

# ISA

## News Bulletin



May 2007

### Iowa Seed Association

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### *President Groepper's Message*

Greetings! There are a few Iowa Seed Association events that I wanted to remind you of for 2007. Before I go into our events, I want to first invite anyone interested in volunteering for the ISA Board to do so! We value your input and opinions and welcome anyone who would like to join us as a board member. This leads me to the first event that I would like to bring to your attention. Your ISA Board will be holding a Strategic Planning Session on Tuesday, June 19.



The annual golf outing will be held at Coldwater Golf Links in Ames again this year. We are encouraging you to bring your own foursome to this event, as was the case last year. This will give you an opportunity to reward some of your key employees, cultivate business opportunities with an important customer or you can choose to be paired up with others that might not have come with a foursome themselves and get a chance to catch up with your fellow seedsmen.

Another event that is in the works is the annual convention. The convention will be held in a new location this year, the Holiday Inn Ames Conference Center in Ames, Iowa on Tuesday, November 13 and Wednesday, November 14. Please mark your calendars for this annual event. By combining key note speakers and workshops, we feel we will be able to provide information to a wide range of employees in your organization. We are in the process of finalizing speakers, however if there is a topic or speaker that you feel should be included in the convention please let Joan or myself know and we will try to coordinate it.

### **Get Ready for Golf!**

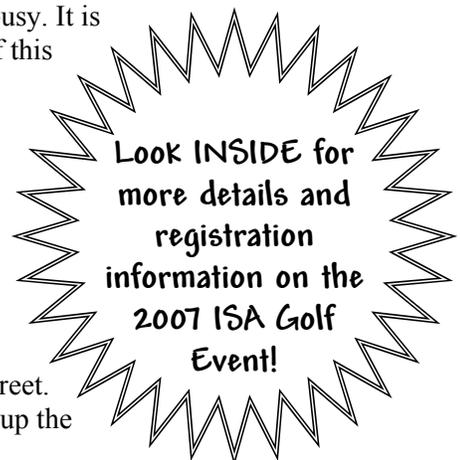
The weather is warming up and the golf courses are getting busy. It is time again for our Annual Golf Tournament. The proceeds of this tournament go to the ISU/ISA Scholarship Fund.

We are encouraging you to register a foursome. If you are signing up as an individual, you will be placed into a foursome by your average score on 9 holes. As in previous years, we will be playing four-person "best ball" which means low scores and more fun.

We will be golfing in Ames at the Cold Water Golf Links Course this year. The course is located at 6515 South 16th Street. This course is spikeless. Awards and refreshments will wrap up the event.

Last year we had a great showing and we hope to increase our numbers this year. Bring your co-workers, your golf clubs and your prize contributions. After all, its for a great cause!

*Hope to see you on the green!*



## **2007 State Legislative Wrap-up**

### **Legislature Adjourns for the Year**

Early on the morning of April 29th, the Iowa General Assembly adjourned for the year. Interim committees will meet throughout the year, with the full legislature returning to work in January of 2008. Bills that were introduced and failed this year will be automatically eligible for consideration in 2008. Governor Chet Culver was largely successful in following through on campaign promises. He was able to secure an increase in the minimum wage, increase the cigarette tax, increase teacher pay and create the Iowa Power Fund. He was not able to deliver property tax relief, fair share legislation, or increased local control of livestock. Overall on the agricultural front this session, inputs such as seed were largely left untouched, with livestock and renewable fuels receiving much of the attention. Livestock, water quality and renewable fuels are likely to top the list of ag issues again next session.

### **Iowa Power Fund Approved**

In the waning days of session, legislators delivered on the Governor's campaign promise to create the Iowa Power Fund. Following lengthy negotiations between Representatives, Senators and the Governor's Office, [HF 927](#) and [HF 918](#) were approved and the fund was established. HF 918 establishes the power fund policy and HF 927 appropriates the first \$25 M of the four year \$100 M commitment. The legislation establishes the Office and Director of Energy Independence, and creates an 18-member Iowa Power Fund Board. The Board will "consider and approve grants, loans, or investments and other financial incentives made from the fund; advise the director concerning strategic direction for the fund; and provide the governor with advice concerning economic development, policy, technical issues, and strategic direction concerning renewable energy, renewable fuels, and energy efficiency". Unlike earlier versions of the legislation, funding decisions have largely been left to the discretion of the board – the only exception being a \$2.5 M earmark for the workforce training and economic development fund of the community colleges.

### **Renewable Fuel Dispenser Incentives**

A provision was included in the Ag and Natural Resources Appropriations bill to further encourage the installation of equipment to store and dispense E-85 gasoline. Currently a retailer is eligible for a Renewable Fuel Infrastructure Program cost share grant of up to 50% of the cost for a retail motor fuel site (not to exceed \$30,000) and up to 50% of a biodiesel terminal (not to exceed \$50,000). The measure provides additional financial incentives to a retailer once a commercially available dispenser is listed by an independent testing laboratory (such as Underwriters Laboratories) as compatible for use with E-85 gasoline. This supplemental incentive would cover up to 75% of the cost of installation (not to exceed \$30,000). For more background on equipment certification, access the UL website at <http://www.ul.com/gasandoil/development.html> ; for more information on cost share grants access the Infrastructure Board website at <http://www.iowalifechanging.com/business/renewablefuels.html> .

### **Battelle Recommendations Partially Funded**

The Legislature partially funded an Iowa Department of Economic Development request to implement the Battelle recommendations for development and commercialization of businesses in the targeted industry areas of advanced manufacturing, biosciences and information technology. The Governor's budget request included \$10.5M for the initiatives with the legislature delivering \$7.7M. The legislative language included in [HF 829](#) was broad enough to allow IDED to expend additional dollars should they become available in the future.

The legislation included the following intent language:

*It is the intent of the general assembly to recognize the strong role that innovation in the advanced manufacturing, biosciences, and information technology industries will play in the growth of this state's economy. To that end, the department of economic development, the department of workforce development, and the department of education shall work together for the purpose of addressing key issues that impact these industries by leveraging their different competencies and resources to work on the following areas:*

1. *Career awareness.*
2. *Data integration and assessment tools.*
3. *Identification of workforce competencies.*
4. *Retention of Iowans in the workforce and recruitment of new workers to Iowa.*

## **Legislature Approves Water Quantity Study**

The Iowa Legislature will conduct a study of water quantity in Iowa, including allocation and use of water resources, protection and management of water resources, and the preclusion of conflicts among users, including new ethanol plants. Related to the legislative study, the DNR will conduct a comprehensive statewide assessment of water availability in Iowa, something that hasn't been done in this state in over 20 years. An additional \$1.5 million is provided to Iowa's soil conservation cost-share program, to help landowners install measures to control soil erosion. Another \$5 million has already been authorized for Iowa's watershed improvement grant program next year, which is designed to improve our water quality.

## **No Property Tax Relief this Session...**

Substantive property tax relief was not enacted in 2007, although a two-year property tax study committee was created. The Senate version ([SF 604](#)) would have prohibited the value of residential property from being rolled back below the assessment year beginning in 2007; Phased down the assessed value for commercial property used as an apartment, trailer park, or related property over several years until it reached 45.56 % for the 2012 assessment year; and Appropriated \$18 million annually between July, 2009 and July, 2014 to replace property taxes lost to the reduced assessment. The House version ([HF 931](#)) also failed. It would have created an income tax credit of \$320 for a taxpayer who owns less than \$300,000 of improved commercial property; Phased in a reduction for property tax assessment limits for commercial and industrial property to 1% over three years; and struck the authority of cities, counties and schools to levy property taxes, except to repay indebtedness.

## **Other State News**

### **Biotech Trait Not Approved in Japan**

There has been a lot of news recently regarding Syngenta's commercialization of "Agrisure RW MIR604". At issue is the fact that the trait has not yet received full Japanese regulatory approval. According to the National Corn Growers Association, the Japanese market typically accounts for 5% of annual US corn production. For more information visit the National Corn Growers Association website at <http://www.ncga.com/news/releases/2007/news043007.asp> , and the National Grain and Feed Association website at <http://www.ngfa.org/> .

## **Northey Comments on Iowa Crops and Weather Report**

On Monday, May 7, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey commented on the release of the Iowa Crops and Weather report by the USDA National Agricultural Statistical Service. The report is released weekly from April through October. "The dry weather that we had during the beginning of last week allowed farmers to begin making real progress on getting their crops in the ground," Northey said. "After the heavy rains of this past weekend, we need more dry weather so farmers can get back to the fields." The weekly report is also available on the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship's website at [www.agriculture.state.ia.us](http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us). The report follows here:

### **Planting and Waiting**

Agricultural Summary: Warm, sunny days at the beginning of last week allowed farmers to get into fields and make significant progress. Fields planted early have some crusting which has slowed emergence. The week ended with more rain, stopping planting and causing flooding and erosion. Some fields will be replanted due to silt build-up or erosion. The moisture helped pastures recover from frost damage but made feedlots muddy and conditions undesirable for livestock. Strong winds in some areas caused damage to livestock facilities.

There were 3.8 days suitable for fieldwork, compared to 3.0 days last year at this time. Topsoil moisture rated zero percent very short, zero percent short, 44 percent adequate, and 56 percent surplus across the state. Subsoil moisture rated zero percent very short, zero percent short, 58 percent adequate, and 42 percent surplus.

Field Crops Report: Oats planted were 93 percent complete, 8 days behind both last year's 99 percent and the five year average of 99 percent. Fifty-three percent of oats are emerged compared to last year's 75 percent. The condition of the oat crop is zero percent very poor, 2 percent poor, 31 percent fair, 57 percent good, and 10 percent excellent. Corn planting, at 53 percent, is 1 week behind last year's 78 percent. Fertilizer application, at 90 percent, was 3 percentage points below both last year's and the five-year average of 93 percent.

## Lamke is New Iowa State University Agronomy Department Chair

Kendall Lamkey, Iowa State University professor of agronomy, has been named chair of the Department of Agronomy effective Feb. 15. Lamkey's appointment will be for three years and may be renewed. He will continue to be director of the Raymond F. Baker Center for Plant Breeding and hold the Pioneer Distinguished Chair in Maize Breeding. Lamkey previously served a year as interim chair of the department. He is an Iowa State alumnus who earned a doctorate in plant breeding and cytogenetics in 1985. He earned a master's degree in plant breeding and genetics and a bachelor's degree in agronomy from the University of Illinois. His research focuses on the application of quantitative genetics to plant breeding problems in corn. Lamkey runs an inbred line development program and conducts several recurrent selection programs. The agronomy department educates about 350 undergraduate and graduate students annually and has about 50 faculty and 100 staff members.

Learn more at <http://www.agron.iastate.edu>.



## 2007 Reminders and Up-Coming Events

- ◆ **ASTA 124th Annual Convention, Omni Interlocken Resort, Denver CO - June 23-27, 2007** (for more details go to [www.amseed.org](http://www.amseed.org) and click on the "meetings & opportunities" link.)
- ◆ **2007 ISA Golf Event, Coldwater Golf Links, Ames, IA - July 17, 2007**
- ◆ **2007 ISA Convention, Holiday Inn Ames Conference Center, (formerly Comfort Suites Hotel) Ames, IA - November 13-14, 2007**

