

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Technology Roadmap Gaining Support

Key policy makers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) expressed strong support in a series of meetings May 27-28, for the tree fruit industry's quest to expand technology-based research in the areas of genomics, genetics, breeding, sensor technology and automation.

USApple Research Subcommittee chairman Phil Baugher, USApple's Jim Cranney and the Washington State Tree Fruit Research Commission's Jim McFerson and Ashmore & Associates' Nick Ashmore met May 27-28 with USDA Undersecretary Joe Jen, USDA Agriculture Research Service (ARS) Administrator Ed Knipling, USDA Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service Administrator Colien Hefferan and USDA ARS Associate Deputy Administrator Judy St. John to gain support for the National Tree Fruit Technology Roadmap Initiative (Roadmap).

The meetings were scheduled to raise the profile of the Roadmap within the Bush Administration, and to encourage USDA to work collaboratively to address the tree fruit industry's needs in the area of genomics, genetics, breeding, sensors and automation.

As a result of the meetings, ARS has agreed to take the lead in organizing two separate workshops to develop USDA action plans to address the tree fruit industry's needs in the areas of genomics, sensors and automation. We expect these workshops to be convened some time during late fall or winter. Members of the apple industry will be invited to participate in the workshops to provide input on the research strategy.

Futuristic peach and apple "orchards," where each dish holds tiny experimental trees grown from lab-cultured cells to which researchers have given new genes. Photo by Scott Bauer. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rep. Hastings To Headline USApplePAC Breakfast

Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) will join apple leaders from across the country at a special breakfast for USApple's political action committee, USApplePAC, on Aug. 20 at the Fairmont Hotel in Chicago.

Rep. Hastings actively supports the apple industry on many important issues, including the threat of

Chinese imports, exports, pesticides and child nutrition issues. This invitation-only event is being held in conjunction with the 2004 Apple Crop Outlook and Marketing Conference, and is only open to U.S. citizens and Green Card holders per federal law.

Rep. Hastings' district in eastern

Washington State grows almost half the apples produced in the United States. USApple Chairman Larry Olsen, from Prosser, WA, knows Hastings well, saying, "Doc has consistently been among the apple industry's very best friends in Congress. Rep. Hastings is a true believer in free enterprise and fair trade."

Rep. Hastings, his colleagues in

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INDUSTRY INFORMATION

Conference Will Provide Needed Info

USApple's 2004 Outlook and Marketing Conference is the must-attend apple industry event of the year. This premier conference provides up-to-the-minute apple market analysis and premier networking opportunities. Register today for this exciting opportunity!

Outlook 2004 will be held Aug. 19-20 at Chicago's Fairmont Hotel, and promises to bring together a top-notch mix of growers, processors, brokers and industry leaders from across the nation and around the world.

Outlook 2004 will include presentations on U.S. and international apple crops, as well as an update on food industry trends, the impact of low carb diets on apples and apple products, and the future of agricultural production in China and implications for world commodity markets.

Conference registration materials for USApple's Outlook 2004 were distributed earlier this month. Attendees are encouraged to make their conference, Fairmont Hotel and flight reservations early.

An Outlook 2004 registration form is included in this issue of Apple News, and information and registration forms are available on USApple's Web site at www.usapple.org.

For more information about Outlook 2004, contact USApple Vice President, Jim Cranney at (800) 781-4443 or via e-mail at jcranney@usapple.org.



USApple Trustee Dave Benner gave a tour of his orchard to USApple Director of Public Affairs Diane Coates recently. Coates and USApple President Nancy Foster were in Adams County, Pa., for a day-long tour, which included stops at Knouse Foods and Rice Fruit.

EDUCATION

Child Nutrition, Fruit Pilot Expansion Bill OK'd by Congress

USApple and its fruit and vegetable industry allies are applauding Congress' reauthorization of federal child nutrition programs (CNP) late this month – and with it a provision that expands and makes permanent the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) popular pilot school snack fruit and vegetable giveaway program.

The bill passed the Senate June 23 and the House approved the Senate bill June 24. The legislation continues the program in Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and the Zuni Indian Reservation, and expands it to include Mississippi, three more states and 2 Indian Reservations (to be determined by USDA).

Created by the 2002 farm bill, the pilot program included 25 schools in each of the original four states and one Indian tribal organization. To keep the program from shutting down after its one-time farm

bill funding ran out, the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association, Produce for Better Health Foundation, USApple and other produce industry allies began working last summer to gain congressional support to continue and expand it. USApple board and committee members from across the country helped to build congressional support by urging their senators and representatives to continue the pro-fruit and vegetable consumption program during USApple's annual congressional visits in March.

Apples were the fruit most purchased by schools that participated in the pilot program, according to a USDA evaluation report issued last year.

For more information, contact USApple Director of Public Affairs Diane Coates by telephone at (703) 442-8850 or (800) 781-4443, or by email at dcoates@usapple.org.

Legislative News: Progress on Exports

Good news for apple growers! Congress is taking steps to direct more federal funding to help boost U.S. apple exports, increase consumption of apples in schools, and may take action on agricultural labor reform this year.

This spring, USApple leaders from across the country came to Washington, D.C. to discuss export funding by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other apple concerns with their congressional delegations. From trade agreements and export promotion to child nutrition and agriculture labor reform, USApple leaders educated Members of Congress and their staff on the real-world impact of legislation on the apple industry.

USApple staff has been working with key members of Congress to achieve the legislative goals outlined last spring. There is good news to report although Congress is still working on some issues.

Exports — The House Appropriations Committee has agreed to increase funding for the Market Assistance Program (MAP), under which the U.S. apple industry receives over \$3 million annually in export funding through USDA partnership with the Washington Apple Commission and the U.S. Apple Export Council. The Committee passed its fiscal year 2005 spending bill, funding MAP at the full \$140 million level authorized under the farm bill. This represents a significant victory as the President's budget called for level (\$125 million) funding of the pro-

gram. The Committee was working with fewer dollars than last year, so few programs received increases. As an active member of the Coalition to Promote U.S. Agriculture Exports, USApple staff met often with the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees in support of the MAP program. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the bill in July, with Senate action later.

Central American Free Trade Agreement — Congress is considering approval of several free trade agreements, including the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). This trade pact would benefit the apple industry by eliminating import duties on U.S. apples in key Central American nations. CAFTA would give the U.S. apple industry fair opportunity to compete against foreign producers, such as Chile, who have enjoyed preferential market access under a free trade agreement with several nations of this nearby market of 35 million consumers. Fairer competition would drive the marketplace, instead of allowing foreign import duties to disadvantage U.S. apple exports to the benefit of our competitors. CAFTA would provide real market access for the U.S. apple industry, since U.S. exports do not face sanitary-phytosanitary import barriers in CAFTA nations. Congress must approve CAFTA before it can take effect. While the trade pact is good news for the apple industry, it faces strong opposition in Congress from other agriculture, labor and envi-

ronmental groups.

Increased Apple Consumption in Schools — Congress voted to expand the fresh fruit and vegetable "pilot" program by passing The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, just a week shy of the June 30 deadline when federal nutrition programs were set to expire. Sens. Tom Harkin (D-IA), Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), and Representative Doc Hastings (R-WA), introduced similar legislation last July, and are largely responsible for its inclusion in the bill. (See related article for more details on the program.)

Agriculture Labor Reform — This apple priority remains a major issue in Congress, the media and the apple industry. The cost and availability of a predictable, consistent and legal supply of labor is a critical issue for the U.S. apple industry. Apple production and harvesting is highly labor-intensive. From pruning to picking, to packing and processing, labor accounts for approximately 50 percent of the cost of producing apples in the United States. The U.S. apple industry is heavily dependent on migrant labor to harvest, pack and process apples and apple products.

The "AgJOBS" bill, introduced by Sens. Larry Craig (R-ID) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) has 63 cosponsors making it immune from a filibuster (lengthy debate on the Senate floor). This bill addresses illegal immigrants already working in U.S. agriculture by providing an avenue to become

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NATIONAL APPLE MONTH

NAM Program Seeks Top Merchandiser

In June, the National Apple Month Program began its search for the "Apple Merchandiser of the Year." NAM will honor the retailer who has done the best job of mer-

chandising apples and apple products.

This involves the handling, merchandising and promotion from our docks to the consumer.

All retailers are eligible, with nominations coming from National Apple Month supporters. The prize will be \$1000 donated to a charity designated by the winner. Check your mailbox for the nomination form. The honoree will be recognized at the 2004 USApple Outlook & Marketing Conference in August.

Political Action Committee Gives Industry a Voice in Washington

PAC (from page 1)

the House of Representatives and one third of the Senate face reelection this year. As November draws near, many political commercials, mailings and phone calls from candidates will solicit your vote.

However, election season is also a time to reflect on the positive impact that apple-friendly members of Congress have on the industry.

And that's where USApplePAC comes in. Established in 1999, the PAC enables the industry to have a stronger voice on food safety, pesti-

cide regulations, farm labor reform, international trade and other critical issues.

In addition to thanking those Members of Congress who have fought hard on Capitol Hill for the apple industry, USApplePAC dollars help ensure they will retain their "seats", and be ready to help us fight the next battle on Capitol Hill.

Contributions to USApplePAC give the U.S. industry the means to support members of Congress who support the apple industry. By law, no individual or state dues paid to USApple are used to support the USApplePAC activities.

On behalf of USApplePAC, the association's staff represents the apple industry at fundraising events for apple-friendly political candidates. USApplePAC also contributes to the election campaigns of these candidates who understand and support industry priorities. Please plan to join your colleagues at the USApple PAC breakfast and say a collective "thank you" to Rep. Doc Hastings.

To request an invitation or to get more information on USApplePAC, please contact Diane Coates at USApple at (800) 781-4443, or via email at dcoates@usapple.org.

House of Representatives Considers Agricultural Labor Proposals

NEWS (from page 3)

legal residents of the United States. It also reforms the H-2A program and works to simplify and streamline the process for hiring foreign workers for agriculture operations.

Sen. Craig is adamant that the bill receive a Senate vote this year. He has promised to file the bill as an amendment to a variety of bills as they come to the Senate for passage.

In the House, there are several

agricultural labor reform bills pending, including AgJOBS (introduced by Reps. Chris Cannon [R-UT] and Howard Berman [D-CA]) and "The Temporary Agricultural Labor Reform Act of 2003" (introduced by House Agriculture Chairman Goodlatte [R-VA] and Ranking Member Charlie Stenholm [D-TX]). The "Goodlatte bill" would reform the H-2A program by establishing a streamlined temporary visa program and simplifying the application

process. The AEWL would be replaced with a new prevailing wage standard so that all workers are paid the same wage as workers doing similar work in a region.

USApple staff will continue to follow these and other legislative issues and work on behalf of the industry on Capitol Hill.

For questions, please contact USApple's Director of Public Affairs Diane Coates at 800-781-4443 or via email dcoates@usapple.org.

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8233 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 200
Vienna, Virginia 22182-3816 USA

USApple Outlook 2004 Registration Form

Please return completed registration forms to USApple by Monday, August 2

(Please print – submit a form for each person being registered, including guest registrants)

USApple ID (see brochure mailing label, or bottom of email from us): _____ - _____ - _____

Full Name _____ Nickname for badge _____

Title _____

Company _____

Address _____

City, State, Postal Code _____ Country _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

	Subtotal for item:
Full conference registration – a \$50 savings over on-site registration (includes Thursday reception): <input type="checkbox"/> USApple Member \$325 <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member \$575	\$
Thursday evening reception only, not attending full conference (includes spouses and guests): <input type="checkbox"/> USApple member or guest of member conference attendee \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member or guest of non-member conference attendee \$115	\$
USApple Chairman's Luncheon and Annual Business Meeting, Friday, Aug. 22 <i>(Note: This is not included in the conference registration fee)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Will attend luncheon after the conference \$35	\$
Proceedings (Note: NOW Available on CD or paper and will be distributed 2-3 weeks after conference): <input type="checkbox"/> U.S., Canada, Mexico shipping addresses \$50 each Number of CD copies _____ Number of paper copies _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other shipping addresses \$60 each Number of copies _____	\$
Additional copies of <i>Production & Utilization Analysis</i> statistical book (one copy included in registration fee): <input type="checkbox"/> USApple Member \$45 each Number of copies _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member \$115 each Number of copies _____	\$
TOTAL PAYMENT DUE:	\$

Payment enclosed, in U.S. funds, and drawn on a U.S. bank, payable to "U.S. Apple Association"

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Check here if you need special assistance to fully participate, and attach a written description of your needs.

Cancellation/substitution policy: USApple will provide a full refund if we receive your cancellation request in writing by July 18. Between July 19 and August 2, a \$50 processing fee will be deducted. No refunds will be provided after August 2. In the event you find you are not able to attend, an alternate company representative can be substituted at no additional cost if you provide written notification to USApple by August 2.

Return completed form to the U.S. Apple Association:

- Paying by check? Mail to USApple, 8233 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 200, Vienna, VA 22182-3816 USA
- Paying by credit card? Fax to: (703) 790-0845
- Questions? Visit www.usapple.org or call (703) 442-8850

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