

SCRIBE NOTES
OALP Class 15, Seminar 11
November 9 - 11, 2011
“Northeastern Oklahoma Agriculture and Industry”

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 a.m.

Scribe: Blayne Arthur

No scribe notes submitted.

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 p.m.

Scribe: Vicki Jo Stephens

No scribe notes submitted.

Thursday, November 10, 2011 a.m.

Scribe: Todd Love

It was a cool crisp fall morning as the OALP class left Miami for Picher, Oklahoma to tour the Tar Creek EPA Superfund Site. The class met John Sparkman at the Picher Housing location, which was a vacant Housing Authority Complex. John reviewed the history of the area and the mining that occurred in and around Picher. He talked about the challenges and timeline that occurred to date. John also talked about what had happened in the community as the EPA tried various methods on the clean up. One could tell that John saw a lot of issues with the EPA and the effect each of these issues had on the community. Today, there is no longer a Picher, Oklahoma as the community was bought out in two different waves.

After finishing the discussion, we moved to the vehicles to tour the area. Our first stop was a chat pile, where the group climbed to the top to view the area. It was a great view as we looked out on the many chat piles in all directions. After John gave us a bearing to the area we would be traveling, it was off to our vehicles to tour the area by road. We visited a field that was being reclaimed and the surface soil removed. The next stop was at a mine cave-in site, and finally we stopped at Tar Creek to view the water rising up from the ground that had a red tint. After the stop at Tar Creek, it was back to the Housing authority location to say thank you and good bye to John.

Our next stop was Leach, Oklahoma. We met Cliff Robinson of Arvest Bank at the Leach First Baptist Church for an excellent lunch of fajitas. Cliff talked briefly about Arvest Bank and agriculture and then we were off to DNA Genetics.

After a short drive to Rose, Oklahoma, we stopped at DNA Genetics, where the owner, Dennis Avery discussed DNA Genetics. Dennis gave us a short presentation in the field and then moved the class into his office and work area. He provided us with examples and the tools he uses every day. He explained the processes he goes through and the results. Dennis was able to explain what he does so that even I could understand. The examples he laid out, including samples under microscopes, really helped to see what he does. After we all had time to look at his processes and tools it was off to our next stop.

The next stop was at Brashear Concrete Feed Bunks in Kansas, Oklahoma. We met Eldon Brashear at his feed bunk production area. Eldon designs and produces concrete feed bunks and water tanks made from tires. He talked about the different types of bunks he produces and how he produces those bunks. He also talked about using large earthmoving equipment tires and showed the class an example. A lot of time was spent discussing the advantages of these large tires and how they should be set in the ground for

maximum use. The class had a lot of questions as this seemed to be something of interest. After spending time with Eldon, it was time to reload the vehicles and head to northwestern Arkansas.

Thursday, November 10, 2011 p.m.

Scribe: Monty Thornbrough

We were welcomed to Walton's Five & Dime and Museum by Mr. Richard Kinnard. He was a member of OALP Class I and has worked at Walmart since 1998. The Five & Dime Store and Museum was originally a Walton's store in 1950. The ladies working the store had prepared some giveaway sacks which were won by Shannon Cunningham and Kurt Murray.

Mr. Paul Renn told us that his job is to procure produce and producers to stock the Walmart grocery area. He spoke on Walmart's focus to buy local and challenges of getting contracts with producers. There are 19 distribution centers throughout the U.S. which handle the inflow and outflow of produce from on-farm to individual stores. We then had several minutes to look around the museum before traveling to the Mohawk Building for presentations.

Mr. Ronald McCormick, Senior Director of Sustainable Agriculture, stated that about 50% of Walmart's sales are food related. Their goal is to support sustainable agriculture through support development for farmers and the community, produce more food with fewer resources, and to have a sustainable source of agricultural products. Sustainable strategies include reduce food miles, improve utilization, and grow better products - not just more.

Mr. Jonathan Nimrod, Director of the Supplier Division, told us that the goal of the Global Woman's Economic Empowerment Initiative is to increase the amount of business Walmart does with minority- and women-owned businesses. This initiative goes as far as to collect second tier data, which is data supplied by suppliers of Walmart on the diversification of the group working on Walmart's accounts. Through this initiative, Walmart provides scholarships to women and minorities to the Tuck Executive Program at the Tuck School of Business.

Mr. Mike Gardener, Vice President of Architecture, spoke on Walmart's store concepts. Walmart's Real Estate Strategy is to fill-in high to medium share markets, penetrate low markets, install smaller formats (Walmart Express), convert discount stores (expansion), and maintain the fleet (remodel). There are 540 remodels planned within the next year in the U.S. and typically a store will be remodeled about every 7-10 years. Walmart's productivity loop: Operate for less → Buy for less → Sell for less → Grow sales → (operate for less).

We then drove to Gravette, Arkansas to visit a Walmart Express. Mr. Ott Bell, Senior Manager, spoke to the group about the new Walmart Express stores. Currently there are only seven Walmart Express stores. These smaller stores are geared toward rural and urban markets and for fast pickup of items. Several demonstrations have been completed and based on research all future Express stores will have gas pumps and grocery. We had an in-store tour of the new 15,000 square-foot store.

We drove back to Miami and had a nice social gathering at Shannon Cunningham's farm house on the Northeastern Oklahoma campus.

Friday, November 11, 2011

Scribe: Orlin Nichols Jr.

We arrived at Hibbard Farms around 8:00 a.m. on Friday. We were greeted just outside the chicken houses by Clay and Melissa Hibbard. Mrs. Hibbard gave us a brief overview of her operation before we

went inside. The Hibbards bought their farm after it had been leased for a few years by someone that had grazed the ground very heavy and found that they could not get the grass to grow. They decided to start producing fertile eggs with laying hens as a contract grower for Tyson Foods with two houses at a capacity of 13,000 chickens per house so they could utilize the fertilizer on their farm to increase the soil fertility and grow enough grass for their cattle operation.

Their first year in production with Tyson was in 2006 and it did not take long for the Hibbards to excel in the poultry industry with 4.2 million eggs the first year. In 2008, they won the Tyson Environmental Stewardship Award and in 2010 they also won the Family Farm Environmental Excellence Award from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association.

Tyson owns the chickens, eggs, and the feed. The farm is paid an amount per dozen eggs for the labor and care of the chickens and eggs. I am leaving out the dollar amount in my notes for Hibbard privacy. The chickens are a Cobb500™ which came from a White Leghorn and are received at the farm at 21-26 weeks of age and weigh about four pounds. They will stay at the farm until they reach 62-65 weeks old when they are shipped to Jay, Oklahoma to be used for Campbell's soup. It takes about two weeks for the chickens to start laying eggs.

The bright lights come on at 4:30 a.m. to simulate spring-like conditions and turn off at 8:30 p.m. There is one rooster for every nine hens in the house and the chickens are fed once a day in the morning with a 14-15% protein ration with no hormones or antibiotics given at any time. The hen feeders are low and the rooster feeders are high. The hens cannot reach the tall feeder and the hen feeders are guarded so the comb of the rooster will not allow him to eat the hen feed. Some roosters have a small comb so a tube or "bone" is inserted into their beak to help with guarding the hen feed. This does not harm the rooster. The feed is the same but they want to measure how much the roosters eat compared to the hens. The water is set at a higher level so the chickens will have to lift their heads to drink making it easier for them.

There are two rows of nesting boxes in each house that have a conveyor running under them to bring the eggs to the end of the house where the Hibbards or one of two employees gather the eggs. The eggs are put in crates with the big end up to supply the fertile egg with air and then they are stacked on a rack that will hold 4,860 eggs. The eggs are gathered from 8:00-11:00 a.m. and again from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with a final check at 4:00 p.m. The houses are also walked three to four times a day to check for any problems. Double yolk eggs are culled and sold to Tyson to be used in cake batter. They ship the eggs twice a week because during the peak of production the chickens will lay around 10,000 eggs per day per house with a fertility rate of 90%. Each house holds 13,000 chickens with a 78% egg to bird ratio leaving each chicken to lay an average of 165 eggs during the ten months they are at the Hibbard's. At the time of our visit the chickens were 54 weeks old and the production was down to 6,200 eggs per day because of the age of the hens. The temperature of a hen is 105-106 degrees making it a greater problem to cool the chickens down in the summer rather than heating them in the winter. The air is moving in the houses in the summer to cool the birds in a house that is 600 feet long which allows each bird to move from one end to the other.

After the chickens reach 62-65 weeks and are shipped out, the houses are given a 5-6 week rest before the new crop arrives. The houses are cleaned by the Hibbard family and the fertilizer is applied to their farm. They are required to take annual classes and have a litter analysis and a fertility check of the soil every year and to leave a 100 foot buffer from any waterway during application according to Josh Payne, Area Animal Waste Management Specialist, Muskogee County. Josh gave us information on some of the

lawsuits and regulations that have been brought to the poultry industry such as Senate Bill 79 that states manure cannot be declared a hazardous substance.

Poultry production started in northwestern Arkansas and has spread to Oklahoma making the poultry industry tied with swine production for the number two cash crop in Oklahoma. On average, consumers eat 80-90 pounds of chicken per year.

We then traveled to the Port of Catoosa where we were greeted by Richard Grenville, Jeff Yowell and John Goetting.

The Port of Catoosa was started by two men, Robert Kerr from Oklahoma and John McClellan from Arkansas. They had an idea that the Arkansas River could be used as an international passageway for industry in the area despite the skepticism of early public figures. They envisioned that this waterway could support barge transportation, reduce flooding, generate hydroelectric power, supply municipal water, and be used for wildlife, recreation and fishing. After 20 years in construction and 1.2 billion dollars, the Port of Catoosa opened for the first barge in 1971. This is an ice-free port that consists of 18 locks and dams between the Port and the Mississippi River creating several reservoirs with 400 feet of elevation in 460 miles and 21 million dollars of maintenance. A tugboat and barge will enter the lock going down stream and the gates will close. Then the water level is lowered slowly until the barge is at the same level as the downstream current. The gates will then open and the barge moves to the next lock downstream. The procedure is reversed for upstream travel.

The Port is in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. It has a 2,800 acre industrial park that is home to 63 industries that employ 3,093 people that provide service to the Port and surrounding businesses. Two class-one railways and fifteen miles of track support global business. Over two million tons of cargo travel through the Port every year including fertilizer, grain, coal, and one-half million tons of raw steel. Waterway transportation is very cost effective. One barge equals 60 tractor-trailer loads and will travel in as little as nine feet of water carrying 65,000 tons and that weight is expected to double in 2014.

There are five to six major barge companies on the Mississippi River that utilize the barges efficiently. A barge may come upstream with fertilizer, be cleaned out, and sent back with a seasonal crop such as beans in the months of November through January where the Port will ship 40-50 barges of beans per month. It costs \$5-6,000 for an empty barge to go downstream so planning is important. Although it is very rare, a tug boat may move up to twelve barges but only six are allowed in the lock at one time. The Port only receives bulk barges currently but is going to start receiving containers soon. The Port leases property to businesses in the industrial park for income. They do not receive any tax dollars. Ten people manage the Port along with three engines for the railways and three tugs in the water.

The Port of Catoosa provides many services to their lessees as well as the local economy and provides Oklahoma with an opportunity to be competitive in a global market.

After arriving back in Stillwater, some class members headed home or to other activities. Several members went to Oklahoma City to attend the first (hopefully annual) ALO Reception at the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Convention at the Cox Convention Center.