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Spokesman

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Defeating climate bill won't stop regulations, analyst says

BY TOM BLOCK

The U.S. Senate is unlikely to reach a conclusion on climate change legislation this year, Informa Economics farm policy analyst Jim Wiesemeyer said at last week's Farming Matters forum in Independence.

However, he cautioned, farmers shouldn't necessarily look at defeating the climate change bill as a victory.

Climate change is a priority for the Obama administration, Wiesemeyer noted. If Congress doesn't act on legislation, the administration will enact regulations via the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Climate change policy is coming," he said. "What agriculture has to do is define the practices that might get credits to make money."

Analysis regarding the impacts

of the bill is difficult, Wiesemeyer said, because broad interpretations allowed in the bill could determine costs and benefits.

He questioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) analysis suggesting that farmers will reap greater benefits than costs under climate change legislation. Offsets may not be available to farmers who experience the greatest cost increases, he noted.

"It depends on the producer and where you're at in this country," Wiesemeyer said.

He also said the USDA's reliance on Environmental Protection Agency estimates for energy costs will understate the increased cost of production to farmers and ranchers. The USDA analysis also fails to significantly discuss the impacts on livestock farmers, Wiesemeyer said.

One estimate predicts a shift

of nearly 58 million acres out of cropland into forest land, including a reduction of 11 million acres of corn, Wiesemeyer reported. That would raise corn prices by an estimated 90 percent.

"Livestock people might want to take a look at this," he said.

Leadership shuffle

The death of Sen. Ted Kennedy

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Farm Bureau 2009 Annual Meeting set for Dec. 2-3

Farm Bureau members will recognize outstanding leaders and discuss current trends in agriculture at the 2009 Iowa Farm Bureau annual meeting in Des Moines.

The 91st annual meeting will run on a two-day format, beginning Wednesday, Dec. 2 and concluding Thursday, Dec. 3. The meeting will feature educational seminars, young farmer events, county and member awards, voting delegate meetings, and more.

This year's annual meeting theme, "Right Time, Right Now," will focus on providing members the most up-to-date information on production and policy trends to help manage their farms in a time of rapid change in agriculture.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack is the invited keynote speaker for the meeting. Iowa Farm Bureau President Craig Lang will also give his annual address to the membership.

Educational seminars will feature the following speakers and their topics:

- Tracy Blackmer of the Iowa Soybean Association and Jerry Hatfield of the National Soil Tilth Lab will provide information on reducing nitrogen use in a volatile market.

- Roger Tjarks of Heartland Power REC will join other panelists in a discussion on electricity regulation and transmission.

- Ted Crosbie of Monsanto and Bill Niebur of Pioneer will offer an update on emerging seed technology.

Meeting agenda

The annual meeting will kick off Wednesday, Dec. 2 with registration at 9 a.m. The voting delegate session will begin at 10 a.m.

Members are invited to join a luncheon at 11:45 a.m. recognizing county Farm Bureau achieve-

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Rick Brehm, right, chief executive of Lincolnway Energy ethanol plant in Nevada, talks with a delegation of Russian farmers who visited Iowa last week as part of the 50-year commemoration of Nikita Khrushchev's famous visit to Iowa in 1959. PHOTO/JOSEPH L. MURPHY

Soviet leader felt at home during 1959 visit to Iowa

BY DIRCK STEIMEL

When Nikita Khrushchev landed in Iowa 50 years ago to visit the Coon Rapids farm of Roswell Garst, he knew he was among compatriots, according to a leading historian on Soviet pre-

mier.

Although the United States and the Soviet Union were in the depths of the Cold War, Khrushchev was warmed by Iowa's famous hospitality during his visit in the summer of 1959, said William Taubman, a historian who earned a Pulitzer-prize for his biography about the Soviet leader.

"Iowa was balm to Khrushchev's soul," Taubman said in a lecture at Drake University that was part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the visit.

Khrushchev, who came from humble, rural roots before he rose to power, was comfortable around

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INSIDE

Education level is big change in Iowa ag

Iowa's farm production has soared since Nikita Khrushchev's visit in 1959. But the big change has been the rising education levels of U.S. farmers, according to an Iowa State University sociologist.

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Lenders may force hog production cuts

Hog producers are burning through equity and may be forced by lenders to cut back, a leading economist said. Those who hang on could see improved margins in 2010, he said.

STORY ON PAGE 4

Future of animal ID system unclear

After years of debate and tests, the future of a national animal identification system remains unsettled.

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BRIEFS

USDA SEES HUGE DROP IN FARM INCOME

The Agriculture Department's latest farm income forecast points to a staggering 38 percent drop in farm income this year. Farm income for 2009 is forecast to be \$54 billion, \$9 billion below the 10-year average of \$63.2 billion, due to lower prices for crops and livestock, the USDA said last week.

Cash receipts are forecast to drop \$40.3 billion. Crop receipts would be the second highest on record in 2009, despite an \$18 billion drop to \$165 billion, following gains of more than 20 percent in each of the last two years. Livestock receipts are expected to decline \$22.2 billion (15.7 percent) in 2009. Expenses are forecast to decline 3.2 percent from a record high posted last year, marking the first time costs have dropped since 2002.

NEW NAME FOR NATIONAL SOIL TILTH LAB



The National Soil Tilth Laboratory in Ames is changing its name to the National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment effective Oct. 1, lab director Jerry Hatfield said last week. The name change reflects a larger reorganization to put greater focus on understanding the processes that affect the sustainability of natural resources and strengthen the scientific basis for selecting among

management options, Hatfield said in a letter to stakeholders. Going forward, the laboratory will focus its research into five major areas covering soil processes, air quality and climate change, animal nutrition and environmental quality, cropping systems, and watershed and water quality management.

USDA seeking members for new committee to assist dairy industry

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking nominations for its newly established Dairy Industry Advisory Committee, Agriculture Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack said last week.

The formation of the committee is another step in the USDA's continuing efforts to listen to and respond to the needs of dairy farmers, Vilsack said.

Part of the committee's focus will be to develop changes to the dairy pricing system

"to avoid the boom and bust cycle behind the crisis facing many dairy farmers this year," said Vilsack. "The input provided by the members of this committee will play an important role in building a more stable market for dairy producers for years to come."

Once appointed, the committee will review the issues of farm milk-price volatility and dairy farmer profitability. The committee will also offer suggestions and ideas on how USDA can best address these issues

to meet the dairy industry's needs.

The Secretary of Agriculture will appoint up to 15 representatives of the dairy industry to serve in an advisory capacity on the committee. Representatives will include: producers and producer organizations, processors and processor organizations, handlers, consumers, academia, retailers and state agencies involved in organic and non-organic dairy at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Written nominations must be received on or before Sept. 28 and should be sent to Judith Lindsay, secretary to Brandon Willis, Deputy Administrator, Farm Service Agency, Farm Programs, USDA Room 3612-S, Stop 0501, Washington, D.C. 20250-0501; faxed to (202)720-4726; or e-mailed to: judith.lindsay@wdc.usda.gov.

More information on the committee is available at www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/DairyAdvisoryCommittee.



FARM FAMILY FAVORITES

2009 IOWA STATE FAIR COOKOUT CONTEST WINNERS

Contest sponsored by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation

COOKOUT CHAMPION/ FIRST PLACE - Turkey

Lemon Basil Romano Turkey Breast

Krystal Miler, Osceola (Clarke County)

Salt Brine	Romano Basil Dressing
1 part table salt to 2 parts water	Bottle lemon juice or fresh lemon squeezed
5 lb. turkey breast	

Mix together the ingredients for the salt brine. Soak the turkey overnight in the brine. Then marinate the turkey in the Basil Romano Dressing for 2 hours. Sear the skin of the turkey breast over high heat. Next, move away to smoke with cherry chips. Smoke the turkey until the temperature reaches 165 degrees internally. Remove, cover with foil for 5-10 minutes. Each time the turkey is turned, squeeze lemon juice over the meat.

SHOWMANSHIP/FIRST PLACE - Combo/Specialty

Game Winner Pork Loin - 1

Steve Heaberlin, Indianola (Clarke County entry)

1 pork loin	1 bottle Cookies Flavor Enhancer
1 bag brown sugar	6 oz. honey
1 small jar apple butter	

Heat your smoker to 225-250 degrees. Apply Cookies Flavor Enhancer and brown sugar mixed 50/50 to the pork loin. Cook for approximately 1-½ to 2 hours; until the loin reaches an internal temperature of 130 degrees. Wrap the pork loin in foil, applying honey and apple butter to the loin. Cook the wrapped meat at 250-300 degrees for 1 to 1-½ hours or until the internal temperature is 150 degrees.

Touchdown Turkey Breasts -2

2 rolled boneless turkey breasts	Seasoning and Rub
4 oz. apricot juice	4 oz. honey
1 Lawry's Perfect Blend Poultry	

Heat the smoker to 225-250 degrees. Apply the rub generously to the turkey breasts. Cook 2-½ to 3 hours at 225-250 degrees. Wrap the turkey in foil, applying honey to top and putting apricot juice into the foil pouch. Cook for 2-3 hours at 250-300 degrees or until an internal temperature of 165 degrees is reached. Rest the cooked meat for 30 minutes before carving.

KHRUSHCHEV

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the farms he saw and the farmers he met during his visit to central Iowa, Taubman said. The Iowa leg of the Soviet delegation's long visit to the United States also offered a chance to get away from the relentless foreign policy questions Khrushchev faced in the bigger U.S. cities that the group toured.

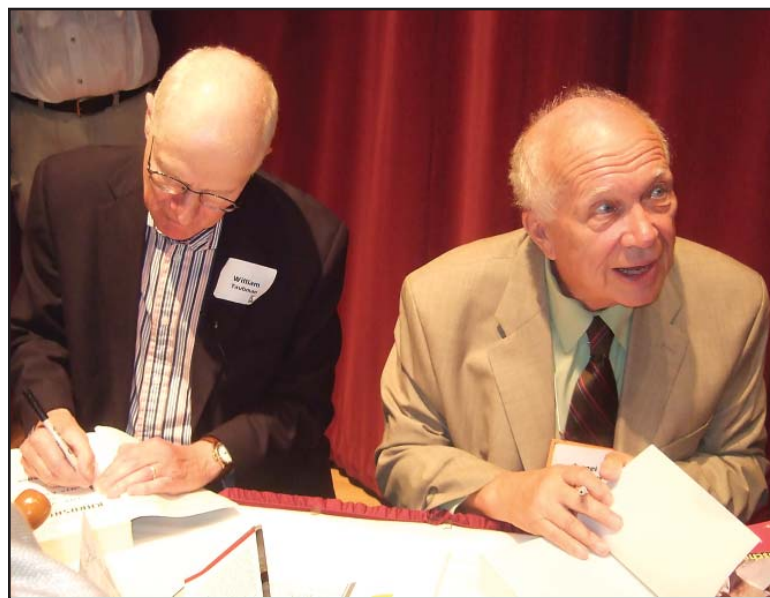
And importantly, Taubman said, was the Soviet leader's strong connection to Garst. The Coon Rapids farmer and hybrid corn pioneer had already visited Khrushchev's private retreat and the two men hit it off, he said.

"Roswell Garst was a man after Khrushchev's heart. He was smart, he was earthy and he talked back to Khrushchev and Khrushchev liked that," the author said. "In that way, Garst was a perfect host."

The strength of that unusual friendship was echoed by Khrushchev's son, Sergei, who participated in a panel discussion after Taubman's presentation at Drake.

During the early Cold War period, it was highly unusual for the Soviet Union to allow in visitors, Sergei Khrushchev said. The fact that Garst was invited to visit the Communist nation and then traveled to the Soviet leader's private retreat shows the strength of the friendship between the two men, he said.

"He (Garst) was one of the first Americans to put a hole in the Iron Curtain," Khrushchev said after a question by one of Garst's granddaughters. "He didn't end



Historian William Taubman, left, and Sergei Khrushchev, son of the late Soviet premier, sign books after a lecture at Drake University. The lecture was part of the commemoration of Nikita Khrushchev's stop in Iowa and his visit to the Roswell Garst farm in Coon Rapids in 1959. PHOTO/ DIRCK STEIMEL

the Cold War, but he was a person who made it a little warmer."

Nikita Khrushchev enjoyed his visit to Iowa and especially to Garst's picturesque farm just east of Coon Rapids, but there were worrisome aspects as well, Taubman said.

The visit to Iowa was part of Khrushchev's effort to rebuild Soviet agriculture, which was still in ruins from war and forced imposition of the communist collective system. As he viewed the gaining strength of American agriculture and industry, Khrushchev could see that the Soviet Union was falling farther and farther behind the West, the historian said.

"The visit clinched in Khrushchev's mind that the United States was way ahead in industry and commerce, and particularly in

agriculture," Taubman said. "It reinforced his conviction that he would have to move mountains to catch up."

The lecture at Drake on Khrushchev was one of a wide range of events to commemorate of Khrushchev's historic visit in 1959. Those events included a tour of an ethanol plant and a farm in Story County, banquets and seminars. A delegation from a Russian farm organization also visited with Iowa Farm Bureau Federation President Craig Lang.

The commemoration wrapped up over the weekend with a celebration at the Garst farm and in Coon Rapids. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack was scheduled to speak at the event, along with Russian ambassador to the United States.

WIESEMAYER

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(D-Mass) last week could ripple down to a change of leadership in the Senate Agriculture Committee, Wiesemeyer said.

Sen. Kennedy was the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee chairman. Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Ct.) is next in line but would likely keep his Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee chairmanship,

Wiesemeyer predicted.

That makes Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin next in line for HELP chairmanship. "Harkin would be expected to jump to that position due to his longtime interest in the panel's key topics, including healthcare reform," Wiesemeyer remarked.

If Harkin moves, it would create an opening for chairman of the Senate Ag Committee.

Although other senators could take the chairmanship, Wiesemeyer believes it would fall to

Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) because the other senators who could claim the position would choose to keep their current chairmanships.

Ahead of Lincoln are Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), current chairman of Judiciary; Sen. Kent Conrad (D-N.D.), Budget chairman; and Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Finance chair.

"If Lincoln becomes chairman, that would mean a more active role for southern-state farm policy issues," Wiesemeyer said.

MEETING

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ments, the 2009 Distinguished Service to Agriculture awards and membership toppers.

Educational seminars will begin at 2 p.m., followed by the annual state young farmer discussion meet finals at 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday evening entertainment will include a performance by Mulberry Lane, a group of sisters from Omaha who will perform country-pop versions of classic Christmas and patriotic songs.

RIGHT TIME RIGHT NOW



The tradeshow will be open Wednesday, Dec. 2 from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Thursday, Dec. 3 from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Also on Thursday, the annual pancake breakfast will begin at 6:30 a.m. in the tradeshow area.

The general session, which starts at 8 a.m., will feature addresses by Iowa Farm Bureau President Craig Lang and a key-

note speaker.

Educational seminars will resume at 10 a.m. Members are then invited to join young farmers at their luncheon and awards ceremony at 12 p.m.

District caucuses will be held at 1:30 p.m., and the voting delegates will gather at 2:30 p.m. for district director and president elections.