President's Report

I hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving with family and friends, it’s a time of the year to give thanks and look back over the year which brings smiles, tears or maybe both. Our hard-working families that produce our food and fiber are having a difficult time. Many of their crops are still in the fields, some buried by snow and water, while others are still in fields too wet to harvest. Other producers have suffered severe drought and have watched as their crops shriveled and production fell. Even with a crop to sell, low prices brought on by a failed farm policy coupled with a Trade War have dealt a bad hand to our producers. Government continues to drag out a new package of band aids and are now sending out the second MFP set of payments this year. These payments will help some producers cover their losses and help with cash flow for this year, but what happens when the payments stop? Already, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue is saying don’t expect another round of payments in 2020, he the same thing about 2019 but, 2020 is an election year and I’m guessing that might not be the case. USDA has forecasted Net Farm Income for 2018 to be $88 Billion but of that $88 Billion, $33 Billion is Federal Payments. Federal Payments for 2019 are estimated to increase by 53% while income from crops and livestock will be down by 14%. Think about that, if correct, nearly 50% of Net Farm Income will be Federal Payments. If Federal Payments stopped and you keep crop insurance in place, Net Farm Income would be in the bottom 50% of all-time records. The current program is not sustainable, Rabobank is forecasting around $3.50 corn and soybeans around $8.50 to $9 per bushel over the next 10 years. Producers need to at least cover their cost of production price from the marketplace. Loan Rates should be raised to assure a fair price in the marketplace and Country of Origin Labeling should be required on all imported products. Speaking of that, USDA just approved Chinese chicken can be imported into the US with the Chinese doing self-inspection at their plants. I guess now we will see Tyson, Perdue and Pilgrim’s Pride closing plants here in the US so they can build new ones in China for cheap labor. A race to the bottom, how cheap is cheap enough, who is making these decisions and why? At least, AAM and other groups got language into the new Farm Bill that will prohibit USDA from buying Chinese chicken for school lunches because there is a Buy American provision in it, now we need Country Of Origin Labeling law so you will know if the wings you are eating is from China.

AAM will be having our Annual Meeting in Lubbock, Texas January 10th and 11th 2020 at the MGM Eleganté Hotel. This meeting will be a time to see old friends, make new ones and set AAM’s coarse for 2020 plus you will enjoy an outstanding program. You should bring an BIG appetite because you will enjoy great food with lunch at Dan Taylor’s cotton farm and museum; which allows you to travel by bus across cotton country, have a great tour of the largest cotton seed plant in the world; and end up at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture where AAM’s Heritage Exhibit is housed. Followed up with one of the best meals you will ever have -- a Chuckwagon meal cooked on an open fire by cowboys. Then, get ready to be impressed to hear from 4-H member Della Hettenbach and FFA member Derek Scharmann about their experiences participating in AAM’s Youth Project’s trip to Farm Aid. On Saturday Donn Teske, Kansas Farmers Union President and Joe Maxwell, President of Family Farm Action will be speaking as well as you will get an update from Southwest Collections on AAM’s Archive activities.

In this Reporter you will find the Hotel contact information, pre-registration information and our agenda. We promise you’ll never be bored! AAM’s Hospitality Room is always open between meetings and in the evening so you will have a chance to visit and share your stories.

Please think about attending, call a friend and see if they want a road trip to Lubbock which would be a chance to catchup and tell some stories. As always, we encourage you to bring your children and grandchildren with you so you can show them the impact AAM had on you and the nation. Make a special effort to invite young farmers from your area, they are the future and AAM is here to support them and follow their lead. Those that want to, don’t forget to bring auction items,
AAM Agenda January 10 and 11, 2020

MCM Elegante Hotel
801 Ave. Q, Lubbock, TX  806-763-1200

Travel Day, Thursday January 9th
4:00 PM Hospitality Room

Friday January 10th

9 AM - 12 Noon  Oral History Recording at the Hotel
Registration at the Hotel
with Southwest Collections, Texas Tech
12 Noon  Board Bus for Lunch
at Dan Taylor’s Farm
2:00 PM  Board bus for tour
2:30 - 4:00 PM  Bayer Cottonseed Plant Tour
4:30 – 6:00 PM  Tour Museum
For those that want to return to Hotel, bus will return to Hotel
6:00 PM  Board bus at Hotel for Museum
6:00 - 7:00 PM  Meet and Greet at the Museum
7:00 PM  Chuckwagon Meal at Museum
7:30 Program  Crystal Carson, Executive Vice President of
AAM along with 4-H Member Della Hettenbach of the Jolly
Jayhawkers 4-H Club in Kansas and Derek Scharmann of
Poteet FFA in Winter Garden District X from Texas.
Return to Hotel for Hospitality

Saturday January 11th

10:00am  Donn Teske, President
Kansas Farmers Union
10:45am  Joe Maxwell, President
Family Farm Action
11:30  Southwest Collection update on AAM’s
Archive
12 Noon  Parity Fund Lunch
2:00  President’s Report
3:00  Business Session
Following Business Session, Hospitality Room will open
6:00  Taco Bar and Auction

Tom Curl and Don Kimbrell at
AAM’s Heritage Exhibit
Past AAM President’s Corky Jones
and Larry Matlack

Chuck Wagon meal being prepared for
AAM done the old fashion way
Thought I would give you a little update on the last couple of days activities in SW Kansas. The Kansas Legislative Policy Group, KLPG, an organization on 35 western KS Counties met in Colby KS., Thursday and Friday. The theme of the conference was (in my words) how to rebuild your rural community thru loans and grants from government resources.

Speaker after speaker gave examples of what was available in loan and grant opportunities for rebuilding Main Street in your rural community. Numerous videos and power point presentations were given to show what particular loans and grants had accomplished in several towns and communities in Kansas revitalization projects. I found it interesting that most of the funding mentioned required repayment over ten years or so. It was evident from the start as each speaker made their presentation, not a single one mentioned the need for a “price at the farm gate”. It was always about how to revitalize your rural community and main street thru grants and loans and NEVER why those rural communities are failing in the first place.

One speaker talked about living in rural Kansas and asked “why are you living in your community, what do you like about it” Answers were “quality of life, schools, healthcare, friends, neighbors, etc. I replied “because I am too poor to go anywhere else” That brought a big laugh from everyone including the speaker.

As the day progressed I finally could not contain myself and suggested the real solution for rebuilding rural America and Main Street was “a price to producers equal to the cost of production for their commodities and livestock”. I further stated we had spent the morning listening to all the loan and grant possibilities available from government agencies including USDA and that if our farmers and ranchers were receiving at the cost of production prices for their products, THEY would be rebuilding rural America and its main streets and there would be little need for all the money from government to rebuild, our farmers and ranchers would do it and it could be accomplished by establishing good agriculture policy in congress. There was some agreement and a few comments like “yeah but that ain’t going to happen.

Then it was back to the “we have some loans and grants for you”.

On Friday, the very last speaker, a lady from Kansas State University, Dr, Mykel Rae Taylor, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agriculture Economics responded directly to my Thursday comments about increasing commodity prices to the cost of production, by letting me and other attendees know that was not possible because, the US would “loose market share” and our producers needed markets to survive. And with that she moved on with the rest of her presentation. To be quite frank, following that statement I lost interest in what she had to say for the rest of her presentation. I did not respond because I am sure my added comments would fall in the “not worth consideration” column.

Yep, the concern for rural revitalization is alive and well, not thru increased prices to the cost of production by policy makers, but thru more of your tax money going to hundreds, if not thousands of government funded agencies to FORCE stabilization in rural America. As Yakov use to say, “what a country”.

Jim Rice
2020 AAM Pre-Registration Form
January 10 – 12
MCM Elegante’ Hotel & Suites
801 Avenue Q - Lubbock, Texas
806-763-1200

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Total

*1yr memberships paid at this time will NOT reset your normal membership renewal months.

All hotel arrangements are made directly with the hotel. The rate $91 for a double queen or king guest room. For our planning purposes, please indicate your planned arrival and departure date.

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Please complete and return to Jacqueline Reed, 8501 County Road 22, Wheeler, TX 79096 or email to aamsect.19@gmail.com. Payment can be made by check or credit card when you arrive in Lubbock. If you are pre-paying, please indicate so on check. See you in Lubbock!!

Membership Application

Name: ____________________________________________

Street Address: ____________________________________________

City: __________________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______+_____

Email: ____________________________________________

Number of Memberships @ $100 _________ Total $ _______

(AAM stands for food producer and commodity PARITY. Parity is a term that denotes a fair commodity price adjusted for inflation to the commodity prices brought in 1910-1914 when producer-middlemen-consumer had a balanced income. Today, 15 commodities average less than 50 percent of PARITY. Meanwhile costs of trucks, implements, tractors, fuel, fertilizer and help rose many times. AAM still demands a parity price increase for commodities.)