

ANNUAL SESSION – SEPTEMBER 7, 8, 9, 2007

GRAND ISLAND

Day now come in the same week?
OK, so I am exaggerating a bit.

Thanks and kudos to State
Grange Program Director Darlene
Janing for organizing a great Rejuv
Conference in early June. Panel

Time goes by at the same speed it
has for centuries. Perhaps it is
what we try to do in the time we
have that has changed. Even with
that “extra” hour we gain with
daylight savings time, there are
things that just may not get done.

It’s important to remember this
as we plan our Grange meetings. A
few people may come to the
meetings. Just to visit and the
content of the meeting isn’t too
important to them. For many folks,
however, there seems to be enough
to do in their lives to fill up their
time and then some. If these folks
are going to spend some of their
precious time with the Grange, we
all need to work at making our
meetings interesting, worthwhile,
and fun. I have found that if
something isn’t a requirement, it
needs to be enjoyable or else I will
find a reason why not to go or to
do something else. I encourage you
to continue with those programs
that are working for you, but also
to seek out new programs and
activities with variety to interest
your members.

discussion members from the NE
Corn Board, NE Soybean Board,
NE Ethanol Board, NE Cattlemen,
NE Pork Producers, Iowa State
Grange President Dwight Baldwin,
and Former State Senator Bob
Kremer, conducted a very
informative session on the
production of ethonal and the use
of its by-products. Grangers from
Nebraska, Iowa, Oklahoma and
Kansas attended. The facilities at
Camp Carol Joy Holling were
excellent and will no doubt be
considered for a future site for our
State Grange Annual Convention.

I know I speak for all Grangers
as I extend our sympathy to
Jeannie Jeary and her family
concerning the loss of her husband
and immediate Nebraska State
Grange President Bob Jeary. Our
thoughts, prayers, and thanks go
out to the Jeary family. Excerpts
from my radio report given the
week of Bob’s death appear
elsewhere in this newsheet.

State officers and department
heads are reminded of our State

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT
JOE FRYMAN**

I think most of us have heard the
expression “Time flies when
you’re having fun.” If this is true, I
must be having a ball because time
seems to go by at warp speed.
Does it seem to anyone else that
New Years Day and Independence

Convention planning meeting to be held at the Riverside Inn/Howard Johnson's in Grand Island, NE on July 28, 2007 beginning at 9:30 AM. This year the National

**President's Report
continued**

Grange representative at our State Convention, to be held at the Riverside Inn on September 7, 8, and 9, will be National Grange Lecturer Judy Sherrod.

Have a great summer and spend some of your precious time enjoying yourselves.



The Robert Jeary family would like to say special thanks to all you Grangers who expressed condolences, sent cards, memorials, flowers, and took time to attend Bob's service. You certainly are a special group of people. Love to all.

Adults and State Lady Assistant Steward. Judy is blessed with two granddaughters, Haley and Emily. Four generations of Grangers in Judy's family.

When not busy with Grange work, Judy enjoys reading, making craft items, beading and square dancing. She is very active in her church, being a member of the sanctuary choir and teaching a girls mission group (8-10 year old girls) every Wednesday evening. Judy has participated in several mission trips to areas in the U.S. as well as overseas. Clowning also fills lots of time for Judy - attending workshops throughout the year to maintain her skills. She is the former president of her local clown alley (club), and currently serving as the newsletter editor. Other than her clown character, she has developed other comic characters and routines as well.



National Grange Lecturer will visit State Grange Convention

Biographical Data

Judy Sherrod, of Knoxville, Tennessee, elected Lecturer of the National Grange in 2002. Sherrod, a 40 year Granger, is currently Master of the Tennessee State Grange. She edits the monthly newsletter, *Tennessee Granger*, as well as her Subordinate Grange monthly newsletter, *The Volunteer*. She was Tennessee State Secretary for more than 15 years before becoming Grange Master. Judy is a member of Volunteer Grange #1250, where she is currently Secretary and Women's Activities Director.

Judy is an executive assistant and office manager at the law firm of Lacy, Moseley & Crossley, where she is the assistant to the senior partner. She has one daughter, Christy and son-in-law Auston. Christy is currently the State Director for Junior/Youth/Young

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**STATE GRANGE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
DARLENE JANING**

The Nebraska State Grange hosted the five state Rejuv Conference on June 1, 2, and 3, 2007 at the Carol Joy Holling Retreat Center, Ashland, Nebraska. Nebraska State Grange Program Director Darlene Janing of Geneva, Nebraska organized and led the conference. Nebraska State Grange President Joe Fryman, Blair, Nebraska, gave the welcome address.

Grange Event's Calendar

July 20-22, 2007
Great Plains Youth Conference at Topeka, KS

July 28, 2007
State Grange Planning Session at Riverside Inn in Grand Island, NE

August 20, 2007
Due Date for Community Service Reports

Aug. 24 to Sept. 3
NE State Fair
State Grange booth will need volunteers

November 13-17, 2007
National Grange Convention In Sparks (Reno) Nevada
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NE Grange web site, click on: www.nebraskastategrange.org for latest State Grange information policies and reports.

"With the tremendous explosion of ethanol production, what are the opportunities for agriculture and the entire state of Nebraska and how do

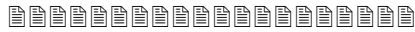
Program Chairman's Report
Continued

we sustain them? What are the challenges and what do we do to address these challenges?" were the leading questions for an ethanol panel on Saturday morning. Members of the panel were moderator, former State Senator Bob Kremer, who is on the steering committee for the 25 x 25 Coalition; Todd Sneller, Nebraska Ethanol Board; Victor Bohuslavsky, Nebraska Soybean Board; Randy Klein, Nebraska Corn Board; Pete McClymont, Nebraska Cattleman; Terry O'Neel, Nebraska Pork Producers and Dwight Baldwin, Iowa State Grange President. This panel presented data that will help agricultural leaders and organizations when they do their policy planning. The questions and answers and follow-up discussion helped keep our members informed of current developments.

Other highlights of the conference were the tour of the SAC Museum and Wildlife Safari, a Nebraska Humanities Council presentation of "Pete Sarpy" by Darrel Draper, Omaha, Nebraska; a presentation on the upcoming Oklahomka Centennial by Jennifer Larmon, Colcord, Oklahoma; interesting historical Grange facts and events by Edgar Hicks, Omaha, Nebraska and an informative presentation by Marilyn Nichols, Geneva, Nebraska of her trip around the southern tip of South America and the northwest corner of Antarctica.

The State Granges represented were Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska. This group addressed current national and state issues and ways to meet the needs of our organization. The National Grange was represented by Tammy Fryman, Blair, Nebraska, National Floral. After the Sunday morning

worship service led by Nebraska State Grange Chaplain Gwenda Cogswell of Friend, Nebraska, the group concluded the meeting with a group meal at the Mahoney Park Lodge. Oklahoma State Grange will host the 2008 ReJuv Grange Conference.



In Memorial
Past State Grange President

This is a sad time for the Nebraska State Grange. Once again, one of our members has been called to lay down his implements on earth. On June 6, immediate Past President of the Nebraska State Grange, Robert "Bob" Jeary died in his farm field while preparing to plant soybeans. Our sympathy and prayers go out to his wife of 57 years. Jeannie, daughters Pam and Beth, and son Clark. Bob led the Nebraska State Grange from 1998 until 2004 and gave the Friday Nebraska State Grange report nearly 300 times himself. How fortunate my wife Tammy and I, along with other Grange members, were to have been able to spend the weekend of June 1, 2, and 3 with Bob and Jeannie at a Grange conference at Camp Carol Joy Holling near Ashland, where we sat around the campfire on Saturday night. The Jeary's reminisced as to how they had met and shared other family stories. Little did we know that this would be a farewell party.

One word that comes to mind when I think of Bob Jeary is servant, a servant at many levels during his 79 years here on earth. He served his country overseas in the Army during the Korean War. He served the Grange for over 50 years. He served his community on NRD, Soil Conservation, and Seward County zoning boards. His service to his Lord was exemplified by his 50-year membership in the United Methodist Church, where he served on many boards, taught Sunday school, and was a past choir member. Yet even as involved in

the community as he was, he served his family with love and pride. Bob was proud of much in his life but of nothing nor anyone more than his wife, his three children, his ten grandchildren, and his great grandchild. He spoke of them often and knew that he was a blessed person. Bob was a passionate person and if you knew him you knew he wore his emotions on his sleeve occasionally, and there is nothing wrong with that either.

As a farmer and rural mail carrier, Bob loved the land and the family farm. Bob, Jeannie and the kids worked as a team. It was truly a family farm operation. It seems rather fitting that Bob should literally die on the land he loved and enjoyed.

If we believe that one of the marks of a successful person is to contribute more than we take out of this world and leave this world a better place than when we found it. Bob Jeary hit the target.

Our family will miss him, the Grange will miss him, and anyone who knew him will miss him. We are thankful he was a part of our lives.

As we mourned his death, we came together to celebrate his life at a funeral service on Monday, June 11, at 10:30 AM at the United Methodist Church in Seward, Nebraska. We shared our last farewells to Bob and visited with family and friends, while Robert Jeary went on to receive that welcome plaudit, well done good and faithful servant.

Joe Fryman, Nebraska State
Grange President



**STATE GRANGE WOMEN'S
ACTIVITIES
PHYLLIS TOOKER**

Now that you have had a chance to look over all of the contests that will be available at the state convention, I'm sure you must have some questions or concerns. Let me give you hints or suggestions for the food classes. For example, the Scrumptious Fruit Pie needs to be baked in a pan that you might not get back. One of the aluminum foil pans would work very well. Include the recipe for the crust as well as for the filling.

The Fall Pumpkin Recipe needs to be something baked such as bars or cookies, and pumpkin must be an ingredient. These are just suggestions – you may have a wonderful unusual idea. Make certain that you send a generous portion so that we have plenty for the auction if you are a winner.

The Drop Cookies are self-explanatory. I do require at least a baker's dozen (13) so that there will be a dozen left after judging for sale.

The Heritage Food might be something that has a history in your family. I think of things like Swedish Tea Ring, Danish Pastry, Kolaches, etc., etc. You people will think of something special which is what makes these contests exciting and fun.

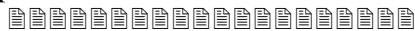
For the Incredible Edible Healthy Food, either a recipe that is already healthy or a recipe you have changed to become more healthy are acceptable. For example, my mother-in-law made wonderful cinnamon rolls and she drizzled whipping cream over them just before they finished baking. She had cream available and it tasted

wonderful. I changed the whipping cream to evaporated skim milk and my family can't tell the difference. This is a way to lower the fat in a recipe. Just add a sentence at the end of your recipe to tell why you believe the recipe is now healthy or at least healthier.

Check all of the other contests and you will find quite a few new classes. A knitted clothing item was added when a sweater was brought and we had no class for it. I had a request for something made from recycled material. The other contests are all listed in the last newsletter, the State Roster, and on the State Grange web site.

Don't forget to make toys, Linus blankets, and collect pop tabs. Bring all of these to the State convention in Grand Island, September 7th.

May the rest of your summer be productive and wonderful.



**COMMUNITY SERVICE
SHANNON COOKSLEY**

Dear Grangers:

Who was it that said "It's summertime and the livin is easy?" I'm so tired I can't remember! I know all of you are busy too and hopefully have your community service projects mostly completed by now. I will be handing out the report forms again upon the completion of the Grange bus trip. The report due date is August 20th which will be here before we know it.

Thank-you for being involved in these special projects. The satisfaction of doing for others is a feeling like none other. I am very proud of the work the Grange does.

I look forward to touring with many of you on the bus trip in July and making some more memories. See you soon!



**DEAF EDUCATION AND
AWARENESS
SHANNON COOKSLEY**

We had five applicants for the Deaf Education and Awareness Grange Scholarship. Following is the winner's picture, application letter and thank-you note.

Dear Scholarship Committee:

My name is Heath Focken and I am a senior at Ansley High School. I live with my parents and also have three brothers. My oldest brother is currently attending the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and my two younger brothers attend Ansley Public School.

At the age of 19 months, I contacted spinal meningitis and as a result I am profoundly deaf. With the assistance of a deaf interpreter, I have been fortunate to be mainstreamed into the public school system throughout my education.

I have never thought of my deafness as a weakness because of

the great support I've received from my family, friends, and also, teachers. Being deaf has never prevented me from achieving good

Deaf Education
continued

grades, being a four-year Honor Roll student, and being inducted into the National Honor Society. I also feel very privileged and honored to have had the advantageous opportunity to be part of so many extra curricular activities. I have participated in football, basketball, track, One-Act Play Productions, and also Speech. Extra curricular activities can be very challenging and rewarding to the average person, but to a deaf person it may present a few more obstacles in order for them to achieve success. Participating in the State Speech contest is just one of the monumental achievements I have accomplished. It was also a great honor to be selected as part of a deaf panel testifying before the State Board of Education relating to the education of deaf students in a mainstreamed school setting.

After graduating from high school, my plan is to attend a college or university and major in biology or animal science. My goal after receiving my bachelor's degree is to pursue a career working with animals either in a zoo setting or in the wildlife. Someday I would like to continue my education and pursue a degree in veterinary science.

From the time I was born, I have always had a fondness for animals. I feel like I can relate to animals even though I am deaf. I have raised many animals of my own and participated in FFA activities at the county fair. This past summer, I job shadowed the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha. While at the zoo, I experienced firsthand the duties of a zookeeper and learned the lifestyle, habitat, and environment of several different

kinds of animals. I believe my love for animals and my experience in raising animals is a big asset in reaching my goals and dreams.

I will be responsible for all my college expenses, so any financial assistance will be a great asset in helping me obtain my goal and pursuing my career.

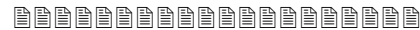
May I quote the first deaf Miss America, Heather Whitestone by saying "It is our responsibility to overcome the barriers which prevents us from reaching our dreams." As I continue on my journey through life, I'll continue to move forward and not let anything stop me from achieving my goals in life. Thanks for considering me for this scholarship.

Heath Focken

Nebraska State Grange Members:

Thank-you so much for the \$500 Nebraska State Grange Deaf Education Grant that I was awarded. It will be very useful in helping finance my college education.

Thanks again,
Heath Focken



**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT
RICHARD JANING**

The first session of the one hundredth Nebraska unicameral came to a close on May 31, 2007. Much more was accomplished than some people thought would be with twenty-two new senators, a result of the term limits law which was passed in 2005.

The Nebraska Grange legislative committee and other Grange members met in January and designated 43 bills and two legislative resolutions on which to take a position. Twenty-six of those bills were indefinitely postponed or killed, five bills and two resolutions remained in committee and one bill was left on general file. The Grange supported seven of the bills which became law and opposed three. Those which the Grange was in favor of were LB 43 which provides for mowing of roadsides along state highways; LB 148 which extends the 15% weight limit increases from the field to market during harvest to all trucks; LB 305 changed the distribution of some sales taxes; LB 313 amended the livestock waste management act; LB 422 removed the Secretary of State as chairman of the Nebraska brand committee; LB 424 will prohibit breathing or inhaling certain compounds; and LB 435 will provide for a state fair management plan. The Grange opposed LB 658 which would have provided a plan for Class 1 and VI school districts to reorganize. The bill did not reinstate the dissolved school districts as had been mandated by the electorate in 2006 and would have been burdensome and possibly impossible for a district to reorganize. The bill was passed by the legislature but vetoed by the governor and the motion to

override the veto failed. The Grange initially opposed LB 367, which was a bill to change motor vehicle sales tax rates. This bill, however,

Legislative Report

Continued

became the tax reduction plan that had several tax related bills incorporated into it which the Grange had endorsed. This changed our position from opposing to supporting LB 367. Tax related bills which had Grange support but were indefinitely postponed because of being incorporated into LB 367 were LB 10, 22, 453 and 684.

Two bills LB 200 and LB 273, which relate to the Nebraska tractor test law, remained in committee. Dealers for an imported brand of tractor which does not meet the minimum fuel efficiency standards established by the Nebraska test law keep this debate alive. The Grange opposes both of these bills.

The Grange opposed LB 701 at the request of Grange members in the southwest part of the state. Current Grange policy states that any Natural Resource District may not levy a special tax or assessment without a vote of the land owners affected. LB 701 did not provide for this vote of the land owners. This bill did pass with thirteen amendments.

LB 516 would create a Corporate Farming Policy Act. The intent is to protect individuals from corporate take-over due to the loss of I-300, the Grange, along with other farm organizations opposed the bill on the grounds the commission members named would have been weighted toward anti I-300 members. An amendment was approved in the last days of the session and the bill was passed.

The Ag breakfasts, which are held every two weeks during the legislative session, were attended by one or more Grange representatives. Rural senators and agriculture agencies are invited by farm organizations and individuals to

discuss issues that are before the legislature.

Again, I want to express my thanks to all those who helped in any way this legislative session.

GRANGE REPORTS

Elkhorn V.E. Grange #393
By Bev Hatcher

May – President Ed Andersen called the May meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Following the opening ceremonies, Ed introduced the guest speaker, Terry Doinicek, owner of Sun Valley Gardens in Gretna, Nebraska. He currently specializes only in geraniums. Doinicek answered numerous questions about the care of potted plants and he shared tips on how to keep them healthy and blooming over a long period of time. A brief business meeting was held following the program. Grange members brought items for the Food Bank. Refreshments were prepared and served by Phyllis and Lila Tooker.

June – Twenty people were in attendance for the meeting including State Grange President Joe Fryman. The program for the evening was a DVD presentation on Terry Redlin, a well known artist from South Dakota. Russ and Garrett Tooker handled the program. Hosts for the evening were Laverne and Donna Lamprecht.



Center for Rural Affairs

In many rural places where livestock are raised there are only a few, or even just one, packer or processor for a given livestock species. Currently, over 80 percent of hogs are either owned outright by packers or tightly controlled through various contracting devices. Many farmers and ranchers face price discrimination

and severely limited market access as a result.

The audit of the Packers and Stockyards Administration performed by U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the Inspector General and released in February 2006 revealed that the agency has utterly failed to enforce the very law that gives it a reason to exist.

Senior officials at Packers and Stockyards blocked investigations from being referred to USDA lawyers or the Justice Department and created an illusion of enforcement activity. Over 1,800 so-called investigations were documented between 1999 and 2005. But 1,739 of those investigations could not be traced to a specific complaint, producer, or packer.

Repeated calls for competition reforms from family farmers, ranchers, and their organizations as well as the National Commission on Small Farms, General Accounting Office, and Office of the Inspector General have fallen on deaf ears at USDA.

That is why Congress must act to define the rules of livestock, market competition and provide clear direction for USDA's enforcement. Congress should not let another farm bill go by without making changes in the Packers and Stockyards Act and Agricultural Fair Practices Act that are necessary to foster competition in livestock markets.

Changes to Packers and Stockyards Act

The Packers and Stockyards Act should be amended to:

*Prohibit packer ownership of livestock more than seven days prior to slaughter.

*Prohibit use of production contracts that do not fix base prices, with adjustments for quality, grade, or other factors outside of packer control, at the point of sale.

*Require the Secretary to write regulations defining the statutory term “unreasonable preference or advantage.”

*Establish that products need not prove anti-competitive injury to an Center for Rural Affairs

continued

entire sector in cases involving unfair or deceptive practices which have harmed them individually.

Changes to Agricultural Fair Practices Act

The Agricultural Fair Practices Act should be amended to:

*Make it unlawful for any firm to refuse to deal with a producer for joining or organizing an association of producers or a cooperative.

*Prohibit the use of binding mandatory arbitration clauses in livestock and poultry contracts.

*Expand the prohibition on confidentiality clauses to cover all agricultural marketing and production contracts, not just those for livestock and poultry.

*Require that contracts include clear disclosure of producer risks.

Although this list is not exhaustive, two of the recommended livestock market reforms stand out. These structural reforms may garner the sternest opposition in the debate over competition policy in this farm bill; but they are also the most crucial.

Prohibiting Packer Ownership of Livestock

Major packers such as Smithfield, Cargill, and Tyson use packer-owned livestock as a tool for exerting market power over farmers and ranchers. This practice fosters concentrated, industrial livestock production, and the environmental nightmares that accompany it.

Packers claim that vertical integration increases efficiency. That is a lie. Small and mid-sized farms and ranches have demonstrated, time and again, that they can match or beat the cost of

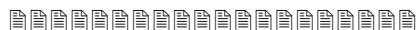
production in the packers’ industrial facilities.

Packers use vertical integration and captive supplies to manipulate livestock markets, depressing cattle and hog prices across the board by killing their own when prices are high and turning to independent producers as residual suppliers when prices are low – to the detriment of farmers and ranchers as well as the rural economy and the environment.

Clarification of “Undue Preference”

Packers commonly make unjustified, “sweetheart” deals that provide unfair economic advantages to large-volume livestock producers over small and mid-sized family farms and ranches. Courts have been unwilling to enforce current undue preference standards. Additional legislative language is needed in the Packers and Stockyards Act to strengthen the law and clarify that preferential pricing structures are justified only for real differences in product value or actual and quantifiable differences in acquisition and transaction costs.

In the end, it comes down to this. In a nation where packers and processors own and control all of the livestock, what need is there of farmers and ranchers? And what hope have we for revitalizing family farming, ranching, and rural communities if we have no hope of revitalizing family farm and ranch livestock production? What hope, if we cannot breathe life and competition back into our livestock markets?



NATIONAL GRANGE NEWS

Rural Groups Oppose Farm Service Agency County Office Closings

A number of organizations representing rural Americans including the National Grange wrote to Congress expressing deep opposition to the closings of many Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices. The coalition also asked members of Congress to co-sponsor and support of H.R. 1649, which states that the Secretary of Agriculture may not close or relocate any county or field office of the Farm Service Agency until at least one year after the date of the enactment of an omnibus law.

Under the plan currently being deployed in several states, FSA offices are being closed while the other field delivery agencies (Natural Resource Conservation Service and/or Rural Development), which were co-located with the FAS, are remaining intact. This selective office closing plan undercuts the USDA “Service Center” structure and eliminates the “one-stop-shopping” concept established by USDA for farmers. If allowed to proceed, this plan will force many farmers to travel to two or more locations to conduct their USDA business.

National Grange Supports Reform of Farm Air Emissions Rules

The National Grange Legislative Director, Leroy Watson, recently wrote to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson

supporting proposals by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reform air emissions reporting requirements imposed on family farmers and ranches with livestock operations. "It is our understanding

National Grange Supports Reform

continued

that the USEPA is considering regulations to partially exempt animal waste air releases from CERCLA reporting obligations. It is also our understanding that EPA is developing either proposed rule-making or guidance interpreting EPCRA's statutory exemption of "routine agricultural operations" to include the application of manure as a fertilizer when applied at agronomic rates," Watson stated. The proposal focuses on exemptions for reporting air emissions from manure that is appropriately applied as fertilizer. Watson encouraged USEPA to produce the proposed rule on this issue by next year.

Legislative Director Watson also sent a letter to the majority and minority Chairmen of the House Committee on Energy, the House Committee on Transportation, and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on this issue. HR 1398 and S 807 mandate similar exemptions stating that manure should not be considered a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Watson concluded, "Federal and state laws including the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act already regulate animal operations. Farmers and ranchers should not be threatened by potential liability for emissions or discharges from manure produced or used."

National Grange Immigration Reform Policy Explained

The National Grange recently wrote to the House and Senate Judiciary committees urging them to comprehensively address immigration reform. The National Grange advised the Committee to modify immigration laws providing for an orderly, well-regulated flow of immigrants to meet the needs of our country and ensure a stable workforce. While deliberating on this issue, we asked the Judiciary Committees to consider supporting the following provisions"

Increased efforts by the U.S. government to patrol our borders to prevent the illegal entry of aliens into our nation, including deployment of active military personnel, if necessary.

*Strict enforcement of current immigration laws.

*A prohibition on general amnesty for illegal aliens.

*Required proof of citizenship and/or legal residence to obtain any government benefits.

*Restrictions on automatic citizenship for children born to illegal immigrants until the parents have obtained U.S. citizenship.

*Granting state and local law enforcement officials authority to detain illegal aliens for further processing.

*Enactment of practical and enforceable foreign guest worker visa programs to meet agricultural labor needs.

*Reforms of the H2A program so the wage costs to farmers more closely reflect local prevailing wages.

*Expansion of the H1B visa programs for professionals to enter the U.S. to fill positions requiring

specific technical skills in rural communities.

*Assurances that agricultural employers are not responsible for verification of authenticity of migrant or seasonal worker documentation.

*Protections for employers who unknowingly hire illegal aliens.

National Grange Urges Caution on Seed Company Merger

The National Grange expressed concern that a Justice Department ruling due this month on a merger of two major companies in the U.S. cottonseed market will have far reaching anti-competitive consequences. William A. Steel, president of the National Grange, said that the proposed \$1.5 billion merger of Monsanto and Delta & Pine Land Company could also cause harm to other major crops, such as corn and soybeans. A ruling on the long-delayed merger is expected soon.

Delta & Pine accounts for 50 percent of the U.S. cottonseed market, and as much as 78 percent of market share in the south-central and southeast cotton-producing region. Monsanto currently controls more than 95 percent of the herbicide tolerance and insect resistance traits in the cottonseed market. Delta & Pine currently has on-going relationships to develop and deploy competing traits with other innovative life science companies, such as Bayer, Dow, DuPont, and Syngenta. These competitive relationships will be discontinued if the proposed merger is allowed to take place, and other major crops, such as corn and soybeans, will then face similar anti-competitive practices.

Opposition to the proposed merger has come from farmers, biotech traits competitors, state regulators, as well as agricultural and rural life groups such as the National Grange. Our concern has been that a combined company would be in a position to harm

potential competition in biotech traits, and raise rivals' costs in major cottonseed markets.

It is estimated that at least 85 percent of the nation's cotton crop is genetically modified. Monsanto's genetic traits are contained in about

National Grange Urges Caution on Seed Company Merger continued

95 percent of all cottonseed planted. At the same time, Delta & Pine is the U.S. market leader in breeding, production, and marketing of U.S. cottonseed. Taken together, a merged company would raise serious hurdles for other would-be competitors, while bringing undue influence on farmers' seed prices.

President Steel said the National Grange supports valid marketplace competition. He cautioned that the proposed merger could result in a closed cotton supply chain system that could raise prices, reduce incentives for developing and marketing conventional cottonseed, and reduce choices available to cotton farmers and consumers alike. He called on the Justice Department to consider both agriculture policy and market competition in their final ruling.

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**Please type your articles, double space and proof read them. Send all of your Nebraska Grange news to:
Edward Andersen
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

September 22, 2007