

# Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

## Class XVII

### Scribe Notes

#### Seminar 9

August 26 - 28, 2015

### “Northwest Oklahoma Agriculture and Industry”

#### Wednesday August 26

Scribe: Patrick Crouch

We arrived at the High Plains Technology Center to tour the Integrated Energy Training Center at 10:00 a.m. After a brief break for coffee, we were greeted by Dwight Hughes the Superintendent for the school. Taylor Burnett spoke briefly about the Wind Energy Training 20- week program. Then we went down to the training facilities and saw the classrooms that have the training equipment and toured the multi-building complex.

We loaded the bus to drive across town to the Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma where they provided us with a nice lunch. We met members of the Board of Directors for the Western Oklahoma Farm Credit and were treated by John Grunewald speaking while we were eating lunch.

After lunch we loaded up the bus for the drive to Hitch Enterprises - Henry C. Hitch Feedlot.

After arriving we had an overview of Hitch Enterprises, Inc. from Chris and Jason Hitch. Robert Bergner, the Feedlot Manager at both feedlots, spoke to the group about the feedlot operations while the bus drove around the feedlot.

Andy Bohl, the Farm Manger for Hitch Farms, Inc., spoke to the group about the farming practices employed at Hitch Farms. Andy spoke about some of the irrigated crops that they have and some of the no-till dry land farming used to help encourage less erosion. Most of the crops are raised for silage wiht a smaller percentage of crops being raised for grain.

Mike Brandherm, Vice President and General Manager at Hitch Pork Producers, Inc., spoke to the group about the swine operations as the bus toured the farms involved in the operation. We drove to the dedicated feed mill for pork and around the hog barns. We then visited the original Hitch Ranch that has a lot of history, being in the Hitch family since 1884.

We drove to Guymon to dinner at All Fired Up, the local art gallery and art center. We had a Mexican buffet for dinner and the opportunity to tour the facilities available to the local artists as well as enjoying the local art that was on display in the gallery.

After dinner, Casey Murdock, State Representative for District 61, spoke about some of the issues that he has been working on in Oklahoma City at the Capitol.

After hearing Representative Murdock speak, we headed out to the city park in Guymon to help assist in the cleanup of a few downed trees that needed moved to a more accessible location. Everyone, even the bus driver, chipped in and grabbed logs and branches to make a big job not that big at all.

After the city park cleanup, the group headed back into town to the hotel for check-in and a few minutes to relax. We then we had a presentation from Josh Payne about his time in Iowa regarding the recent avian flu

outbreak and his involvement in the process of containing the outbreak and composting birds.

### **Thursday August 27**

**Scribe: Chad Hartin**

We started of the day by going to Seaboard Pork processing. Bill Powell told us all about what goes on inside of the plant such as how many hogs are killed per day which is around 20,000 head. He also talked about their safety program and that many ethnicities worked in the plant.

We then went to the Plains Cotton Coop for lunch where Jim Pittman and Zach Hrencher told us about the Coop's mission.

From the Coop, we went to National Beef Packing where Brian Webb told us about all that the plant is capable of which is killing 6,000 head per day while putting food safety and worker safety at the forefront of the company.

We then went to Arkalon Energy Ethanol Plant which is a corn and milo based ethanol plant where they produce 125,000 gallons of ethanol per day with the excess being sent to feed lots in the form of DDGs to be put in a ration to be fed to cattle.

We ended our day at the Draper Farm and Showplace, which I would say was kind of a museum, where we had a wonderful meal that was provided by Joe Locke. During our meal, Vicki Ayres-Portman of the Panhandle Regional Economic Development Coalition talked to us about some of the projects that were coming to the panhandle that could have a big impact on the economy.

In closing, it was a very eventful day in the panhandle of Oklahoma and Kansas where there is a major agriculture economy that not many people in our state even know about.

### **Friday August 28**

**Scribe: Bob Mulligan**

Rick Kochenower talked to us on the bus about farming in the panhandle with the water issues, CRP, and school land issues.

Jarrod and JB Stewart talked about their operations. They discussed their dryland crop rotations between what they did used to do by growing wheat and leaving the land in fallow to growing wheat and rotating in a sorghum crop to gain more crops in the same amount of years. They use minimum till farming methods and have around 35,000 acres of farm ground. They use a stripper header on their combines to save on fuel, decrease repair costs, and operate at higher speeds. They also have a chemical and fertilizer business along with a grain business.

On the way out to Boise City, we stopped at a two-story sod house for a quick visit. It was interesting to walk around and see this piece of history.

Jody Risley, Museum Curator and Director of the Cimarron Heritage Center, gave us a brief history of the original house the museum is in and then we toured the collection. A wonderful home-cooked meal was enjoyed at The Chicken House.

Reflections and Announcements were shared on the bus ride back.