



February 2020 Newsletter

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MGFA's 113th Annual Convention & Industry Trade Show is Next Tuesday-Thursday

Join your industry friends and colleagues next week, March 3 – 5, at the 113th Annual MGFA Convention and Trade Show to be held at the DoubleTree By Hilton Hotel in Bloomington. We have a great line-up of speakers covering topics including the new grain law changes, rural mental health & stress, credit policies & liens, air quality rules & permits and more. Well-known meteorologist Paul Douglas and head coach of the U of M Golden Gophers football team, PJ Fleck, will be on hand as our keynote speakers. We have over 75 vendors in the trade show who are looking forward to seeing their customers and meeting new ones; a nice selection of items available to bid on in the Silent Auction, which benefits the MGFA scholarship fund; a fun pre-convention tour & gracious hospitality suite hosts. The weather next week looks decent, so please join us at the DoubleTree! [Click here](#) for the registration form.

MGFA Convention Hotel Still Accepting Reservations – Book Your Rooms Today

The DoubleTree By Hilton – Bloomington, site of the 113th Annual MGFA Convention and Industry Trade Show, is still accepting room reservations. Please use the following link to make your reservations online: https://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/M/MSPBSDT-MGF-20200301/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

If you prefer to make reservations by phone, please call 952-835-7800 and **use the group code MGF**. The convention room rate is \$113/night. We encourage members to make plans to attend the entire convention to take full advantage of the networking, educational opportunities, industry trade show and other events we've planned for you. We would greatly appreciate your participation in this event!

MGFA Board Members Up for Re-election

The 113th Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association will be held on Wednesday, March 4th at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Bloomington. Three (3) MGFA Board of Director positions are up for election and each have current directors running for re-election. If you have a desire to be more directly involved with the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association and have an interest in providing meaningful leadership and guidance for this association, consider running for one of the positions on the Board.

The association is divided into 4 districts (information can be found in the 2019 MGFA Directory, pages 8-10). **District 2** (central) – Bob Heim from St. Cloud is the current director from District 2 and is running for re-election to the Board. This position is open to candidates who are working for a member in good standing with its main office in the district. **District 3** (southwest) – this position is currently held by Mark Herberg and is “required” to be a farmer/director of a cooperative elevator member firm with its main office in the district. **At Large** – Brian Yager with Munson Lakes Nutrition, LLC in Howard Lake was appointed to fill the position vacated by Tom Traen’s retirement last summer. Brian is the current At Large director and is running for election to the Board. This position is open to any candidate working for a member in good standing with the Association. If you have an interest in running for one of these Board positions or want more information about the Board, please contact the MGFA office.

2020 MGFA Grain Grading Schools Scheduled for March & April

Each year, the Minnesota Grain & Feed Association hosts multiple spring grain grading schools for industry employees. These schools are conducted in a very practical manner by licensed grain inspectors. Our first grain grading school will be held on **Tuesday, March 31 at Bigwood Event Center, Fergus Falls (218) 739-2211**. The focus at this school will be on the grading of all three major grains – corn, soybeans, and wheat. The second grain grading school will be held on **Thursday, April 8 at Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel, Morton (507-697-8000)**. The focus at this school will be on the grading of corn and soybeans. The schools will begin at 9:00 AM and conclude by 3:00 PM (lunch included). Proper use of grading equipment will be demonstrated and each participant will receive a participation certificate.



The cost for the school is \$90/person for MGFA member firms. The non-member charge is \$100/person. The cost includes training materials, training personnel time, breaks and lunch. The size of each school is limited so early registration is encouraged.

To register, complete the **registration form**. Return the form, along with a check to the Minnesota Grain & Feed Association. Cancellations will be accepted up to 48 hours prior to each school. After that date a full refund cannot be guaranteed. We encourage pre-registration so we can assure meal counts, material availability, etc.

MGFA Wants to Feature Your Photo on the Spring Edition Cover of *Mill & Elevator News*

As a way to keep our magazine member-centric, we invite all our member amateur photographers to submit your photos for the cover of the spring edition of the MGFA member magazine. We'd love to see creative photos of your facility, your employees/co-workers or photos generally related to the grain and feed industry here in Minnesota.

If you plan to submit a photo, please note the following specs:

- Image size needs to be 8.75" x 11.25"
- Photos can be color or black & white
- Photo needs to be submitted by the original photographer
- Please provide a short write-up about your submitted photo
- We intend to give photo credit to the photographer, so we'd appreciate a written note releasing your photo to be used on the cover of the MGFA magazine.
- Deadline to submit photos: Monday, March 16, 2020
- Submit photos to info@mgfa.org in a .jpeg file format.

We look forward to seeing your photos, so please send them in today!

Submit Your Member News for the Spring Edition of *Mill & Elevator News Magazine*

In addition to your photos, we would also like to receive any newsworthy items about your location(s) for the Member News section of the spring MGFA magazine. We'd be happy to include your news about new construction or expansion of your facility; milestones, anniversaries or industry recognition; merger or consolidation news; hiring of new managers or retirements of employees; or any other company news items you'd like to share. Please email or fax in your member news by **Friday, March 20, 2020**. Information can be sent to info@mgfa.org or fax at 651-454-8213.

Your Grain Bond Situation Deserves a Check-up

The Minnesota Grain and Feed Association, through its in-house (MGFA) insurance agency, has been providing grain warehouse, grain buyer and deferred payment (surety) bonds for country grain elevators for over 80 years. *One hundred percent* of the agency commission is retained by the association and supports MGFA members through the legislative and regulatory representation, timely industry information and meaningful industry education you have come to expect from us – your current agent/agency can't make that claim!

It is simple to separate your surety bond coverage from your other insurance coverage or to change agencies if necessary. Your grain bonds are continuous (in-force until cancelled) so they can be changed at any time during the license year. If it's time to re-evaluate your current grain bond situation, give us a call for a quote (651-454-8212) or e-mail us at info@mgfa.org. We appreciate the consideration & your support!

MGFA Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship Program

In an effort to financially assist students pursuing agriculture degrees at institutions of higher learning, the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association established a scholarship program, which is funded by generous donations from industry members and friends. The MGFA annually awards up to three \$1,000 scholarships to successful applicants.

Applicants must be:

1. The child of an elevator or feed mill employee whose employer is a current MGFA member, in good standing with the Association, OR
2. An employee/intern of an elevator or feed mill whose employer is a current MGFA member, in good standing with the Association

The student must be pursuing a degree in agriculture (preference will be given to those pursuing a degree in agribusiness) and have a minimum GPA of 2.75. The application for the 2020-21 Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship is available [here](#). The deadline to submit an application is April 17, 2020.

If you know of a student who would be interested in receiving a scholarship, please share this information & encourage them to apply. Information can also be found on the MGFA website at www.mgfa.org.

Anhydrous Ammonia Inspection & Compliance Workshops

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has released their [schedule](#) of Anhydrous Ammonia Inspection and Compliance Workshops to take place around the State during the second half of March. These workshops are targeted for anyone who uses, maintains or operates anhydrous ammonia bulk storage and/or equipment, including farmers, agricultural chemical facility employees, managers, safety officers, insurance agents and emergency responders. The workshops are free to attend and no pre-registration is required.

OSHA Requires Posting of Injury and Illness Reporting

Grain, feed and processing facilities are required to complete the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) 2019 injury and illness recordkeeping obligations by posting the Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses (OSHA Form 300A) in each facility. OSHA requires the notice be displayed from Feb. 1 to April 30 each year in a visible place where employee notices usually are posted. Businesses with no injuries or illnesses for the year still are required to post the form. In addition, a company official is required to certify that the information in Form 300A was checked and is believed to be correct and complete.

All businesses with 250 or more employees in industries covered by the recordkeeping regulation must electronically submit this form no later than March 2. Companies with between 20-249 employees in certain industries, including "warehousing and storage," also must submit the form by March 2. OSHA began accepting submissions on Jan. 2. Employers with more than 20 but less than 250 employees – in each establishment – still are required to electronically submit their 300A form annually (includes part-time, seasonal, and/or temporary workers). Facilities may submit the OSHA Form 300A using the Injury Tracking Application on OSHA's website. Employers also are required to include their Employer Identification Numbers (EIN) when filing their reports.

Source: NGFA Newsletter

USDA and USTR Announce Progress on Implementation of U.S.-China Phase One Agreement

WASHINGTON, February 25, 2020 – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer announced today that China has taken numerous actions to begin implementing its agriculture-related commitments under the landmark U.S.-China Phase One Economic and Trade Agreement on schedule. The agreement entered into force on February 14, 2020.

These actions include:

- Signing a protocol that allows the importation of U.S. fresh chipping potatoes ([U.S. Chipping Potatoes Protocol Announcement](#));
- Lifting the ban on imports of U.S. poultry and poultry products, including pet food containing poultry products ([Poultry and Poultry Products Announcement](#));
- Lifting restrictions on imports of U.S. pet food containing ruminant material ([Pet Food with Ruminant Ingredients Announcement](#));
- Updating lists of facilities approved for exporting [animal protein](#), [pet food](#), [dairy](#), [infant formula](#), and [tallow for industry use](#) to China;
- Updating the lists of products that can be exported to China as [feed additives](#); and
- Updating an approved list of [U.S. seafood species](#) that can be exported to China.

In addition, China has begun announcing tariff exclusions for imports of U.S. agricultural products subject to its retaliatory tariffs ([Tariff Exclusion Process Announcement](#)), and it announced a reduction in retaliatory tariff rates on certain U.S. agricultural goods ([Tariff Rate Adjustment Announcement](#)). These types of actions will facilitate China's progress toward meeting its Phase One purchase commitments.

"President Trump and this Administration negotiated a strong trade agreement with China that promises significant benefits for American agriculture," Secretary Perdue said. "We look forward to realizing these benefits this year and are encouraged by progress made last week. We fully expect compliance with all elements of the deal."

Ambassador Lighthizer said, "President Trump signed the Phase One agreement a little more than a month ago and we are already seeing positive results. Under the President's leadership, we will ensure the agreement is strictly enforced for the benefit of our workers, farmers, ranchers and businesses."

U.S. Pork Industry Requests Additional ASF Prevention Measures

Thanks to continued vigilance by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Bureau of Customs & Border Protection (CBP) and the U.S. pork industry, the U.S. has so far prevented an outbreak of African swine fever (ASF), but to ensure that the U.S. swine herd remains free of the disease, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) and 30 state pork producer associations asked Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue Feb. 20 to take additional measures, including restricting imports of organic soy products for animal feeds from all ASF-positive countries.

NPPC explained that the U.S. pork and feed industries have adopted [holding times](#) to allow for the natural degradation of any viruses to ensure that most imported feed ingredients are safe to use. Research indicates, however, that organic soy products can maintain the virus for longer periods of time, making holding times impractical, NPPC said.

While overall imports of feed ingredients are minimal, most soy products imported by the U.S. are organic, NPPC said, adding that the organization is confident in the safety of domestic soy products.

"We appreciate the diligent focus and outstanding collaboration between the U.S. pork industry, USDA, CBP, Congress and state animal health officials to protect the U.S. swine herd," said NPPC president David Herring, a hog farmer from Lillington, N.C. "While we are confident in the safety of domestic soy products, we urge Secretary Perdue to use authority under the Animal Health Protection Act to restrict imports of organic soy products from ASF-positive countries to further safeguard our animals and prevent an outbreak that would have devastating, far-reaching economic consequences."

NPPC and the 30 state pork associations also asked USDA to further explore the merit of restricting all soy products from ASF-positive countries to enhance its online system that would be used for permitting animal

movements if an outbreak occurred and to expand state animal health laboratory testing capacity. The pork industry letter to Perdue can be read [here](#).

In the letter, NPPC noted that USDA personnel, as well as staff from the Food & Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine, have been involved in a Feed Risk Task Force organized by feed and pork industry organizations that also includes representatives from other food animal groups.

According to the letter, the task force "has reached a stalemate due to lack of validated sampling and testing protocols for feed ingredients. However, we continue to have heightened concern over the risk of ASF contamination of imported feed ingredients."

"The pork and feed industry participants have taken steps to limit the risk from imported vitamin and amino acids through holding times, but that is an impractical mitigation for soy products, especially organic soy products, due to their ability to maintain virus for extended periods of time," NPPC said in the letter. "For that reason, we are asking you to utilize your authority under the Animal Health Protection Act to restrict the imports of organic soy products for animal feeds from all ASF-positive countries and to consider if action should be taken on all soy products."

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives approved Senate legislation that authorizes funding for 720 new agricultural inspectors at land, air and sea ports to prevent ASF and other foreign animal diseases from entering the U.S., NPPC said, noting that the legislation also authorizes 600 new agricultural technicians and 60 new agricultural canine teams.

The most likely path for a foreign animal disease to enter the country would be through the illegal transport of contaminated products. An outbreak of certain foreign animal diseases, including ASF, would immediately close U.S. pork export markets, causing significant damage to farmers and consumers, NPPC said.

NPPC added that it continues to advocate for other foreign animal disease preparedness measures, including quickly establishing a U.S. foot and mouth disease (FMD) vaccine bank as provided for in the 2018 farm bill. The U.S. does not currently have access to enough vaccine to quickly contain and eradicate an FMD outbreak, NPPC said.

Source: Feedstuffs

Inland Waterways Receive Key Funding in Army Corps Work Plan

The NGFA's quest to jump start construction on the dilapidated locks on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois River System under the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) received some positive momentum this month, as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released its [2020 Work Plan](#).

The Work Plan revealed that NESP would receive \$4.5 million to conduct additional pre-construction engineering and design (PED) work, which is a necessary step before a lock and dam project can be constructed (known as a "new start"). Significantly, this is the first time that NESP has received PED funding since 2012 and while additional PED funding will be needed next year, this \$4.5 million in fiscal year 2020 funding keeps NESP on track to receive a new-start designation for construction potentially within the next three fiscal years.

What is NESP?

According to the Corps, the purpose of NESP is to "improve efficiency and capacity of this nationally significant Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway (UMR-IWW) navigation system while protecting preserving and enhancing the structure, diversity and function of this nationally significant ecosystem." Specifically, NESP will expand navigation capacity by constructing seven new 1,200-foot locks on the UMR (lock 20, 21, 22, 24 and 25) and IWW (LaGrange Lock and Peoria Lock), as well as undertake a number of environmental restoration projects, including island building and floodplain restoration.

Why is NESP Important to NGFA Members?

The majority of U.S. locks and dams were built in the 1930s and 1940s and have out-served their useful design life. In addition, most barge tows are 1,200 feet in length while the aforementioned locks are only 600 feet, necessitating the splitting of the tow and two lockages. Therefore, adding additional 1,200-foot lock capacity will boost efficiency of navigation by reducing costs and the amount of time it takes to lock through these portions of the UMR and IWW.

Where is NESP in the Corps Process?

The following outlines NESP's timeline within the steps of a Corps construction project:

- Initiation of a study, which requires congressional authorization and appropriations. (1989-1990)
- Execute a feasibility study (1993-2004)
 1. Chief's Report signed (2004)
 2. Congress authorized NESP (2007)
- Pre-Construction Engineering and Design (PED) (2005-present)
- Construction (TBD)

Which Corps Projects Currently Are Being Constructed?

According to information obtained at this week's Inland Waterways Users Board Meeting in Arkansas, both the Olmsted Locks and Dam project and the Lower Monongahela River Locks and Dams project have been funded to completion. Currently, the Corps is constructing the Chickamauga Lock Replacement Project near Chattanooga, Tenn., and the Kentucky Lock Project near Paducah, Ky. Once completed, Inland Waterways Trust Fund dollars, which consists of barge fuel taxes collected from the commercial industry, will be freed up to go toward the next-available construction projects.

Who Should I Thank for Helping to Achieve PED Funding?

There is a long list of groups, policymakers and NGFA members who teamed up to achieve this outcome. First, NGFA's Waterborne Commerce Committee and its chair, Scott Leininger of CGB Enterprises, consistently have advocated for NESP during in-person visits in Washington, D.C., and using NGFA's advocacy tool. The staff of Waterways Council Inc. also has been a leading driver pushing for NESP funding. Several lawmakers were integral in securing NESP dollars, including MN Congresswoman Betty McCollum, D-Minn. Finally, a big "thank you" goes to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who has consistently promoted NESP, including at an August 2019 event at the Mel Price Locks and Dam in Alton, Ill., where he and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works R.D. James unveiled a report highlighting the importance of inland waterways to U.S. agriculture, and through intervention with the White House.

How Can I Help Moving Forward?

Stay tuned for opportunities to weigh in with policymakers via [NGFA's advocacy tool](#) as the fiscal year 2021 appropriations process kicks off next month. As always, please feel free to contact NGFA Vice President of Legislative Affairs and Public Policy Bobby Frederick at bfrederick@ngfa.org for more information.

Source: NGFA Newsletter

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