center called the "face" or "blotch," which contrasts with the lighter-colored petals.

"The unique color combinations and patterns that pansies provide around the house make them a popular choice for gardens and containers," he said. "There are so many colors. They are always a great option to add a pop of color during the cool season in Texas."

To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must perform well for growers throughout the state. Texas Superstars must also be easy to propagate, ensuring the plants are widely available and reasonably priced.

Some pansy series available at garden centers include Delta, Freefall, Colossus, Matrix, Cool Wave, Crown, Ultima and Majestic Giants II.

Economy report to now, food and agriculture manufacturing jobs grew at a faster rate than any other job category. As a result, manufacturing of agricultural production now accounts for almost 20% of America's manufacturing jobs, over twice as many as automobile manufacturing. The report shows the significant role that the food and agriculture sectors play in supporting the U.S. economy and helps the public and policymakers better understand how these industries continue to promote those contributions.

To view the full report and the list of its 32 sponsors [click here](#).

BAYER IS CONSIDERING OPTIONS TO SETTLE ROUNDUP LAWSUITS, INCLUDING BANKRUPTCY Mar. 15, 2024

by Jef Feeley, Tim Loh and Crystal Tse, Bloomberg

Bayer AG is weighing whether to use a controversial legal maneuver known as the Texas Two-Step bankruptcy to try to resolve tens of thousands of U.S. lawsuits claiming its Roundup weedkiller causes cancer, according to people familiar with its thinking.

Faced with a recent string of costly jury verdicts over the herbicide, Bayer executives are consulting with law firms and advisers about how to prompt a bankruptcy judge to halt further trials scheduled for this year. The object is to wrangle a settlement of more than 50,000 cases, said the people, who asked not to be identified discussing a confidential matter.

The bankruptcy maneuver gets its name from the use of a Texas state law that lets companies split their assets and liabilities into separate units, then place the unit loaded with liabilities into bankruptcy to drive a global settlement. Courts have rejected the tactic by 3M

When and where to plant pansies

Pansies are cool-season plants, meaning they thrive in cooler temperatures. They are often planted in the spring or fall, as they can withstand light frosts.

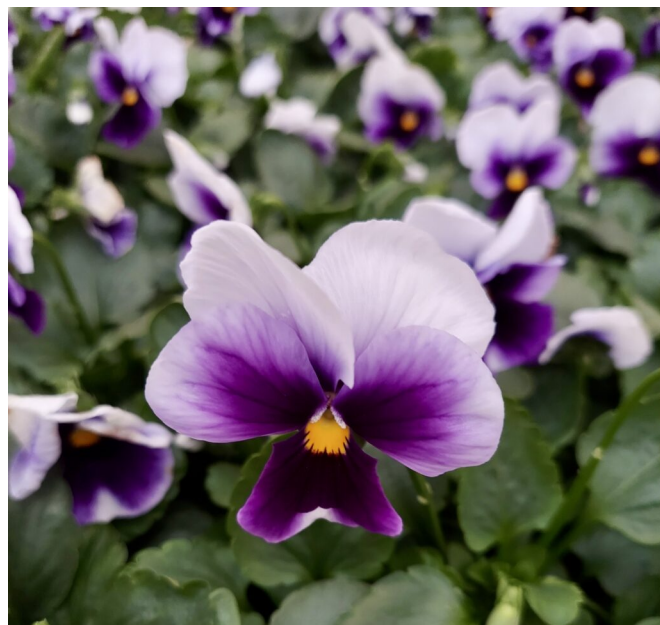
Winski said pansies can be found on the market in Texas by August and that many professionals and home gardeners will add them to landscapes by October because they perform well through typical Texas winters and can bounce back from cold snaps.

“They hold up well as a cool-season ornamental and provide color at a time of the year when there isn’t much color in the landscape,” he said. “People are planting them earlier and earlier, but I think the best time to plant them is around Halloween. They’re just tough as nails and don’t need a lot of inputs or attention.”

Pansies prefer full sun to partial shade and adapt to most well-drained soil types, he said. They grow to 6-12 inches in height with a 6- to 8-inch spread. When planted in clusters, Winski said they will typically fill out when planted 12 inches apart from center to center.

Winski recommended adding some general 1:1:1 ratio fertilizer upon planting. The application will be enough to carry the plant through its life. Because they are a cool-season plant, pansies in landscapes typically thrive on moisture from rainfall. Once established, they require watering only when soils become dry.

“Pansies are one of those plants that you can plant and, once established, require minimal care,” he said. “They’re low maintenance, have very few disease issues and stay in bloom.”



Once established well, pansies can offer a cold-tolerant pop of color that stands well through typical

Co. over suits targeting faulty hearing protection devices for US soldiers and by Johnson & Johnson in litigation tied to its talc-based baby powder.

To read the entire article [click here](#).

Texas winter weather. (Texas A&M AgriLife photo by Paul Winski)

Best use for pansies

Plants perform best when adding color to borders or in mass in landscape beds and containers, Winski said. Cascading or trailing varieties, like Cool Wave and Freefall, are available and great for hanging baskets or containers.

Pansy flowers are also edible. Their petals can be used to garnish drinks, salads, desserts and other dishes.

“Pansies are one of those all-around staple ornamentals for Texas landscapes when it comes to the cool season,” he said. “If you want to add color to your landscape, you can find imaginative ways to apply them because they are consistent performers. That’s why they are a Texas Superstar.”

Texas Superstar is a registered trademark owned by [Texas A&M AgriLife Research](#). Plants are designated by the Texas Superstar executive board, which comprises nine horticulturists from AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

Access the American Seed Trade Association's updated guide for locating local, professionally produced, environment, conservation, and cover crop seed

ASTA release

The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) updated its guide assisting farmers, landowners, and others to easily locate and contact professional seed suppliers for quality environment, conservation, and cover crop seed.

The interactive [Environment, Conservation, and Cover Crop Seed Resource Guide](#) helps buyers find dealers for specific seed types by geographic location to support production and sustainability goals.

“It’s important to plan proactively, and as far in advance as possible, to ensure your local, professional seed dealer has your selection of seed in stock when and where you need it,” said ASTA President & CEO Andy LaVigne. “Professionally produced and processed seed is designed to help farmers achieve success through managing the use of the right seed, at the right place, at the right time. It has been selected, harvested, cleaned, analyzed, processed, and packaged for performance; and it has been tested for purity and germination. All of this helps ensure you get the best quality seed to meet your production and sustainability goals, while minimizing the presence of invasive and other

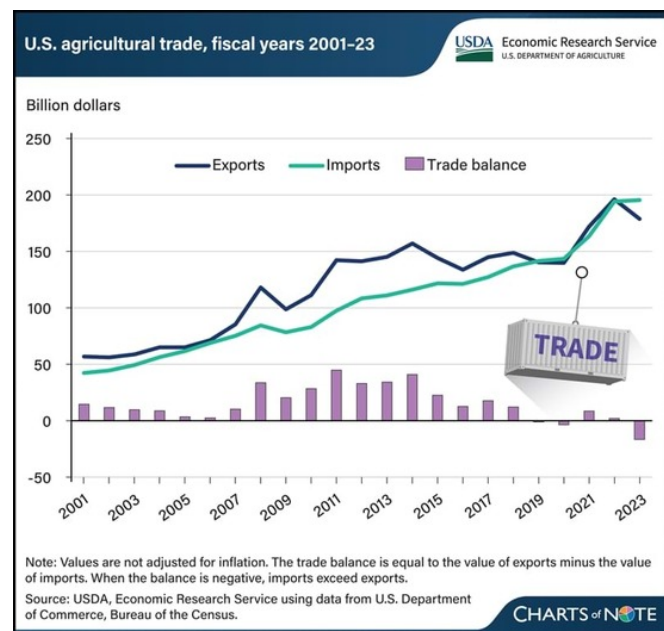
weeds.” ASTA works with its members to update this map every year, ensuring farmers, landowners, and other interested individuals have the latest information to access local and professionally produced environment, conservation, and cover crop seed. A recent survey by ASTA found that **an added 10.5 million acres of cover crops will be planted in the next five years** as a result of USDA’s Partnerships for Climate Smart-Commodities projects. This projected demand demonstrates the benefits of conservation resources like this map, and supports ASTA’s ongoing efforts in sustainability advocacy for cover crop seed.

[View the updated Environment, Conservation, and Cover Crop Seed Resource Guide here.](#)

Factoids

USDA: U.S. AG IMPORT VALUES OUTPACE EXPORT VALUES IN 2023

USDA release



The U.S. agricultural trade balance measures the difference between the values of exported farm goods and those imports from other countries. For nearly 60 years, U.S. agricultural trade maintained a surplus, but in fiscal year (FY) 2019, the balance shifted to a deficit, where it has stayed 3 out of the last 5 fiscal years. In FY 2023, U.S. agricultural imports exceeded exports by \$16.6 billion.

Imports have largely followed a stable upward trend, while exports have had relatively wide swings. From FY 2013 to 2023, import values increased at a compound annual growth rate of 5.8 percent, and exports grew at a rate of 2.1 percent. Although the U.S. agricultural trade balance is closely watched, it reflects changing consumer tastes, a robust economy, and a strong dollar, and is not an indicator of export competitiveness or

import dependence.

The U.S. consumer's growing appetite for high-valued imported goods--such as fruits and vegetables, alcoholic beverages, and processed grain products--has contributed to the expanding trade deficit. Those goods often include products that can't be easily sourced in the United States, such as tropical products or off-season produce. In contrast, nearly 40 percent of U.S. exports are bulk commodities, whose prices respond more rapidly to global markets. This chart also appears in the USDA, Economic Research Service report Selected Charts from Ag and Food Statistics: Charting the Essentials, 2024.

Editor's Note: Kinda sad to think we import more food (value) than we export. We all like Chilean grapes in January. Ag exports once comprised the largest portion of US trade surplus but the days of trade surplus are long gone.

Texas Seed Trade Association |
www.texasseedtrade.com



The articles, views, and opinions expressed in the Weekly Update do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Texas Seed Trade Association or the opinions of its members.

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