



## Calendar of Events

**July 28:**

**Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board Meeting**  
- Kearney Public Library, Kearney

**July 28:**

**Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association Meeting**  
- Kearney

**September 1 - 5**  
**Nebraska State Fair**  
- Grand Island

**September 13 - 15**  
**Husker Harvest Days**  
- Wood River

**September 7**  
**2022 Hybrid Plot Field Day**  
- Baker's Acres near Trenton

## Resources

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

[KSU Grain Basis Maps](#)

[UNL Crop Budget Reports](#)

Haven't gotten your Sorghum Army gear yet?  
[Click here to order hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts and polos!](#)

[The Sorghum Army Outpost](#)

## Table of Contents

Nebraska Sorghum Goals in the United Arab Emirates and The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

- Page 3

Meetings Summary:

The United Arab Emirates

- Page 5

Key Notes from The United Arab Emirates

- Page 7

Meetings Summary:

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

- Page 8

Key Notes from The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

- Page 9

Meet Ms. Bevon Charles: Developing Leaders in the Caribbean through YLAI

- Page 9

Together at last: Nebraska Sorghum Appreciation Banquet Held In-Person in 2022

- Page 12

Sustainable Food Systems at Home and Abroad: How Sorghum is Poised to Play a Critical Role in Mitigating the Global Food Crisis

- Page 12

Facing Extraordinary Challenges: Nebraska Farmers Persevere Despite Fire, Drought, and Rising Input Prices

- Page 14

Message from the Director: The International Year of the Millet: Why That Matters to Nebraska Sorghum Producers

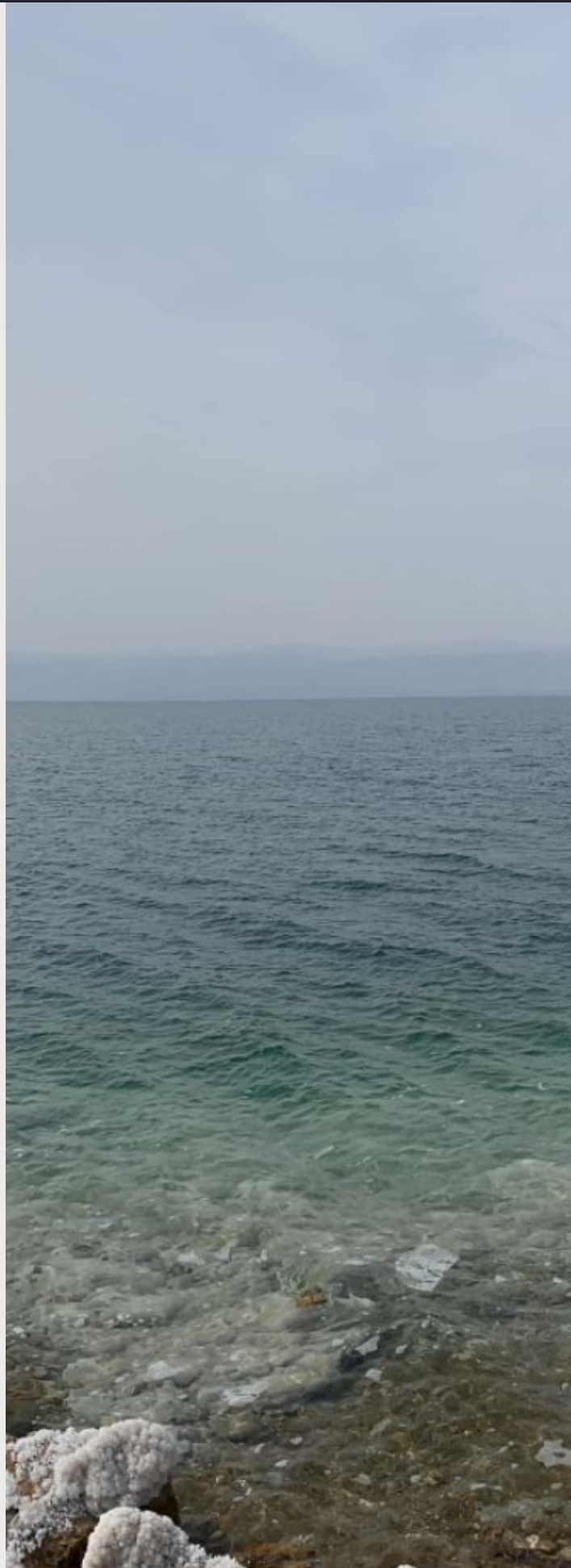
- Page 16

# Nebraska Sorghum Goals in the United Arab Emirates and The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

*At the heart of any trade mission is the desire to advocate and facilitate exports to new purchasers. However, due to sorghum's potential positive impacts on climate, water and soil health, human and animal health, and economic disparity in developed and developing regions, the goals of Nebraska Sorghum on this trade mission were a bit more complex. Below is a brief description of our top priorities.*

## **1) Facilitating Trade:**

- Much of the MENA Region is dependent upon agricultural trade due to natural limits of sustainable environmental usage.
- The UAE is the largest importer of US Agricultural goods in the region.
- The UAE is home to significantly large populations of expatriates whose native diets includes sorghum as a staple. However, those populations currently do not have access to sorghum. This is a market opportunity.
- Jordan is a close ally of the US in the region. While much of the agricultural imports to Jordan come from Ukraine, Russia, and Romania through the Black Sea, turmoil in the region may justify increased shipping costs from more distant ports in the US.
- The Jordanian government has expressed that importation of sorghum for sheep feed is a high priority. Additionally, the government is operating under a mandate to become food secure in the near future.
- Jordan was the first country in the region to sign a Free trade Agreement (FTA) with the USA (twenty years ago). There is no FTA between the UAE and the USA at present.



# Nebraska Sorghum Goals in the United Arab Emirates and The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

## **2) Promoting Climate Water, and Soil Health:**

- Encouraging adoption of sorghum as a rotational crop.

The MENA Region is at the forefront of rainfall, groundwater, and surface water scarcity.

- Introducing sorghum as a rotational option will necessarily decrease water usage. The plant uses half of the water of peer crops, and is drought tolerant.

- Including sorghum in local rotations will increase productivity of other crops through renewal of biomass in the soil. Including sorghum in rotations will also decrease the effects of climate change, as the crop has been shown to more efficiently sequester carbon in the soil.

## **3) Bettering Human and Animal Health**

- Obesity and Diabetes are endemic to the MENA Region due to a high reliance on rice in local diets. Sorghum can mitigate these ailments as a substitute for rice. The uses of sorghum and rice are similar in recipes, but sorghum's naturally lower glycemic content and higher nutrient content give it an advantage in regard to human dietary benefits.

- Including sorghum in animal diets, in particular for finishing cattle and sheep, will decrease water demands created by local production of alternative crops.

## **4) Tackling Economic Disparity amongst Small-Holder Farmers**

- Markets for sorghum are growing worldwide. Many sorghum farmers adjacent to the MENA Region do not have access to international markets, because the demand is still nascent in the area.

- Developing demand locally will allow access to high-value markets for small-holder farmers in East Africa and India, thus helping to lift many in the developing world to a higher economic prosperity.



# Meetings Summary: The United Arab Emirates

## 1) Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce

- Nebraska Panel Discussions
- One-on-One Connections:

Omar Salih Wahbi - Delegations Specialist, Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce

Suroor Hesham Sawan - Internal Affairs Specialist, Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce

Ali Alshamsi - CEO Conrad Hotel

Augusto Castellanos Cardenas - International Relations, Abu Dhabi Investment Office

Hind Al Youha - Investment and Talent Director, UAE Ministry of Economy

## 2) ADQ Holdings and Investments

- Discussion on Sustainability and Food Security

Gil Adotevi - Executive Director, Portfolio Management

Silal Food Technology Executive Team

## 3) Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure

- Roundtable Discussion on Water, Energy, and Agriculture

Abdullah Bin Salem Al Wahshi - Chairman, Emirates Council for Work Relation Development

## 4) Kanoo Group

- Discussion on the Potential for Sorghum in the Region

Mahmood Ahmad Mian - Head of Business Development

## 5) Sharjah Chamber of Commerce

- Formal Discussion of Shared Interests and Dinner
- One-on-One Connections

Abdelaziz Mohamed Humaid Shattaf - Assistant Director General, Sharjah Chamber

Abdullah Al-Jawder - CEO, U.A. Enterprises

Elias Sejean - Manager Business Development, IFFCO



Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce



Sharjah Chamber of Commerce



Blum on an Ag Panel at the Dubai Chamber



# Meetings Summary: The United Arab Emirates

## 6) Gulfood Ribbon Cutting and Meetings

(Largest Annual Food Show in the MENA Region)

- One-on-One Meetings
- Jessline Carvalho - Business Development, Sun Impex
- Laura Amores - Export Manager, Torres Y Ribelles
- Bilal Shahbaz - Export Manager, Doughstory
- Megha Verma - AGM, Tradologie
- Ziv Dotan - UK Branch Manager, Mikshar Import-Export Agency
- Julia Bezverkhnia - Export Manager, Agrovita
- Jeff Sutton - CEO, Healthy Flour
- Asad Khan - CEO, ABC Global
- Gerard Chin-A-Kwie - Director, American Food Service Inc.
- Thomas Peace - International Sales, Preferred Popcorn

## 7) Dinner with USDA FAS Staff

## 8) Dubai Chamber of Commerce

- Nebraska Panel Discussions
- One-on-One Connections
- Kamlesh Thakur - Chairman, PrimeInvestrade Limited
- Sarfraz Dairkee - General Manager, M.A.H.Y. Khoory and Co.

## 9) Meeting with Minister Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi and Staff, Ministry of Economy

## 10) Meeting with Ministry of Climate Change and Environment

## 11) Taste of Nebraska Event



Dr. Al Zeyoudi and Nebraska Secretary of State Robert Evnen



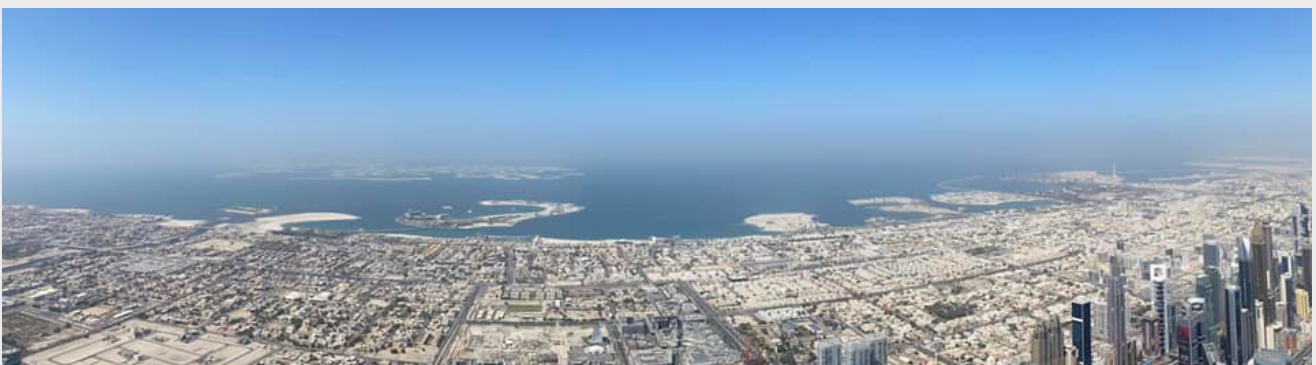
Nebraska Sorghum Executive Director, Nate Blum at Gulfood

# Key Notes from The United Arab Emirates

- 60% or more of the population in Dubai is from East Africa or Southwest Asia. These are places where sorghum is a staple of local diets. Presently there are no products available to this market in The UAE.
- The UAE (and many of the GCC Countries) are facing an epidemic of obesity and diabetes due to a heavy reliance on rice in diets. Sorghum can be a strong alternative as a rice replacement to mitigate this epidemic
- Consumer awareness and education of sorghum must be developed in order to expand the industry in the MENA/GCC Region.
- Water and Resource management are key priorities for the UAE government.
- Tradologie is a company Nebraska farmers should be looking into. This is a tech company which has an app platform that connects producers directly with buyers. The platform allows for direct price negotiations and contracting. More info can be found at: [www.tradologie.com](http://www.tradologie.com)



Blum at the Burj Khalifa



View from the Top of the Burj Khalifa, Highlighting the Ecologically Precarious Nature of the Region

# Meetings Summary: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



Sunrise over Amman (Photo Courtesy of Mr. Angel Velitchkov)

1) Nebraska Agricultural Delegation and National Center for Agricultural Research

- Meeting with Dr. Nizar Haddad and Team

2) Select Nebraska Delegation Meeting and Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply

- Minister Yousef Mahmoud Al-Shamali

- Minister of Industry, Trade, and Supply

- Senator Nael Raja Al-Kabariti - Chair Jordan Chamber of Commerce

- Nebraska Delegation Meeting with the Jordanian Royal Court

3) Limited Nebraska Delegation Meeting with the Ministry of Irrigation and Water

- Eng. Bashar Batineh - Secretary General, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Authority

4) Limited Delegation Meeting with Jordan Silos and Supply General Company

- Eng. Emad A. Al. Tarawneh - General Manager, Jordan Silos and Supply General

4) Taste of Nebraska Event

- One-on-One Connections

- Aseel Al-Mkhaimer - Communications Officer, The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development

- Yasser Khalaf - Marketing Director, Frozen Food House

- Dr. Tareq Tamimi - Marketing Director, Tourmaline Marketing and Investment Company

- Rustom Abuargub - Business Development, Manaseer



Delegation Meeting at the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply



The Small Business Incubator at the National Center for Agricultural Research



The Nebraska Delegation Meets with the Royal Jordanian Court



# Meetings Summary: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

1) Importation of sorghum for sheep feeding is a top priority expressed by the Jordanian government. Connections between Embassy staff, Jordanian Importers, and U.S. Exporters have been established

2) As in the UAE, obesity and diabetes are epidemic. Inclusion of sorghum in the local diet as an alternative/replacement for rice makes sense, and can be achieved through markets development efforts.

3) Water and food security are significant priorities in Jordan.

- The population of Jordan has doubled in ten years due to peoples seeking refuge from Syria, Iraq, and Palestine.
- Annual rainfall for the past three years has decreased to 60% of average.
- The Dead Sea has declined by fifty feet or more in five years.
- Currently, wells are being drilled 4,000 feet deep to access dwindling aquifer reserves.

4) There is an opportunity to teach local farmers to grow sorghum as a food source given the decreased need for water in comparison with crops being presently grown.

5) Discussions took place to host a delegation of water officials and influential famers to Nebraska later in 2022 to exchange best practices for water and resource management.

6) The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a close ally in the region. Much of the infrastructure is funded through USAID and diplomatic dollars. This is a sound investment given the stability the Kingdom provides to the region.



Left: Illustration of water decline in the Dead Sea: The water level reached the edge of the top wall just five years ago.

Right: Blum and the Nebraska Delegation visit the ancient Nabatean trading city of Petra





# Meet Ms. Bevon Charles: Developing Leaders in the Caribbean through YLAI

In 2015, the US. Department of State launched the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative, YLAI, a Fellowship program, geared towards empowering emerging entrepreneurs from the Western Hemisphere to enable full economic potential and opportunities of its citizens. YLAI, promotes U.S business models, increases trade relations, encourages job and opportunity creation and builds, sustainable networks and partnerships for these entrepreneurs and businesses, and social leaders across the Caribbean, Latin America, Canada, and the United States. With an alumni of 1000+, these change-makers are creating the better world we hope to see.



Nebraska Sorghum Executive Director,  
Nate Blum, and  
Ms. Bevon Charles pause for a photo  
between meetings on Capitol Hill



Ms. Bevon Charles visits Robinette Farms,  
a specialty vegetable farm near Lincoln



# Meet Ms. Bevon Charles: Developing Leaders in the Caribbean through YLAI



Above: Ms. Charles works on her vegetable farm in Granada  
Right: The Akata Farms Team works with seed trays



This year was no different. With 250 cohorts stationed at Host organizations across the country, Nebraska was privileged to host 15 of those fellows. The Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board was delighted to host YLAI Fellow, Ms. Bevon Charles in June and July.

Bevon, founded Akata Farms in 2017, on her father's bold and yet unfulfilled dreams of seeing Grenada as a self sufficient and sustainable economy with agriculture at its helm. Bevon didn't only grow up surrounded by agriculture. She become convinced that a country able to feed its people is the only true means of growth. And while some of these ideologies have shifted over time, Bevon's passion for the industry has not. Akata Farms took on a bold mandate to not just create high production, capacity and strengthen the foundations of the sector, but also took on a social responsibility that so many companies often overlook. The responsibility of one's people. Based on Akata farms' model every site is deeply placed and rooted in the community. Healthy. Affordable and available food is the bottom line yet through education, training, job creation.

It was an absolute pleasure to get to know Ms. Charles through her YLAI fellowship in Nebraska. Nebraska Sorghum is eager to see the application in Grenada of the lessons learned while touring agriculture in the heartland of America. To learn more about Akata Farms, visit: [www.akatafarms.com](http://www.akatafarms.com).

# Together at last: Nebraska Sorghum Appreciation Banquet Held In-Person in 2022

Members of the Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association gathered in Grand Island for the annual Sorghum Appreciation banquet on March 25th. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this was the first time since 2019 that the event was held in person.

Approximately forty producers and family members attended the evening of celebration, fellowship, and long-awaited reunions between friends.

Dr. Charlie Stoltenow presented the keynote address. He shared his vision as the new Dean of Extension Services at the University of Nebraska. He also discussed his academic path to becoming a veterinarian and eventually to higher education. His message was uplifting and encouraging. NeSPA thanks Dr. Stoltenow for spending the evening getting to know our sorghum family.

The family of long-time sorghum advocate and board member, the late Mr. John Dvoracek were present also to receive the Service to Sorghum award. The award was well-deserved. John served on the Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board and the National Sorghum Producers Board. "Mr. Milo" as he was known, was an ardent advocate for the sorghum industry. He was a mentor to Nebraska Sorghum's Executive Directors and a friend to many. His daughter Kristine also served as an intern at Nebraska Sorghum for nearly two years.

The Service to Sorghum Award was also given to several recent and past Board members. Congratulations to Mr. Dune Sugden, Mr. John Dolnicek, Mr. Duane Vorderstrasse. Nebraska Sorghum Thanks these leaders for their tireless work on behalf of their fellow producers.

The Service to Industry Award was presented to Dr. Brent Bean. Dr. Bean is the Director of Agronomy at the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. His industry-leading insights are highly appreciated by Nebraska's Sorghum Growers and he is a frequent featured guest at the annual Sorghum Symposium. You can find videos of Dr. Beans Agronomy talks on our website at: [www.nebraskasorghum.org](http://www.nebraskasorghum.org).



Outgoing NeSPA President, Lynn Belitz MC's the 2022 Sorghum Appreciation Banquet in Grand Island



# Sustainable Food Systems at Home and Abroad: How Sorghum is Poised to Play a Critical Role in Mitigating the Global Food Crisis

It would be impossible for any reasonable person to deny that our world is facing a tragic food crisis in countries around the globe. The factors driving this crisis are multifaceted. While Russia's unjust aggression against Ukraine is certainly an important factor, the problem is also compounded by global supply chain issues that were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and devastating drought in India, Europe, South America, Africa, and much of the United States.

The global food crisis has also exposed an overreliance on the top three most produced cereal grains: corn, wheat, and rice. These grains, which are all useful in their own right, account for three fourths of the world's grain production. Many of the regions in which they are grown struggle with water availability and frequent drought. As a result, many farmers in countries like India and Uganda are reverting back to native grains like sorghum and millets after several generations of wheat and maize production.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at the United Nations, as many 18 million people are on the brink of starvation in the Sahel of Africa alone. Many of those effected are children. USAID and USDA has reinforced shipments of grain to many countries in the region, but it is a battle in which hope is hard to come by.

Other organizations, such as the US Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC), are working to tackle the humanitarian crisis in a proactive way. The organization, which advocates for the one percent of the federal budget that is designated for foreign aid and diplomacy, recently announced the creation of the "Farmers for Prosperity" advisory committee. The committee will help to advocate for agricultural policy which will help producers to address the ongoing crisis of hunger and nutrition around the world. The Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association is a proud supporter and participant of USGLC.

You can find the USGLC Website at: [www.usglc.org](http://www.usglc.org)

**USGLC**

NSP Board Member, and Kansas Sorghum Farmer, Doug Keesling (right) Speaks at the USGLC Global Leadership Summit in Washington DC.





# Sustainable Food Systems at Home and Abroad: How Sorghum is Poised to Play a Critical Role in Mitigating the Global Food Crisis

NeSPA has also partnered with the group, "World to Rebuild Rural Ukraine" (WRRU). In May, Nebraska Sorghum and The University of Nebraska Extension, hosted Mr. Roman Grynyshyn and his family for meetings in our state. Mr. Grynyshyn has spent his career leading teams of Ukrainian farmers on educational missions to the United States. After the war broke out, he began his touring the United States to raise awareness and funds to rebuild small family-farms destroyed by war.

Ukraine is a key exporter of wheat and sunflower to over fifty countries. Many of those countries are in the Middle East and Africa and are considered to be developing nations. In the absence of Ukrainian exports, and with sanctions in place which prevent the purchase of Russian exports, these countries are increasingly vulnerable to hunger, malnutrition, and starvation. The small family farms for which Roman advocates represent as much as thirty percent of Ukrainian exports in any given year. To learn more about WRRU, or to make a donation, please visit: [www.wrru.org](http://www.wrru.org).

Sorghum is gaining recognition as a crop that can help mitigate the effects of the global food crisis. The Biden Administration has placed an emphasis on promoting drought-resistant and climate smart agriculture. Furthermore, the USDA is actively seeking ways to decrease supply lines and shore up food security in the United States. Most recently, the USDA announced the inclusion of sorghum in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutritional Programs. This means that for the first time, sorghum will be available to school lunch programs throughout the United States.

In Nebraska alone, acres for Grain Sorghum have increased by ninety-nine percent since 2020. More and more farmers in the United States and around the world are turning to sorghum as a solution to challenges created by a changing climate and overdependencies on monoculture agriculture. Look for our sustainable and healthy crop to continue to play a key role in mitigating the effects of the global food crisis in the coming years.

**WRRU**

Mr. Roman Grynyshyn and The World to  
Rebuild Rural Ukraine

**WORLD TO REBUILD RURAL UKRAINE:  
HOW RUSSIA'S WAR HAS IMPACTED GLOBAL  
FOOD SECURITY.  
WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW YOU CAN HELP.  
FEATURING: MR. ROMAN GRYSYSHYN  
Monday, May 9, 2022**

10:00am - 11:00am Nebraska Cattlemen Coffee  
4611 Cattle Drive, Lincoln

12:00pm - 1:00pm Seward County Economic Development Lunch  
Pizza Kitchen - 411 1st Street, Milford

4:00pm - 5:00pm York County Economic Development Meet and Greet  
York County Extension Office - 2345 Nebraska Avenue, York

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association

NEBRASKA CATTLEMEN

CULTIVATE SEWARD COUNTY  
CHAMBER & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NEBRASKA FARM BUREAU

AGRICULTURE CONCORDIA NEBRASKA

YORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
COMING TOGETHER TO GROW

YORK COUNTY EXTENSION

# Facing Extraordinary Challenges: Nebraska Farmers Persevere Despite Fire, Drought, and Rising Input Prices

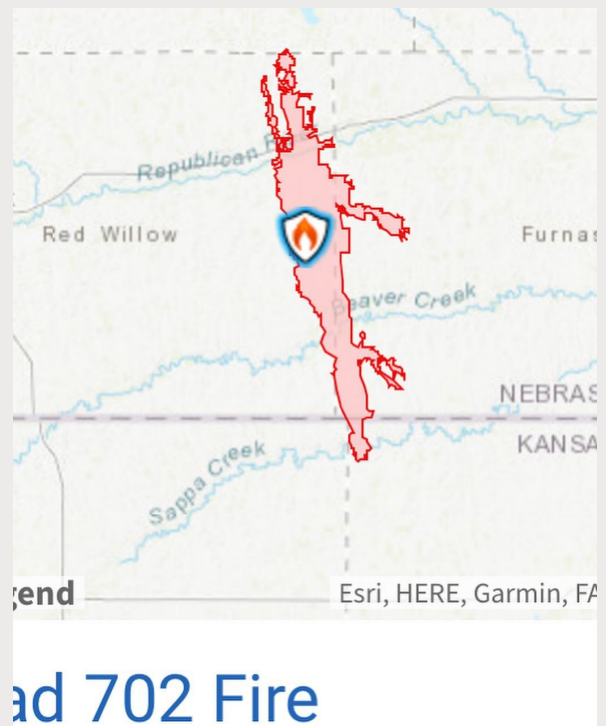
As if farming wasn't difficult enough, 2022 has thrown additional challenges at Nebraska Producers. In April, approximately 140,000 agricultural acres were subjected to wildfires. 77,000 acres alone were consumed in the Road 739 and 702 Fires in Furnas and Gosper Counties. The fires hit hard in Nebraska's Sorghum Belt.

Tragically, Elwood Fire Chief, Darren Krull and retired Cambridge Fire Chief John Trumble lost their lives fighting these fires. Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association Board Member, Todd Downer was among the many volunteers who worked around the clock to save homes and lives from the fast moving blazes, which were fanned by dry conditions and 70 mile per hour winds. Nebraska Sorghum salutes these brave heroes, and all of Nebraska's Volunteer and Full Time First Responders, for their service.

On a fortunate note, soil analysis following the fire showed that due to the speed of the advancing flames, much of the soil microbiology remained intact. While it will take the ground time to recover, for most farmers, the prospect of growing a crop in 2022 was still a possibility. At local meetings with the Farm Service Agency and University of Nebraska Extension, producers were advised that sorghum was the optimal crop to plant to restore soil health due the large root biomass and reduced water requirements of the plant.

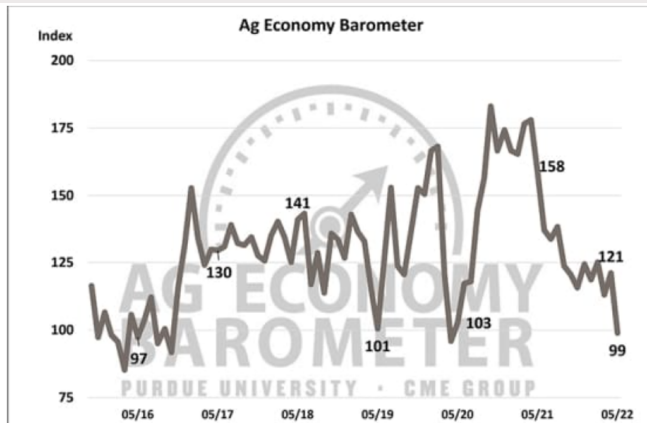


NeSPA Board Member, Todd Downer during the Road 702 Fire



Map of the Road 702 Fire

# Facing Extraordinary Challenges: Nebraska Farmers Persevere Despite Fire, Drought, and Rising Input Prices

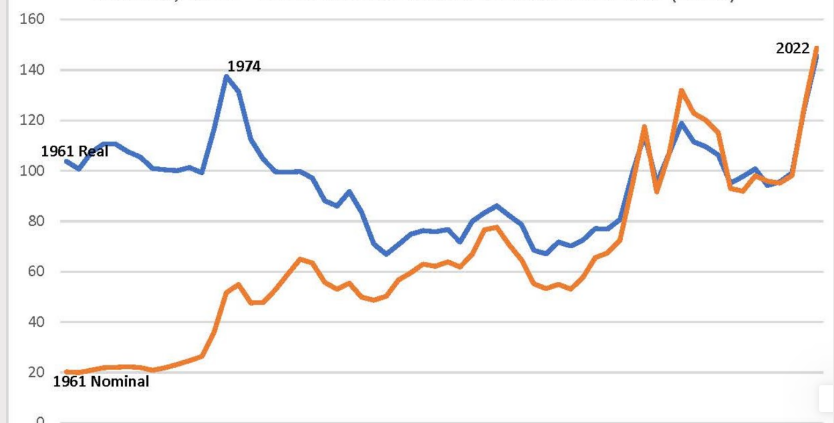


Farmer sentiment plummets as production costs skyrocket. (Purdue/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer/James Mintert)

The inverted Ag Economy Barometer and the Nominal Food Price Graphs

Rising input costs further compounded problems on the farm in the 2022 growing season. Fertilizer costs, driven by embargoes, supply chain issues, and Russian Sanctions skyrocketed in late 2021 and early 2022. Fuel prices and near-record inflation haven't helped either.

Figure 1. FAO Real (2014-16 = 100) and Nominal Food Price Indexes, 1961 - 2022. Source: based on data from FAO (2022)



In a somewhat counterintuitive development, farmer's outlook (as measured by Purdue University's "Ag Economy Barometer") declined precipitously while the Nominal Food Price concurrently reached near record highs according to the FAO. There is no mistake in the data. Farm incomes are struggling to break even despite over nine percent inflation at the grocery store checkout line.

Persistent drought in Southwest Nebraska, and other regions, has continued to make life difficult. Near McCook, Nebraska, there has been little to no measurable rainfall since planting began in May. Similar conditions exist in much of Western Kansas and Texas as well. While there is still hope for some sorghum production in areas around the region, much of the less drought-resistant crops like dryland corn won't be as lucky.

Nebraska Sorghum stands with our producers. In good times and in bad. We are available to assist in finding resources for farmers here at home. We also communicate policy concerns in regard to international trade, fertilizer embargoes, and disaster assistance programs to our representatives and Administrative Branch Agencies in Washington D.C. If we can be a resource to you and your operation, please send us an email at: [sorghum.board@nebraska.gov](mailto:sorghum.board@nebraska.gov).

## Message from the Director: Bridging the Cultural Divide

At the time of this writing, Eastern Europe is at war. American politics and the polarity of the American electorate is supercharged. There are immigration crises at our southern border, and uncertainties in much of the world...including the Middle East.

Many Americans may be tempted to shrink into the policies of Isolationism. To "worry about our own problems" and let the "rest of the world" worry about theirs. This notion represents an unattainable myth.

The first 21 years of the 21st Century have seen the continued, and expediated, march toward international connectedness. Actions in one part of the world necessarily influence actions across the globe. We don't have to "like" it. But, the fact that this is true cannot be denied.

We rightly look to national leaders to provide guidance and steady hands in world affairs on the state level. At the same time, we may neglect the interpersonal relationships which can influence state policies. This level, the one-on-one conversations that happen between individuals and interagency representatives, is underestimated at times. It is true that such conversations begin small, but they can quickly manifest into international course-changing policy.

Take for example a common conversation that I experienced in the MENA Region: Often when inviting individuals to visit Nebraska, the invitation was met with trepidation. People stated that they would love to visit Washington D.C. or New York, but expressed serious concern with visiting the U.S. Midwest. This caught me off guard.

It turns out that there is as much interpersonal misinformation about the US Midwest among residents of the Middle East as there is about the Middle East amongst residents of the Midwest. A few examples of this include our notion that women are uniformly subjugated in Arabic culture. The opposite was to be witnessed as our delegation met with women holding leadership positions across the UAE. Prior to meeting the delegation, our Middle-Eastern counterparts were under the impression that the American Midwest was a homogenous conglomeration of European descendants who dislike people of different ethnicities. The opposite was witnessed when they realized that our Nebraska delegation consisted of foreign nationals from eight different countries from Africa, Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe...all of whom have found success in Nebraska.





## Director's Report: Bridging the Cultural Divide

Why does this matter? It matters because it ought to serve as a reminder that when we lay aside our ideas of what someone who is different from us may be, and instead listen to how they describe themselves, real relationships can begin to form. We may not always agree. Our value may not align. Yet, mutual respect is found in listening, and respect is the foundation for relationships.

Those relationships grow into business deals. I've been asked how much sorghum I sold during our trade mission. The reality is that I did not go to sell sorghum. I went to build relationships that will allow for unforeseen and mutually beneficial interpersonal and interorganizational relationship...that will ALSO result in sales of sorghum.

These relationships also "trickle up". By genuinely showing concern and interest with individuals on a personal level, it changes the opinions and uninformed tropes in each person. As a consequence, the parties involved share their experience with those around them. Soon, one conversation is related to another person and another person and another person...until cultural preconceptions are corrected by fact in a much larger population.

The sum of that which we have in common with our Arab brothers and sisters is greater than the parts which divide us. Yes. Culture is different. For many Americans and Arabs, religions are different. Our geopolitical outlook on the globe is different. Our concerns for peace, prosperity, sustainability, health, and hope for the future are the same. It is the similarities that matter most.

If you know me, you've heard me say this before. People are people wherever you go. We all want safety, security, healthy food, clean water, and for our children to do better for themselves than we have. The facade of culture may appear different. The unique spices of place and circumstance may alter the flavor...but the recipe remains the same.

At Nebraska Sorghum, we do not "sell sorghum". We build relationships. We foster markets. We lift up farmers at home by creating high value markets in North America, and in regions around the world by facilitating access to high value markets proximate to their farms. Most importantly, we bridge the cultural divide because we believe in the innate common denominator of humanity. No matter how divided our world may seem.



Executive Director  
Nebraska Sorghum

# THE GRAIN THAT GIVES

As rich in nutrition as it is good for the Earth, sorghum sustains by offering big benefits for our health, water, wildlife and our world.



SORGHUM-SAVVY  
Learn more when you visit  
[sorghumcheckoff.com](http://sorghumcheckoff.com)

## SORGHUM HELPS FIGHT HUNGER



### ENVIRONMENT

Sorghum benefits the globe from the ground up:

- Builds soil health by retaining more nutrients
- Sips and saves water up to 227%<sup>1</sup> better than comparable crops
- Reduces the need for pesticides and insecticides
- Protects against soil erosion from harsh winter winds
- Removes harmful carbon from the atmosphere by storing it underground



### NUTRITION

Sorghum is an ancient grain that provides today's nourishment:

- Cooked whole grain sorghum is an excellent source of protein and fiber
- More antioxidants than blueberries and pomegranates
- Naturally gluten free



### ENERGY

Sorghum ensures the future of fuel:

- Clean-burning ethanol for better air quality
- Earth-friendly renewable resource from marginal land
- Boosts energy security by helping to import less petroleum
- Less expensive than other plant-based ethanol sources



### WILDLIFE

Sorghum helps fauna flourish:

- Habitat protects and increases wild life populations
- Preferred food choices for deer, pheasants and quail



### ECONOMY

Sorghum makes financial sense for farmers:

- Improved yields of rotated crops
- Lower seed and other input costs
- Reduced economic risk
- 74% of sorghum acres are farmed with conservation methods<sup>2</sup>

A single cup of cooked whole grain sorghum packs 14.8 grams of protein<sup>3</sup>, plus it's a high energy grain and an excellent source of 12 vitamins and minerals. No wonder the United States relies on it for food assistance efforts around the world.

**SORGHUM** THE SMART CHOICE

<sup>1</sup>[cropwatch.unl.edu/crop-water-usa-comparison-rainfed-corn-sorghum-and-soybean-2009-2011](http://cropwatch.unl.edu/crop-water-usa-comparison-rainfed-corn-sorghum-and-soybean-2009-2011) | <sup>2</sup><http://www.sorghumcheckoff.com/whatfuelsyou>

<sup>3</sup><https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/fdc-app.html#/food-details/369716/nutrients>