

## **Attached please find fertilizer industry news clips.**

1. **Government Relations Items**
2. **Security Items**
3. **Environmental Items**
4. **Industry Outreach**

**1)**

### **High fertilizer prices could lead to less corn**

**John Sullivan**

**April 6, 2003**

<http://www.theadvertiser.com/business/html/0BB23B9F-E3DF-4E15-86BB-F6F02CAA231.shtml>

WASHINGTON — Corn could be more scarce in the summer because farmers say fertilizer prices are so high that it is too expensive to plant the crop this spring. “A lot of people are trying to figure out if they want to plant corn at all, or how much they can get away with without fertilizer,” said James Carter, whose family owns a 1,100-acre farm in Grand Rapids, Ohio, about 30 miles southwest of Toledo. The five states that the U.S. Department of Agriculture calls the Corn Belt — Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri — use more fertilizer commercially than any other area of the country. Corn farmers desperate for less expensive fertilizer want domestic manufacturers to import cheaper nitrogen fertilizer.

### **FAPRI reaction...**

#### **USDA crop planting intention report had surprises; but numbers likely to change again, before planting**

**April 2, 2003**

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- The surprising crop planting-intentions report released by USDA is not likely to be the final acreage numbers, says a crop analyst at the University of Missouri.

"These numbers are not the last word on this year's acreage picture, not even close," says Brian Willott, of MU Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI).

Nationally, crop farmers surprised market watchers with their first planting-intentions report of the spring season. As of March 1, farmers told USDA that they would cut acreage of corn and plant more soybean acres.

That's a marked shift from earlier indications, which anticipated one of the largest corn acreages in recent years.

The shift downward is being attributed to higher energy costs. Prices of fertilizer and fuel were driven up by the uncertainties of war in Iraq. Planting corn requires more energy and other costly inputs than soybeans.

Willott said the earlier crop planting estimates were based on price. The most recent numbers are based on production costs. He sees a shift back up in the corn acreage as planting season gets under way.

The price of a barrel of oil dropped significantly after the war started in Iraq got under way.

Also, when futures trading opened in Chicago after the USDA report was released, the market sent an immediate signal by raising the corn price and lowering the soybean price.

"The market is saying that we need more corn acreage," Willott said. "The market was signaling that farmers were about to plant too many acres of soybeans and not enough of corn. The corn market closed up more than 8 cents per bushel and the soybean market was down about 5 cents."

As a result of the price shift upward and the cost shift downward, Willott expects further changes in the planting intentions.

Farmers often complain that the planting intentions report is never right, Willott said. However, he sees that as good. The report allows the market to signal, in advance of planting, what is needed. Farmers then have time to adjust their plans to provide what the market is willing to pay. "USDA each year does farmers a great service by surveying them about their seeding plans," Willott said. "The results of the survey are released on the last business day of March. The futures market then reacts to the report and 'buys' acres of whichever crop needs more acres planted."

In the end-of-March report USDA said corn farmers intend to plant 79.002 million acres this year, almost unchanged from 79.054 million acres in 2002.

For soybeans, the national USDA survey found farmers intend to plant 73.182 million acres in 2003 or 99 percent of 73.758 million acres in 2002.

Based on demand and price outlook in January, MU FAPRI had projected the 2003 national corn area at 80.7 million acres and soybeans at 72.5 million acres. That would have been the largest corn area since 1985.

Willott noted that this spring Missouri farmers bucked the national trend and continued planning to plant more corn and fewer soybean acres.

Last year, Missouri corn area totaled 2.8 million acres and is now projected to be 2.9 million acres.

The 2003 soybean area in Missouri is shown falling to 4.950 million acres from 5.05 million acres last year.

The next USDA acreage report will be released June 30th, 2003.

Meanwhile, farmers will be watching futures markets as they await the crop report. "Now the market wants some of those corn acres back. Right now at least, the market is willing to pay to get them," Willott said.

### **A godsend for struggling farmers**

After four years of drought, prayers finally answered

**By Jerd Smith, Rocky Mountain News**

**April 5, 2003**

[http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN\\_15\\_1865903,00.html](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN_15_1865903,00.html)

PLATTEVILLE - For two days during last month's blizzard, Gary and Joyce Herman watched the snow fall, hour after hour, inch after inch, blanketing their 1,200-acre farm with hope. Across the drought-stricken South Platte Basin, farmers watched first with skepticism, then with a growing sense of glee as the mid-March blizzard continued. The epic spring storm they'd prayed for every year for the past four years had finally arrived.

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### **Thwarted al-Qaida attacks are revealed**

**BY LARRY MARGASAK**

**Associated Press**

<http://www.kansas.com/mld/eagle/5581756.htm>

WASHINGTON - When al-Qaida leaders decided an attack on a U.S. military shuttle bus was not spectacular enough, the Singapore-based operatives who proposed the idea meticulously planned to hit more daring targets. They laid out plans to blow up embassies of the United States and three other nations and had a chemist buy four tons of ammonium nitrate -- four times the amount Timothy McVeigh used to bomb the Oklahoma City federal building.

### **Does It All Add Up At Homeland Dept.?**

**By Christopher Lee**

**Washington Post Staff Writer**

**Thursday, April 10, 2003**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1554-2003Apr9.html>

No one said putting together the Department of Homeland Security was going to be easy. There is even confusion about what some might regard as the most basic of questions: How many people work there? The Bush administration put the number at 169,154 employees last summer when the White House proposed merging 22 agencies to create the department.

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Chemical Plant Security Steps**

**Criticized as Vulnerable to Terrorism, Industry Fighting Democratic Proposal for Mandatory Measures**

**By John Mintz**

**Washington Post Staff Writer**

**Tuesday, April 8, 2003;**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51903-2003Apr7.html>

The Bush administration is proposing new legislation to improve security standards at chemical plants that will emphasize voluntary compliance by an industry that some experts say is one of the nation's most vulnerable to catastrophic terrorist attack. Sen. James M. Inhofe (R-Okla.) is working with the White House and the Department of Homeland Security to craft a bill that would require chemical companies to abide by standards drawn up by their industry association, rather than be subject to mandatory government measures advocated by environmental activists and many Democrats, officials said.

**Officials urge safeguarding of chemicals, fertilizer**

**Associated Press**

<http://www.aberdeennews.com/mld/aberdeennews/5595594.htm>

**PIERRE, S.D.** - State officials on Wednesday reminded farmers and businesses to make sure fertilizers and farm chemicals can't be stolen by terrorists. Tom Dravland, secretary of the state Department of Public Safety, said there are no specific threats, but that the notice is part of an overall homeland security effort.

**Coast Guard, EPA Negotiate Security Roles For Maritime Facilities**

**Chemical Policy Alert**

**Wednesday, April 09, 2003**

The Coast Guard and EPA are negotiating an agreement on regulating security at chemical and petrochemical plants along waterways, a key Coast Guard official says. The security roles of the two agencies will be laid out in revisions to a long-standing memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Coast Guard and EPA that deals with oil spill prevention.

The official says EPA likely will not take on any new regulatory authority over the security of chemical plants involved with maritime commerce. The MOU would give the Coast Guard, which is now part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the lead role in regulating chemical and petrochemical facilities that are on or near navigable waters, according to the official.

The understanding appears to be consistent with chemical security legislation drafted by the administration that would grant DHS, not EPA, the lead role when regulating chemical security (*see related story*).

EPA officials would not return calls seeking comment.

The Coast Guard official says the details of the revised memorandum will be finalized after the service issues its interim final rule on July 1 to address maritime security. The rule will implement two international shipping codes and the Maritime Transportation Security Act passed late last year. The plan requires companies to employ enhanced security measures at facilities located near navigable waters, as well as on vessels and around ports.

Date: April 9, 2003

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## **Safeguarding Chemical Plants**

**Monday, April 7, 2003; Page A14**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A43671-2003Apr6.html>

ON THE MORNING of Sept. 12, 2001, the management of the Blue Plains water treatment plant at the southern tip of Washington made a decision. In the past, the plant had treated sewage with gaseous chlorine, a chemical that, if leaked, could have enveloped the entire city in a poisonous cloud. Although the plant had safety procedures, its managers figured it could not withstand a terrorist attack, and they substituted another chemical.

## **U.N. Warns of Synthetic Drug Problem**

**By SUSANNA LOOF**

**Associated Press Writer**

<http://www.wilmingtonstar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20030409&Category=API&ArtNo=304090582&Ref=AR&cachetime=5>

Illicit synthetic drugs, including Ecstasy and methamphetamine, could become the world's top drug problem in the next five years, a U.N. report says. Progress has been made in the global battle against drugs in the last five years, said a report released Tuesday by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime. Heroin and cocaine abuse have stabilized or even declined in some countries, said Antonio Maria Costa, executive director of the U.N. agency.

## **Anhydrous ammonia needs extra attention**

**April 11, 2003**

Kentucky New Era

[http://www.kentuckynewera.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?/200304/10+Anhydrous-04-10-03\\_news.html+20030410+news](http://www.kentuckynewera.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?/200304/10+Anhydrous-04-10-03_news.html+20030410+news)

FRANKFORT, Ky. -- Agriculture Commissioner Billy Ray Smith reminds farmers and farm businesses to take extra care to prevent thefts of anhydrous ammonia during the planting season. Anhydrous ammonia is a common nitrogen fertilizer for crops. It also is a target for thieves who use it to produce the street drug methamphetamine or sell it on the black market.

### **Disaster can happen here, sheriff tells Rotary**

**Shirley Kohlenberg**

**Staff Writer**

<http://www.herald-online.com/Stories/news1.html>

If you bought duct tape stock -- or you just stocked up on duct tape -- after 9-11, now may be the time to liquidate. "Forget that plastic and duct tape stuff," Miami County Sheriff Frank Kelly told Louisburg Rotary Club members Wednesday. "It doesn't work. A family in another county suffocated trying it." There are other ways to protect yourself for up to two weeks, he said. Information is available on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Web site.

### **Near capacity crowd learns about meth**

**By Virgil Cochran**

**Lamar Daily News**

<http://www.lamardaily.com/Stories/0,1413,121%257E7979%257E1307685,00.html>

LAMAR - A near capacity crowd gathered at the Large Lecture Hall at Lamar Community College Friday to hear a presentation on clandestine methamphetamine labs - a problem law enforcement officials say is presenting a growing threat across the state. Two presentations were made last week to provide information for landlords, maintenance personnel, utility workers, social service workers and just about anyone else who enters other people's homes as part of their work. Apparently there is more local concern about the issue than even organizers expected.

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## **Boxer's bill would require perchlorate disclosures**

**By staff reports**

**April 9, 2003**

[http://www.insidevc.com/vcs/county\\_news/article/0,1375,VCS\\_226\\_1875300,00.html](http://www.insidevc.com/vcs/county_news/article/0,1375,VCS_226_1875300,00.html)

Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif, introduced legislation Tuesday in the Senate guaranteeing a community's "right to know" about the use of perchlorate by companies. If passed, the Perchlorate Community Right-to-Know Act would require anyone who has stored or transported more than 375 pounds of perchlorate since Jan. 1, 1950, to report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency no later than June 1, 2005. It also would require anyone who discharged perchlorate into the water to report volumes, method and remedial actions to the EPA by the same date.

## **EPA focus on storm water pollution**

**By ELIZABETH DE MEDICI**

**Banner Staff Writer Published**

**April 09, 2003**

[http://www.clevelandbanner.com/NF/omf/daily\\_banner/news\\_story.html?\[rkey=0037484+\]\[cr=gdn](http://www.clevelandbanner.com/NF/omf/daily_banner/news_story.html?[rkey=0037484+][cr=gdn)

**As part of the ongoing celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has declared the month of April as Storm Water Month. Spring is a great time to focus on storm water pollution. This year it is even more appropriate as Phase II of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) storm water regulations comes into effect.**

## **What is a farmer?**

**By Denny Banister**

[http://www.semissourian.com/story.html\\$rec=105907](http://www.semissourian.com/story.html$rec=105907)

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. -- In this day and age of political correctness, we have to be very careful what title we use when addressing someone. Some women are offended if they are addressed as Mrs. or Miss, although never call my wife Ms. to her face. Garbage men are sanitation engineers. Salesmen are account executives, Indians are Native Americans. Short people are height challenged. Giants are height enhanced. Political correctness seemingly has no end -- until you get to the farm. A friend where I work pointed out to me recently that, in spite of how politically correct people try to be today, a farmer still wants to be called a farmer.

## **Farm Journalists List Top Ag Achievements**

**BY DAVID HENDEE**

**Published Sunday**

April 6, 2003

WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

[http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u\\_np=0&u\\_pg=46&u\\_sid=704481](http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u_np=0&u_pg=46&u_sid=704481)

WASHINGTON - The most important change in agriculture in the past 50 years was the hybridization and improvement of many crops, according to members of North American Agricultural Journalists. Starting with a list prepared by three agricultural historians, members of NAAJ voted on the top 10 developments in agriculture during the past 50 years. The results will be released today at the 50th anniversary meeting of NAAJ in Washington. Hybridization is the process of inbreeding plants, then crossing their offspring to create stronger, higher-yielding varieties.

## **With farmers and farm animals, school addresses lack of agricultural knowledge**

*By GENE ZALESKI, T&D Staff Writer*

<http://www.thetandd.com/articles/2003/04/07/features/features.txt>

NORTH -

"Do you have to go to college to be a farmer?"

"Why do pigs smell?"

"What kind of food do animals eat?"

"What is the most important thing to make sure of when operating farm machinery?"

Questions - and ooohs, wows and aaahs - were the order of the day for North Elementary School children Thursday during a three-hour "Ag in the Classroom" event complete with presentations on pigs, goats, chickens, bees, cotton pickers and hay balers.