OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CLASS XVI

Scribe Notes
Seminar 3
November 7 - 9, 2012

Theme: *"The Noble Foundation and Mid-Southern Oklahoma Agriculture and Industry"*

November 7, 2012
Scribe: Stacy Howeth

OSU's Institute for Agricultural Biosciences, Ardmore:
Class XVI arrived and enjoyed refreshments in the IAP auditorium. Chairman Steve McIntyre welcomed the group.
Dr. Randy Allen gave an overview and background presentation. He spoke about the people, projects, and plants.
Dr. Todd Baughman gave the group a tour of the facility. In one of the research areas, Dr. Million Tadege explained his current focus on projects.

Class XVI Presentations – Round 1

Cheri Long – Ag in the Classroom
Chris Kidd – Private Property Rights
Karen Eifert Jones – Large Scale Farming
Jamie Doyal – Problems Keeping Young People in Production Agriculture
Debbie Wedel – Wheat Production
Dianne Jeans – Teaching Young People about Natural Resources
Jane Fuhlendorf – Climate Change
Janet Stewart – Legal Aspects of Food Safety
Joe Gribble – Rotation Crops
Steve Alspach – Agriculture Globalization Concerns
Rusty Roush – Government in Agriculture

The Noble Foundation, Ardmore:
A lunch of catfish was enjoyed while visiting with consultants.

Mary Means went over the history and legacy of The Noble Foundation.

"The land must continue to provide for our food, clothing and shelter, long after the oil is gone."
- Lloyd Noble

Three Divisions: Agriculture
Plant Biology (added in 1988)
Forage Improvement (added in 1997)

Adam Calaway presented facts about the agricultural crisis and food insecurities in the future.
Campus tour – Mary Means
Greenhouse tour – David McSweeney

Class XVI Presentations – Round 2

Meriruth Cohenour – Recreational Agriculture
Brent Howard – Estate Tax Planning
Justin Whitmore – Food Safety
Steve McIntyre – Livestock Production Concerns
Jennifer Jensen – Food Insecurity in Oklahoma
Stacy Howeth – Oklahoma Legislative Demographics
Jamie Cummings – Agritourism Insurance
Sandra Stevenson – Assistive Technologies in Agriculture
Tracy Payton Miller – Women in Agriculture
Chris Hitch – "Graying" Society in Agriculture
Casey Sharber – Educating the Public about Agriculture
Scott Stinnett – Educating the Public about Agriculture
Justin Lingo – Alternative Enterprise Production

Job Springer educated the group about marketing and hedging –

(Cash – Futures = Basis) (Short = Sell Today, Buy Later) (Long = Buy Today, Sell Later)

Helpful websites: *admis.com* *agmanager.info* *beefbasis.com*

The group ended the day with dinner and synthesis at The Noble Foundation Conference Center.

November 8, 2012
Scribe: Justin Lingo

8:00 a.m. Arrived at the research plots and the speakers spoke about different ways to assess the forage mass of range land. They described the typical farmer methods of guessing and estimating using a yard stick. They then proceeded to talk about their technology. They had an electronic plunger, a pull behind shed also called feed reader, and anelectronic photo beam. All had different situations where they worked best.

9:15 a.m. Josh Gaskamp talked to us about the efficiency of capturing hogs. Hogs are smart and they learn that the traps are bad. Hogs haven't learned to look up when worrying about traps. The ferial hog traps have had great success with drop nets and drop cages. The cages work best because there are fewer hogs that escape and there is less handling of hogs. With the drop cages, the hogs can be loaded into a trailer and hauled to market without ever shooting or handling them. The drop nets and cages can be operated from a computer or any smart phone.

9:45 a.m. We visited the pecan orchard and production facility. The pecan grove at the Red River Ranch is believed to be one of the oldest in the state. It was planted between 1940 and 1943. Oklahoma is the second largest pecan production state. The crew proceeded to show us a pecan shaker in action.

10:30 a.m. Kent Shankles talked to us about the Noble Foundation cattle herd. Most of the time was spent discussing the problem with worms and other diseases in the cattle this year. They are going to try different vaccinations next year.

11:30 a.m. Kent Shankles showed us the cattle handling facilities at the Oswalt Ranch. They took a lot of time designing the facility to minimize stress on cattle. They want the cattle to be comfortable and they want the cattle to see the way out. They do this by using high walls and overhead cover.

11:50 a.m. Dr. Blanton discussed the GrowSafe System and GrowSafe Beef feeders. The feeders' measure how efficiently cattle use feed to put on weight. The trough can measure to the faction of a pound how much feed the cattle take from the bunks and turn it into weight. This technology measures how efficiently a cow turns feed into weight. They want very efficient cattle.

12:15 p.m. Lunch was provided by The Noble Foundation at the Oswalt Ranch.

1:00 p.m. Hugh Aljoe discussed the effects of the drought in Oklahoma. Then there was a question and answer period.

2:45 p.m. We drove out to Jack Cunningham's place where he discussed how he used The Noble Foundation consultants and the benefits this interaction has on his farm operation. Jack is a third generation wheat operator. He uses his own wheat seed year after year. He said it was important to always have wheat tested before planting for fertility. Jack also runs cattle on his wheat pastures. They have had success buying high risk cattle and doctoring them up and the putting them on wheat for gain. Soil tests must be done yearly. No-till farming wasn't for him because the soil was too tight and would hold too much water.

4:00 p.m. Our community service project was at Kenneth Lemons' home. We mowed the lawn, bagged leaves, trimmed trees, repair door screens, etc. He and his daughter were very appreciative of our work.

6:30 p.m. We enjoyed a dinner prepared by OALP alumni and then toured the Gene Autry Museum.

November 9, 2012
Scribe: Karen Eifert Jones

7:00 a.m. Breakfast was held at The Noble Foundation Conference Center.

7:45 a.m. We departed for Madill.

8:30 a.m. Oklahoma Steel and Wire, Madill, OK

We gathered in the showroom/meeting room to be greeted and don our safety gear consisting of glasses, ear plugs and hard hats. We were greeted by Craig Moore, president and Lou Richards, sales. We were also joined for the day by Robert Holiday, the incoming president of the Chamber of Commerce.

We boarded a local church bus for transportation around the facility.

Our first stop was the melt shop. We were divided into smaller groups for safety and ease of hearing. Each group may have had slightly different experiences. The melt shop runs essentially non-stop. In the heat of the summer, they do have to shut down during the peak time of electrical use each day at the direction of OG&E. Any time they are shut down, routine maintenance is performed. The steel industry is considered the fifth most dangerous with regard to fatalities and serious injuries. They focus on safety with both facilities and employees of which they have about 500.

The beginning of our tour in the melt shop was at the point where scrap iron is put into a smelt pot (ladle) to be heated to 2,930 degrees to liquefy it. There are about 100 employees working shifts in this part of the plant. The ladle is preheated to 2,000 degrees before iron is added to keep things moving quickly. It is poured from the ladle into a billet mold for ease of handling. The billet is sprayed to harden. It is about 1,900 degrees coming out of the mold. It continues to travel the length of the building and it is about 1,400 degrees when it is cut into lengths of 30 feet. The billets are left to cool and to age a few days when time permits.

Next, we moved to the rolling mill where we were greeted by another set of tour guides. Each guide was an employee from that area of the factory. In the rolling mill they produce rod that will be further refined into marketable products. The 30-foot billet will be rolled and stretched (much like bread dough for a cinnamon roll) until it is about five miles long. As it is rolled, it goes from round to oval and back again, over and over to form the perfect rod.

Finally we arrived at the product or wire handling facility where we were greeted by another set of guides. We watched the barbed wire machine work as it twisted two wires then twisted in a third to hold the barbs in place. Way cool! We also saw the production of fence stays, tie wires, and cattle panels. These are packaged and branded for various distributors around the area.

At the conclusion, we were treated to cold water as we returned our safety gear.

10:00 a.m. Savage Equipment, Inc., Madill OK

This company produces equipment for harvesting and processing pecans. We were greeted by Mr. Savage, owner and CEO. He set the tone with an authoritarian style which was further evidenced by the spotless condition of the business offices and the factory floor. His employees seemed very clear about his expectations.

We first saw the laser cutting of the parts for the equipment. A computer lays out the pattern to most efficiently fit the piece of iron then they are cut exactly by the machine. This makes for ease of “repeatability” later on. If a part is ordered years later, it can be reproduced from file data. The parts are picked up off the cutting table by a magnet. Most processes are nearly fully automated and work very efficiently. They move through the production line on a monorail system. The factory is about 87,000 square feet. The three main lines of equipment are shaker, harvester, and cleaner.

After production, the equipment is painted in a downdraft paint booth for maximum coverage, efficiency, and safety. They also have a plant in Georgia. It generally takes about eight days for an item to travel through the plant and be ready to deliver.

We were introduced to one son who is an engineer and one who does purchasing. He pointed out that if the supplies are “bought right” the product can be “sold right.” A similar concept to farmers’ constant vigilance of input costs. The sale of parts is about five percent of their business. They feel they have a monopoly in the pecan cracker industry. All competition is gone.

12:00 p.m. Lunch in Madill was sponsored by BancFirst and Vicki Byrd of Class V hosted us. She spoke briefly and noted that Marshall County is the sixth fastest growing county in Oklahoma. BBQ chicken and ribs were great!

1:00 p.m. Clint Williams / Texoma Peanut Company

We were hosted by Steve Ortloff, the grandson of the founder. His father Alan Ortloff also joined us briefly. We met first in the conference room and learned about peanut growing and harvesting. Peanuts are brought to this plant from the farm and they process about 140,000 tons. Peanuts are selling for about $650-750 per ton this year. They are working on trace-back and can do some but not all the way back to the production farm.

The large tote bags they transport peanuts in hold about 1,000 pounds in the shell and 2,200 pounds shelled. Some markets also require a 110 pound burlap bag. These are more cumbersome to handle in the plant but they do it for the customer.

Different varieties are used for different purposes. The Virginia peanuts are processed in the shell while runners are shelled out. Some of the shelled peanuts are sold with skins on and some are blanched to remove the skin. Our final stop was at the blanching facility. These peanuts are ready to be consumed so the level of control and cleanliness goes way up. Many of these go into the baking and candy industries.

We returned to the Conference Center and disbursed into vehicles to head to the OALP alumni reception at the Farm Bureau Convention in Oklahoma City and home.

My summary thoughts of this day are the need to pay attention to detail and efficiency in production without losing sight of safety. Not unlike a day on my farm.