



Market Bulletin

Mike Strain DVM, Commissioner



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Groundhog Day
Feb 2**

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January 26, 2012



Strain begins second term

By Sam Irwin

The 2012 inauguration of Louisiana's statewide elected officials took place at the Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge. It's the first time the inauguration was held there since 1996. Strain, of Abita Springs in St. Tammany Parish, won re-election as Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry with 66 percent of the vote.

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Mike Strain's second term as Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry began January 9 at the inauguration ceremony at the Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge.

Strain was sworn in by Judge Burrell Carter of the First Circuit Court of Appeal.

Strain believes that Louisiana and the nation as a whole are entering into an agricultural "golden age."

"American agriculture continues to be one of the winners in our nation's economy," Strain said. "Farm revenue was up 28 percent in net income and our agricultural exports hit a record high of \$137 billion. Under the right conditions, the United States could add an additional \$12 billion to its ag export totals and possibly reach \$148 to \$150 billion in 2012."

Strain, citing numbers from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service, said U.S. agriculture will have a net positive balance of trade of more than \$43 billion, a significant increase over the record of \$38 billion in 2010.

"There is no doubt that agricultural exports will continue to be a major factor in the economy of the future,"

he said. "The increased demand for agricultural products is making a real difference for America's farm families, whose household income was up 3 percent in 2010 and is forecast to show another gain in 2012. This

year, American farmers will surpass the record 2010 profit of \$100 billion, the highest in American history.

"In order to maintain this growth, the USDA must continue to support farmers and ranchers with a strong safety net and expand export markets. Recently, America signed new trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. These new accords should generate an additional \$2.3 billion in exports next year alone for America's farmers and ranchers. The expected increase in exports will help support and create thousands of jobs here at



Strain signs inauguration documents as his wife, Susan, and Judge Burrell Carter look on.

home."

Strain said he will continue to support Louisiana Congressman Charles Boustany's Realize America's Maritime Promise (RAMP) Bill that will provide proper funding to keep Louisiana's waterways like the Mississippi River and the Calcasieu Shipping Channel dredged to their proper depths.

See Second Term, continued on page 5

Louisiana Agriculture & Forestry Today

Strain: Agricultural guest worker policy must be reformed

Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., said he's glad Congress decided to delay a United States Department of Labor (DOL) mandated wage increase that would have doubled the hourly rate compensation for foreign agricultural guest workers. Strain reiterated his call for an efficient national guest worker policy.

"The agricultural community, not just in Louisiana, but throughout the nation, demands a streamlined process that will allow producers to pay foreign guest workers a fair wage to fill agricultural job vacancies," Strain said.

Strain said an effort led by Louisiana Congressman Rodney

Alexander successfully blocked the H-2B Final Wage Rule that would have doubled wages for crawfish peelers and other such workers.

"Agricultural producers would have had to pay their 2012 workers rates 30 to 100 percent higher than they paid in 2011," Strain said. "The rule's delay will help Louisiana's aquaculture producers for the 2012 season, but there will be problems for our sugar industry when the measure expires in September."

Strain said pressure from his office and other state agricultural commissioners as well as the Louisiana congressional delegation is having an effect.

"Agriculture is too critical to our

nation's economy for this issue to get entangled in politics," Strain said. "The agricultural community wants, needs and demands reform in the guest worker policy."

Strain said the H-2B provision of the DOL rules allow U.S. employers to bring in foreign nationals for work if employers can establish that the need for workers is temporary and/or seasonal and demonstrate there are not sufficient American workers who are available to do the work. The number of H-2B guest workers is capped at 66,000 per year. The Gulf Coast seafood industry uses about 3,000 of these workers each year.

"Crawfish, shrimp, and crab processors and agricultural produc-

ers establish the need for temporary workers each year and are never able to fill the jobs locally," Strain said.

Strain said he has proposed a plan that involves pre-processing foreign workers for a five year period. "Ninety percent of guest workers brought into the country come year after year to work in our crawfish plants, crawfish ponds, agricultural industries and hospitality industries, many for the same employers," Strain said. "We have to implement a pre-processing system that will be good for five years. If guest workers have already worked in the U.S. and did a good job and stayed out of trouble in our country and in their own country, then our



MIKE STRAIN DVM
COMMISSIONER

seafood and agricultural employers should be allowed to bring those workers into the U.S. to work without unnecessary delays and expense."

Louisiana Market Bulletin (USPS 672-600)

Mike Strain DVM, Commissioner

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USDA Agriculture Marketing Service Hay Prices

Values are in tons unless otherwise noted

Alabama SE Hay Report, Jan. 12, 2012

Bermuda Small Square.....	Premium.....	\$160-\$360
Bermuda Large Rounds.....	Premium.....	\$100-\$100
Bermuda Mid Round.....	Premium.....	\$90-\$110

Bahia Small Square.....	Premium.....	\$200-\$200
Bahia Large Round.....	Premium.....	\$87-\$87
Bahia Mid Round.....	Premium.....	\$100-\$100

Texas Weekly Hay Report, Jan. 13, 2012 East Texas,

Coastal Bermuda Small Squares.....	Good/Premium.....	\$300-\$360
Large Rounds.....	Good/Premium.....	\$200-\$240



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

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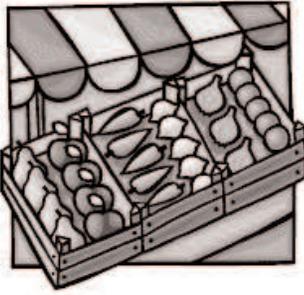
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Visit your local farmers market

DESOTO PARISH

Mansfield

DeSoto Farmers Market
10117 Hwy 171, DeSoto Parish
Ext. Office
Sat. 7:30 -11 a.m.,
May 7 -June 11

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #1
Fifth St. & Main St.
Sat. 8 a.m.- noon, year round

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #2
8470 Goodwood Blvd.
Unitarian Church Parking Lot
Tues. 8 a.m. - noon
April - earl Dec.

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #3
7248 Perkins Road
Thurs. 8 a.m. - noon,
Year round

Zachary

Zachary Famers Market
City Hall side parking lot
Sat. 8 a.m.- 12 p.m.,
Year round

EVANGELINE PARISH

Ville Platte

Ville Platte Farmers Market
704 N. Soileau
June to Aug., Fri. 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

IBERIA PARISH

New Iberia

Teche Area Farmers Market
Main St. Bouligny Plaza
Tues. 3-6 p.m., Sat. 6-10 a.m.
Year round

JEFFERSON PARISH

Gretna

Gretna Farmers Market
Huey P. Long Ave.
Sat. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Year round

Westwego

Westwego Farmers & Fisheries
484 Sala Ave. at 4th St.
Sat. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Year round

JEFFERSON DAVIS PARISH

Jennings

Main Street Farmers Market
Founder's Park on Main St.
Sat. 7 a.m.-9 a.m., May - Nov.

Welsh

Welsh Farmers Market
201 South Elms St.
Tues. 4:30-6:30 p.m., May- Oct.

LAFAYETTE PARISH

Lafayette

Acadiana Farmers Market
801 Foreman Dr. & Dulles St.
Tues., Thurs. & Sat. 5 - 10 a.m.
Year round

Lafayette

City Garden Market
Heymann Blvd., Oil Center
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon
Year round

Lafayette

Open Air Farmers Market
800 East Broussard Rd.
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon
Year round

Lafayette

Freetown Mid-Week Farmers
Market
Vermilion & Johnston St.
Wed. 3-7 p.m.

Lafayette

Lafayette Jockey Lot Flea Market
3011 N.W. Evangeline Trwy.
Sat.-Sun. 8-5 p.m., year round

LAFOURCHE PARISH

Thibodaux

Thibodaux Main Street Market
314 St. Mary St. at Jean Lafitte
National Historic Park
Sat. 7 - 11 a.m.
April-July & Sept.-Dec.

LINCOLN PARISH

Ruston

Ruston Farmer's Market
Railroad Ave at Monroe Street
Sat. 7:30 a.m.- 11:30
April-Oct.

LIVINGSTON PARISH

Denham Springs

Livingston Farmers Market
215 Florida St.
Sat. 7 a.m. - noon, Year round

MADISON PARISH

Tallulah

Tallulah Farmers Market
404 N. Cedar St., Hwy. 65
Tues., Thurs. & Sat.
8 a.m. - noon,
May-Aug., Oct.-Dec.

MOREHOUSE PARISH

Bastrop

Morehouse Parish Farmers Market
305 E. Madison
Mon.-Sat. 7 a.m.-5p.m., Year round

NATCHITOCHE PARISH

Natchitoches

Cane River Green Market
Downtown riverbank
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon,
April-July, Oct. Nov.

ORLEANS PARISH

New Orleans

Crescent City Farmers Market #1
700 Magazine St.
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon
Year round

New Orleans

Crescent City Farmers Market #2
Uptown Square, 200 Broadway
Tues. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.,
Year round

New Orleans

Crescent City Farmers Market #3
3700 Orleans Ave.
Thurs., 3 - 7 p.m.,
Year round

New Orleans

Marketplace at Armstrong Park
700-900 block of N. Rampart St.
Fri. 2-5 p.m., year round except
Feb.

New Orleans

Lower 9th Ward Sankofa Farmers
Market
5500 St. Claude Ave.
Sat. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., year round

OUACHITA PARISH

Monroe

Monroe Farmers Market
1013 Washington St.
Mon. - Sat. 6 a.m. - 1 p.m.,
June-Aug.

West Monroe

West Monroe Farmers Market
1700 North 7th St.
Mon.-Sat. 8 a.m.-6 p.m, year round

ST. CHARLES PARISH

Destrehan

German Coast Farmers Market 1
Parking lot of Ormond Plantation
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon, year round

Luling

German Coast Farmers Market 2
12715 Hwy. 90 (St. Charles Plaza)
Wed. 3 - 6 p.m., year round

ST. LANDRY PARISH

Opelousas

St. Landry Farmers Market
952 East Landry St., Hwy. 190
Tues., Thurs. & Sat. 6:30-11 a.m.
April-Nov.

Eunice

Eunice Farmers Market
Second St. & Park Ave.

ST. MARTIN PARISH

St. Martinville

St. Martinville Creole Market
Evangeline Blvd. & Main St.
Sat. 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,
May-Dec.

St. Martinville

Bayou Teche Market
203 New Market St.
Sat. 7 a.m.-11 a.m., year round

Breaux Bridge

Pont Breaux Farmers Market
1800 Rees Street
10 a.m.-noon
1st Sat. of the month

ST. MARY PARISH

Franklin

Franklin Farmers' Market
306 Willow St.
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon,
Tues. 2 p.m.-6 p.m., year round

ST. TAMMANY PARISH

Covington

Covington Farmers Market #1
609 North Columbia (City Hall)
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, year round

Covington

Covington Farmers Market #2
419 North New Hampshire
Wed. 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., year round

Folsom

Folsom Community Farmers
Market
Railroad Avenue
Every third Sat., 9 a.m - 1 p.m.
March - Nov.

Mandeville

Mandeville Trailhead Market
675 Lafitte St.
Sat. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., year round

Slidell

Camellia City Farmers Market
Robert & Front St.,
Sat. 8 a.m.-12 p.m., year round

TERREBONNE PARISH

Houma

Cajun Farmers Market of Houma
Naquin St. & Martin L. King Blvd.
Mon.-Sat. 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.,
Year round

UNION PARISH

Farmerville Farmers Market

407 South Main St.
Mon.-Sat., 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Year round

VERMILION PARISH

Kaplan

Kaplan Farmers Market
Turnley Park, 119 N. Irvin Ave.
2nd Sat, 8 a.m.-noon, year round

Gueydan

Gueydan Farmers Market
600 Main St.
1st & 3rd Sat. 8 a.m.-noon
Jun-Thanksgiving

VERNON PARISH

Leesville

Main Street Market
Sat.
7 a.m.until sold out, year round

WASHINGTON PARISH

Franklinton

Franklinton Farmers Market
1500 block of Washington St.
Daily, year round

WEST FELICIANA PARISH

St. Francisville

St. Francisville Farmers Market
agricultural pavilion (4-H Barn)
Thurs. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
May until 1st freeze

WINN PARISH

Winnfield

Winn Farmers Market
301 West Main
Tues. & Fri. 7:30 - 11 a.m.
May-Aug.

ALLEN PARISH

Oberlin

Oberlin Farmers Market
228 West 6th Ave.
Wed. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Year round

AVOUELLES PARISH

Moreauville

WestMar Farms Dairy Market
851 Couvillion Street
Thurs. 2-6 p.m.

Marksville

Marksville Farmers Market
122 E. Mark St.
Sat. 8-11 a.m., June

BEAUREGARD PARISH

DeRidder

DeRidder Farmers Market
206 N. Washington Ave.
7 days a week, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.
Year round

DeRidder

Azalea Street Marketplace
Beauregard Parish Fairgrounds
Exhibit Hall
1st weekend of the month
Fri. noon-6 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.-6
p.m., Sun. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jan.-Sept. & Nov.-Dec.

Ragley

Ragley Farmers Market
Ragley Historical Square,
Hwy. 12
Sat. 8 a.m.- 1 p.m.,
During peak growing season

CADDO PARISH

Greenwood

Greenwood Farmers Market
William Peters Town Park
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon
June-Aug.

Shreveport

Shreveport Farmers Market
River front at Festival Plaza
Oct. 22-Nov. 19, Sat. 8 a.m.-noon

CALCASIEU PARISH

Lake Charles

Charlestown Farmers Market
Bilbo St. behind old City Hall
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, Year round

Lake Charles

Cash & Carry Farmers Market
801 Enterprise Blvd.
Corner of Broad & Enterprise
Tues., 4-6 p.m., year round

Moss Bluff

MB Farmers & Crafters Market
Sam Houston Jones Pkwy.
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon, April-Oct.



COOKERY

Quick & easy slow-cooker meals

Source: "Slow Cooker Meals" by Neal Bertrand
For more information about the book visit
www.cypressCovePublishing.com

Slow Cooker Chicken

1 chicken washed, cut up and pat dry	1 can mushroom soup
2 tbsp. butter, melted	2 (3 oz.) packages cream cheese
Salt and pepper, to taste	½ cup sherry or water
2 tbsp. dry Italian salad dressing mix	1 tbsp. chopped onion

Brush chicken with butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in slow cooker and sprinkle with dry salad mix. Cook on low for 5-6 hours. About 45 minutes before serving mix soup, cream cheese, wine and onion in a small saucepan and cook until smooth. Pour over chicken and cook for 30 minutes on high. Serve over rice. Serves 4 to 6. Cooked in a 4-quart small cooker.

Southwestern Chicken

2 (15 1/4 oz.) cans corn, drained	6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
1 (15 oz.) can black beans, rinsed & drained	1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 (10 oz.) jar chunky salsa, divided	

Combine corn, black beans, and ½ cup salsa in slow cooker. Top with chicken. Pour remaining salsa over chicken. Cover. Cook on high 3-4 hours or low 7-8 hours. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover 5 minutes for cheese to melt.

Makes 6 servings. Cooked in a 6-quart slow cooker.

Chicken Breast & Turkey Sausage Pastalaya

1 (10 oz.) can beef broth	½ stick butter, chopped
½ cup water	1 (10 oz.) can diced tomatoes with green chilies
½ lb. chicken breast, sliced into bite-size pieces	1 onion, chopped fine
½ lb. (1 ½ links) turkey sausage, sliced into small pieces	½ bell pepper, chopped fine
Cajun or Creole seasoning, to taste	5 cloves garlic, minced
Tabasco brand pepper sauce to taste	8-oz. pack elbow macaroni, cooked according to package.

Coat the chicken and sausage with Cajun seasoning, brown for 10 minutes in skillet. Add all ingredients except pasta to slow cooker, stir, cover and cook on low for 7 hours. Add cooked macaroni to slow cooker, being careful not to add too much and overcrowd it, stir well and serve.

Sausage, Potatoes & Green Beans

1 lb. smoked sausage or sirloin steak, sliced small and browned	1 (10.5-oz.) can beef broth
2 lbs. (about 5 medium) potatoes, cleaned well, unpeeled and quartered	1 medium onion, chopped
1 (14.5 oz.) can green beans with liquid	½ bell pepper, chopped
	½ stick butter, chopped
	Salt and pepper, to taste
	Onion and garlic powder, to taste
	1 cup water

Brown meat in skillet. Drain grease. Add all ingredients to slow cooker, stir, cover and cook on high for 3 hours, or on low for 6-7 hours. Makes 2 ¼ quarts.

Chuck Roast Barbecue

1 ½ lbs. boneless chuck roast, trimmed	1 ½ tsp. beef bouillion granules
2 medium onions, chopped	¾ tsp. dry mustard
1 (12-oz.) can cola	¾ tsp. chili powder
1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce	¼ to ½ tsp. ground red pepper
1 ½ tbsp. apple cider vinegar or white vinegar	1 cup ketchup
	1 tbsp. butter or margarine
	6 hamburger buns

Place roast in a 4-quart electric slow cooker, add onions. To make a sauce, combine cola, Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, beef bouillion, dry mustard, chili powder and red pepper in a bowl, cover. Reserve 1 cup of the sauce and chili. Pour remaining sauce over roast. Cover and cook on high 6 hours or low for 9 hours or until roast is very tender. Remove roast with chopped onion from cooker, using a slotted spoon, and shred meat with forks. (Reserve remaining meat juices to spoon over mashed potatoes or toast, if desired.)

Pear Crunch

1 (8 oz.) can crushed pineapple in juice, undrained	¼ tsp. vanilla
¼ cup pineapple or apple juice	2 pears, cored and cut into halves
3 tbsp. dried cranberries	¼ cup granola with almonds
1 ½ tsp. quick-cooking tapioca	

Combine all ingredients except pears and granola in slow cooker and mix well. Place pears, cut sides down, over pineapple mixture. Cover and cook on low 3 ½-4 ½ hours. Arrange pear halves on serving plates. Spoon pineapple mixture over pear halves. Garnish with granola.

Livestock Market Reports

Kinder Livestock Auction held 10-14-11

no new reports available

Cattle Receipts: 1316

Boner cows (80-85% lean 850 lb.-1200 lb.).....\$32-\$68 per cwt
 Bulls (1500-2000 lbs.).....\$62-\$78 per cwt

Feeder steers (cwt)

200-300 lbs.....\$115-\$160
 300-400 lbs.....\$110-\$150
 400-500 lbs.....\$105-\$120
 500-600 lbs.....\$105-\$130
 600-700 lbs.....\$102-\$124

Feeder heifers (cwt)

200-300 lbs.....\$105-\$145
 300-400 lbs.....\$102-\$135
 400-500 lbs.....\$100-\$128
 500-600 lbs.....\$100-\$120
 600-700 lbs.....\$97-\$117

Cow/calf pairs 2-4 yrs:
\$700-\$1150 range

Replacement &/or feeder cows 1-4 yrs:
\$500-\$1100 range

Cow/calf pairs 5-7 yrs:
\$650-\$1000 range

Replacement &/or feeder cows 5-7 yrs:
\$450-\$1000 range

Mansura Auction held 10-14-11

no new reports available

Cattle Receipts: 1112

Boner cows (80-85% lean 850 lb.-1200 lb.).....\$32-\$68 per cwt
 Bulls (1500-2000 lbs.).....\$62-\$78 per cwt

Feeder Steers (cwt)

200-300 lbs. \$115-\$160
 300-400 lbs. \$110-\$150
 400-500 lbs. \$105-\$135
 500-600 lbs. \$105-\$130
 600-700 lbs. \$102-\$124

Feeder Heifers (cwt)

200-300 lbs. \$105-\$145
 300-400 lbs. \$102-\$135
 400-500 lbs. \$100-\$128
 500-600 lbs. \$100-\$120
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\$700-\$1150 range

Replacement &/or feeder cows 1-4 yrs:
\$500-\$1100 range

Cow/calf pairs 5-7 yrs:
\$650-\$1000 range

Replacement &/or feeder cows 5-7 yrs:
\$450-\$1000 range

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 Louisiana
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www.LDAF.la.gov

Second term, continued from page 1

“Our shipping channels are the lifeline for transporting agricultural products to market and it’s imperative that we keep them deep enough for all vessels,” Strain said.

Strain is also supportive of agricultural guest worker policy reform.

“Crawfish, shrimp, and crab processors and other agricultural producers need temporary workers each year,” Strain said. “Employers establish the need for temporary/seasonal workers and demonstrate there are not sufficient American workers who are available to do the work, so the Department of Labor should reform the process to find the laborers they need.”

Strain pledged to remain fiscally responsible with the state’s agricultural budget.

“We’ve had mid-year budget cuts every year since I’ve been in office,” he said. “We trimmed our budget, eliminated some areas of unnecessary spending and still managed to provide essential agricultural services to the public.”

Strain cited the several areas where he cut spending.

“The LDAF is no longer in the construction business,” Strain said. “Building construction was a drain

on the department’s financial resources and not an efficient allocation of LDAF manpower.”

Strain said he instituted an aggressive safety program that cut risk management costs by 22 percent and reduced LDAF and the Louisiana Agricultural Finance Authority’s (LAFA) debt load by nearly 57 percent from \$97.7 million to \$53.6 million.

Additional savings to the department came from the reduction of the overall workforce by more than 300 employees (35 percent). The motor fleet was reduced by 410 vehicles and the unnecessary home storage of vehicles was eliminated. Also, fuel consumption was reduced by 42 percent and the aviation fleet was cut 30 percent.

“I’ll continue to work hard for Louisiana and help our agricultural and forestry industry enjoy what I believe will be a golden age for agriculture,” Strain said. “The nation’s farmers, and specifically our Louisiana producers, are in an opportune time to realize great profits from their investment. Even more important is the ability to provide ourselves with the world’s safest and highest quality food, fiber and energy supply. We can also take advantage of the world’s desire for our products and services as we contribute to a more stable global economy.”

La. Spirits announces new rum distillery

Louisiana Spirits LLC is building a new state of the art distillery to create world-class rum crafted with Louisiana sugar cane in Lacassine, La, along the South Frontage Road of Interstate 10. The Jefferson Davis Police Jury voted unanimously on December 28, 2011 to re-zone Louisiana Spirits’ 22.77 acre site for distilling operations. Construction is underway on the 18,000 square facility which will house the full distillery, barrel storage, bottling line, offices, a gift shop and a viewing room that explores the state’s historic role as a sugar cane producer and rum distiller with memorabilia and curated exhibits. A historic 1903 farmhouse (the first home built in Iowa, La) is being relocated to the site which features the buildings in a natural setting complete with ponds, cypress trees and a sugar cane field. Local architect Randy Goodloe and contractor Miller & Associates are developing the site along with support of Louisiana Economic Development (LED). Louisiana Spirits is gearing up to offer its first rum in 2012!

“Our vision for a world class rum distillery in Louisiana is a natural fit for the Lacassine area. Our Louisiana rum will represent the best the state has to offer in the way of local sugar cane, molasses and raw sugar. We’re committed to delivering products that honor Cajun heritage and are worthy of the ‘Made in Louisiana’ label,” said Trey Litel, President of Louisiana Spirits LLC. Besides utilizing Louisiana sugar cane as its primary ingredient, and investment in an appealing cultural visitor destination, the company is creating 17 to 20 direct full-time jobs and additional economic opportunities for Louisiana contractors, partners, and suppliers.

Rum is a hugely popular spirit and it is interesting to note that few choices are actually produced in the United States. “The growth of artisan distilling in the USA has been inspiring, and so has the trend toward local ‘farm to table’ products made in the USA. We plan to do that here. We believe Louisiana enthusiasts and consumers will recognize and switch to an authentic Louisiana rum now that they have a worthy choice,” Trey Litel added.

The local Jeff Davis Parish Economic

Development and Tourist Commission office has supported the project since site selection by providing legislative and program support. “Louisiana Spirits is important to the economic engine of Jeff Davis Parish providing a new tourist attraction and adding value to area agriculture products. Because I-10 is a major transportation artery for the Southern United States, the Louisiana Spirits Distillery will be easily accessible and visitors will likely spend more time and dollars in our parish,” said Marion Fox, Executive Director of Jeff Davis Economic Development, Tourist, and Film Commissions. “The owners are sincere, experienced entrepreneurs and marketers who wisely chose Jeff Davis Parish as the location of this new venture, and our team strongly supports their new distillery!”

Tim Litel, Skip Cortese, and Trey Litel founded Louisiana Spirits in May 2011. The Litel brothers are from the Lake Charles area and have teamed with Skip Cortese of Baton Rouge for the venture. “The idea came out of a duck blind conversation near the Lacassine Wildlife Refuge and some sugar cane fields. So, it was natural to select our site near the sugar mill at Lacassine,” said Tim Litel. “We could not be happier with the local government’s reception and support from LED, and we look forward to getting the distillery up and running.”

“We have visited many distilleries in other states, but they do not have the fascinating history of the Louisiana sugar cane industry to work with. We plan to celebrate that history with our distillery and our rum. We have researched the origins of rum and its introduction in Louisiana,” said Skip Cortese. “In Spanish Colonial Louisiana, around 1770, a settler named Manuel Solís built a rum distillery and a small mill to grind cane. Rum was produced in Louisiana even before Étienne Bore perfected sugar production! This practice continued in most plantation sugar houses until the Civil War. We thought with abundant sugar cane fields in south Louisiana; why not revive rum distilling here today?”

With Louisiana being the fourth largest producer of sugar cane in the United States, there is a big opportunity here for the state to shine and add its unique value to the spirit.

What's Happening

Bird Events

Acadiana Bird Club Bird Fair will be held April 21-22 in the Crown Room of the Lafayette Event Center, 43607 Johnston St., in Lafayette. For more information, visit acadianabirdclubinc.com.

Ponchatoula Bird Fair & Sale will be held July 14-15 at the Lion's Club, 750 East Pine St., in Ponchatoula from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Avian surgical sexing on Sunday. Weekend pass admission is \$6.50, \$4/one day pass. Children 6 & under free. For more information, visit Totaltat.com.

Dog Events

CenLa Beagle Club AKC Field Trial will be held Feb. 11-12 at 6135 Twin Bridges Road in Alexandria. Derby trial is Feb. 10. For more information, call Steve Miller at 318-447-1662.

South Louisiana Retriever Club Field Trial, Jan. 29, Norco. For more information, visit www.infodog.com/panels/la.htm.

North Louisiana Beagle Club Field Trial, Jan. 28, Downs ville. For more information, visit www.infodog.com/panels/la.htm.

Borzo Club of American Sweepstakes-Conformation Show, Jan. 28-29, Alexandria. For more information, visit www.infodog.com/panels/la.htm.

Alexandria Kennel Club Rally, Jan. 28, Alexandria. For more information, visit www.infodog.com/panels/la.htm.

Alexandria Kennel Club All Breed-Obedience-Junior Showmanship, Jan. 29, Alexandria. For more info, visit www.infodog.com/panels/la.htm.

Education & Workshops

Master Cattlemen's Class Orientation will be held Feb. 9 at the War Memorial Civic Center, 250 W. 7th St., in DeRidder at 6 p.m. The program will outline costs, expectations, class topics and schedule. Interested cattlemen from any parish may enroll at this meeting. Classes will start on Feb. 23. For more information, call County Agent Keith Hawkins at 337-463-7006.

Southwest Louisiana Beekeepers Association will host "Louisiana Apiary Laws and Regulations: Income Taxes & Bees" Feb. 6 at the War Memorial Civic Center, 250 W. 7th St., in DeRidder from 7-9 p.m. Allen Fabre, State Apiarist, will cover the state regulations & answer legal questions regarding bees. Copies of the regulations will be available as handouts. Leonard Wilfert, CPA and beekeeper, will discuss income taxes and beekeeping. New folks welcome to join. For more information, call County Agent Keith Hawkins at 337-463-7006.

2012 Sugarcane Winter Meeting Calendar - Assumption, Jan. 31, 2 p.m., Napoleonville, Extension Office, 119 Robin St.; **ASSCT/ASCL Annual Meeting**, Feb. 7-8, <http://assct.org>, Lafayette, Hilton Hotel, Lafayette, 1521 West

Pinhook Rd.; **Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association**, Feb. 16-17, www.laagcon.org, Marksville, Paragon Casino Resort, 711 Paragon Place; **Rapides/Avoyelles**, Feb. 22, 8:30 a.m., Bunkie, Masonic Lodge, 306 Floyd St.; **Ascension/St. James/St. John/St. Charles**, Feb. 23, 9 a.m., Vacherie, Westbank Reception Hall, 2455 Hwy. 18.

Baton Rouge Arts Market will be held the first Saturday of the month at the corner of Fifth and Main St. in Baton Rouge. Regional crafts from more than 60 artists and craft vendors. 7 a.m. – noon. For more information, contact Kathy Scherer at 225-344-8558.

Fresh From the Market Cooking Demonstration every Saturday at 10 a.m. at Main Street Market in Baton Rouge, 501 Main Street. Chef Celeste Gill and local chefs demonstrate using local ingredients for seasonal recipes. For more information, contact Copper Alvarez at 267-5060.

Clinton Market Day is held the first Saturday of the month in the Courthouse Square and Main Street in Clinton. Free to vendors; 8 a.m. - until. Crafts, locally grown produce, antique items, horse-drawn carriage rides. For more information, call Carol Shirley at 225 603-9003.

Cultural Events

Frisco Fest will be held March 10-11 at the San Francisco Plantation Grounds in Garyville. Local & regional artists, woodworkers, stained glass, jewelry and Cajun products, arts & crafts, plants, flowers, kids' activities area, LSU Ag Master Gardeners, Creole & Cajun cuisine. Cruisin' the Plantation Car Show, Chef's Choice Cook-Off, zydeco music. For more informa-

tion, call 985-535-2341 or visit <http://sanfranciscoplantation.org>.

North Louisiana Sweet Potato Festival will be held March 28-31 at the Courthouse Square in Oak Grove. Carnival, arts and craft show, antique car and tractor show and live music at the Lingo Center. For more info, call 318-428-8289 or www.westcarrollchamber.com.

Horticultural Events

Friends of Hilltop Arboretum Heirloom Gardening Symposium will be held Jan. 28 at the LSU Design Auditorium, 302 Fieldhouse Drive, Baton Rouge, from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Admission is \$45 members and \$60 non-members. Pre-registration required. For more information, call 225-767-6916 or visit [http://hilltop.lsu.edu/hilltop/hilltop.nsf/\\$Content/Symposium](http://hilltop.lsu.edu/hilltop/hilltop.nsf/$Content/Symposium).

Second Saturday Plant Sale program will be held Feb. 11 at 9:00 a.m. at the Parkway Partners Greenhouse, 1137 Baronne St. (corner of Baronne and Clio), New Orleans. Guest speakers lecture on horticultural issues. For more information, call 504-620-2224 or e-mail dgraham@parkwaypartners.org.

East Baton Rouge Master Gardeners Day is the first Saturday of the month at the Red Stick Farmers Market, corner of Fifth and Main St. in Baton Rouge. Master gardeners offer expert advice on seasonal gardening. Special Arts Market will be held the first three Saturdays of Dec. For more information, contact Copper Alvarez at 267-5060 or visit www.breada.org.

Sporting Clays Shooting Events

Louisiana Sporting Clays Association Shoots – Jan. 28, GOL, Maurice; Jan. 28, Ed's Sporting Goods, Kaplan; Feb. 4 Wilderness Gun Club, Lafayette; Fe. 4, Golden Ranch, Gheens; Feb. 10, Cajun Elite, Jennings; Feb. 12 Riverside, Denham Springs. For more information, visit www.lsca.info.

What's Happening

Livestock Shows

LSU AgCenter/4-H/FFA Livestock Shows & Sales:

Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Livestock Show, Florida Parishes Arena, Amite, Jan. 28; *Calcasieu Jr. Livestock Sale*, Burton Coliseum, Lake Charles, Jan. 28; *Jeff Davis Parish Livestock Sale*, Jeff Davis Parish Fairgrounds, Jennings, Jan. 28; *Terrebonne Parish Livestock Show*, Jan. 28; *Northeast District Jr. Livestock Horse Show*, Delhi Livestock Barn, Delhi, Jan. 28-29; *Acadiana District Livestock Show*, Blackham Coliseum, Lafayette, Jan. 25-28; *Northwest District Livestock Show*, Jan. 28; *Southeast District Junior Livestock Show*, Jan. 31-Feb. 3; *Southwest District Livestock Show*, Burton Coliseum, Lake Charles, Jan. 31- Feb. 4; *Northeast Jr. Livestock Show*, Delhi Livestock Barn, Delhi, Feb. 1; *4-H Livestock Show*, Delhi Livestock Grounds, Delhi, Feb. 1; *Northeast District Livestock Show*, Feb. 2-4; *South Central District Livestock Show*, Lamar-Dixon Expo Center, Gonzales, Feb. 2-4; *Central District Livestock Show*, Dean Lee Livestock Complex, Alexandria, Feb. 2-4; *LSU AgCenter State Livestock & Poultry Show*, Lamar-Dixon Expo Center, Gonzales, Feb. 11 -19. For more information, call 225-578-2255.

Louisiana Angus Assoc. Annual Bull Sale will be held Jan. 21 at the LSU AgCenter Dean Lee Research Station in LeCompte at noon. Selling 75 Angus bulls and commercial Angus-influenced females. Free catalog. For more info, call 662-837-4904, 662-837-1776 or alb@albauction.com, www.albauction.com.

Open House, Bull Sale will be held March 3 at the LSU AgCenter Dean Lee Research Center in Alexandria at 9 a.m. 18 Angus, 2 Brangus and 15 Charolais performance-tested bulls available for viewing and sale by private treaty. For more information, call Sid DeRouen at 318-473-6589 or sderouen@agctr.lsu.edu.

Louisiana Angus Association Annual Female Sale will be held March 10 at noon at the LSU AgCenter Dean Lee Research Center in Lecompte. 60 Angus female lots will be offered. For more information, call 662-837-4904 or alb@albauction.com

22nd Annual Bayou Classic Polled Hereford/Hereford/F-1 Cattle Sale will be held April 7 at noon at the Dean Lee Livestock Sale complex, DeWitt Center, in Alexandria. Sponsored by the Louisiana Polled Hereford Assoc., the sale offers 60 lots, including cow/calf prs., bred & open heifers, breeding age bulls, black baldies & F-1 cattle. For more information & catalog requests, call Chris Lewis at 985-516-7643 or Dr. Ronnie Bardwell, Sale Chairman, at 225-222-6372.

Acadia Parish Rice Arena Auctions are held on Thursdays at the Acadia Parish Rice Arena in Crowley, 159 Cherokee Dr. at 6:30 p.m. Dealers and consignments welcome; small farm animals & barnyard fowl, bagatelle, new and used merchandise. For more information, call 337-783-1442 or 337-384-4500.

Horse Events

Louisiana Stock Horse Association Horse Show 2012 events will be held Feb. 19 in West Monore, March 10, DeRidder; March 24, Lake Charles; April 28, New Roads; May 26, DeRidder; June 16, New Roads; July 18, New Iberia; Sept. 1, West Monroe; Sept. 22 New Roads; Oct. 13, New Iberia, Nov. 17-18 Finals, DeRidder. Pre-entry closes the Monday before the show. Entry fee. For more information, contact Judy Weisgerber at 877-335-3072, jweisgerber@hughes.net or www.louisianastockhorse.com.

Deep South Stock Horse Show 2012 events to be announced soon. Beginners welcome. For more information, call Jenny Redhead at 225-665-2382, e-mail to jennyredhead@bellsouth.net or www.DSSHSA.org.

Tractor Shows

International Harvester Chapter 31 State Antique Tractor, Engine & Truck Show, May 4-5, Washington Parish Fairgrounds, Franklinton. Featured equipment is IH, but all makes are welcome. Kiddie Tractor Pull, Chain in the Box, Skillet Throw (Ladies only), Blindman's Bluff, Egg Crackin', Trailer Backing, Barrel Rol, Slow Race and Swap Meet. For more information, visit, www.ihc31.com.

North Louisiana Sweet Potato Festival Tractor Show will be held March 28-31 at the Courthouse Square in Oak Grove. For more information, call 318-428-8289 or http://westcarrollchamber.com.

Show Arenas, Barns, etc.

Acadia Parish Rice Arena, 159 Cherokee Drive, Crowley. 337-783-1442, 337-384-4500 or ricearena@appj.org.

Clinton Covered Arena, 14730 Hwy. 10, Clinton. 225-572-9229 or visit www.clintonarena.com.

M.A. Edmond Livestock Show Arena, 14506 Scenic Hwy., Baton Rouge. 225-278-6019.

Morehouse Activity Center, 9525 Marlatt St., Bastrop. 318-281-3164 or www.morehouseactivitycenter.com.

SugArena at Acadiana Fairgrounds, 713 Northwest Bypass (Hwy. 3212), New Iberia. 337-365-7539 or www.sugarena.com.

Terrebonne Livestock Agricultural Fair Association Arena, 221 Moffet Rd., Houma. 985-665-1005 or www.terrebonne-livestock.org.

Texas Longhorn Rodeo Arena, 3274 Hwy. 109 S., Vinton. 337-589-5647.

Your arena not listed? Send your contact info to marketbulletin@ldaf.state.la.us or via fax at 225-923-4828

Commission & Board Meetings

Structural Pest Control Commission, Jan. 31 at 9 a.m. Veterans Memorial Auditorium, LDAF Baton Rouge Headquarters, 5825 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge. For more information, contact david_f@ldaf.state.la.us.

Advertising events with us is easy and free. Just email, fax or mail us your event, date, time, location and any other details. To ensure timely publication, submit your event at least six weeks prior to the event.

Mail: P.O. Box 3534, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3534
Email: marketbulletin@ldaf.la.gov Fax: 225-923-4828.

Monsanto fund distributes nearly \$100,000 to Louisiana nonprofits

Extreme weather has taken its toll on Louisiana, but with the help of recent donations, nonprofit organizations are working to improve lives and rebuild communities.

The Monsanto Fund recently presented \$95,200 in grants to five Louisiana organizations nominated by the Luling Monsanto site.

The Monsanto Fund awarded \$37,200 in grants to St. Charles Community Outreach Foundation, Luling Volunteer Fire Department, Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans and Raymond K. Smith Middle School. It also presented a \$58,000 donation to the United Way of Luling on behalf of employees at the Luling Monsanto site.

The Monsanto Fund grants, donated each year through dozens of facilities across the U.S., are part of a broad commitment by the Monsanto Fund, which is focused on strengthening farming communities, as well as the communities where Monsanto employees live and work.

"We are committed to improving people's lives and strengthening communities in the state of Louisiana. These grants help to meet critical community needs and support education initiatives," said Deborah Patterson, president of the Monsanto Fund.

Jeffery Shloe Wilson, Luling Monsanto site manager, nominated each of the organizations for grants and said he was honored to play a part in the process.

"We are excited about this opportunity to continue to support the outstanding work these organizations are doing," said Wilson. "They are dedicated to their communities and will utilize the funds to provide education

and assistance to those in need."

The Luling Volunteer Fire Department was awarded a \$13,200 grant to send firefighters to Texas A&M University for advanced training. There, firefighters will learn techniques to help them lessen the intensity of residential hazard emergencies.

The United Way received a donation of \$58,000 to benefit the Community Impact Fund. The funds will be distributed to education, income assistance and health-care in St. Charles Parish.

The Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans will utilize its grant to encourage youth to own their financial successes. Through its American Free Enterprise System, students are educated about entrepreneurship and taught practical information on how to start a business as well as the pros and cons of owning a company.

St. Charles Community Outreach Center received an \$8,000 grant to provide an arts and sciences program that makes dance, art, chemistry, music and biology available to middle school students.

Raymond K. Smith's \$15,000 grant will benefit reading, math and social studies programs, support after school tutoring and enhance field trips for students. Raymond K. Smith is the partner school for the Luling Monsanto site, and employees spend a number of hours investing in the students.

Monsanto Fund has given \$95,200 to these organizations this year toward the betterment of the lives of the people of Louisiana. Luling Monsanto will nominate additional nonprofit organizations for Monsanto Fund grants in 2012.

Hay transport size restriction waiver extended



Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain said a waiver on size restrictions and permit fees on oversized loads of hay on Louisiana highways has been extended through March 30.

The extension of the waiver will allow truck drivers to move oversized loads of hay without extra permit fees and restrictions to areas where the ongoing drought has severely curtailed hay production.

Strain said the state departments of Transportation and Development, Public Safety and Revenue will allow vehicles trans-

porting round hay bales to be loaded side by side across trailers up to twelve feet in width and fourteen feet in height.

Carriers, owners and drivers are responsible for verifying in advance that the actual dimension and weight of the vehicles and loads are acceptable for all routes traveled, Strain said.

The oversize vehicles may only travel during daylight hours, not exceed weight limits for bridges and similar structures, be equipped with proper mirrors and the loads must be securely bound.

Louisiana farmers withstand drought, floods in 2011

By Tobie Blanchard
LSU AgCenter

In a year marked by drought and floods, Louisiana farmers still managed to have a good year in 2011. Dry weather allowed for easy and efficient harvests of most crops, and overall yields were respectable despite challenges.

LSU AgCenter economist Kurt Guidry said one downside was that some flooded or drought-damaged crops never did get harvested.

"We did have a higher abandonment this year in terms of acres when you look at the five-year average, particularly for soybeans and corn," Guidry said.

Farmers saw higher fuel and fertilizer costs this year than last, according to Guidry. More farmers also had to irrigate because of dry conditions, raising their total production costs.

Drought also caused an increase in feed prices for cattle producers.

"The flip side to that is that commodity prices got to extremely high levels this fall," Guidry explained. "Most of our commodities – our row crops, corn, soybeans, wheat to some extent, cotton – all had opportunities for producers to lock in some really high prices."

He also noted that prices for feeder cattle were at historically high levels.

Even with losses from drought and flooding, Guidry said, many farmers saw good profits this year. "We are expecting net income to be higher in 2011 than in 2010,

both for Louisiana farmers and the whole United States."

Commodity prices will drive which crops are planted next year, and these prices have come down, he said. "Right now projecting forward, I don't see much of a change in acreage mix next year."

Guidry predicts corn and soybeans may gain some acres with cotton and rice acreage either maintaining or falling slightly. Prices for soybeans and corn look to be the most favorable, with cotton prices dropping.

Rice acres fell this year and may fall again next year, he said. "I really don't see anything for a price standpoint that would suggest we're going to get those acres back."

Rice acreage in northeast Louisiana moved to crops with stronger prices. In the southwest, saltwater intrusion caused additional acreage losses.

"If we don't see some rain this winter, we could see a reduction in acreage either because irrigation sources have high salt content or land is still salty," Guidry explained.

With around one million acres in soybeans, Louisiana had more acres dedicated to that crop than any other row crop. Corn was planted on around 570,000 acres; rice around 400,000 acres and cotton was a little less than 300,000 acres.

Agricultural enterprises in Louisiana are worth around \$5 billion.



Louisiana producers withstood flood levels along the Mississippi River which caused the Morganza Spillway to be opened for the first time since 1973. More than 60,000 acres of cropland was flooded in the spillway. While flood stages were high and water mostly contained within the levee systems, farmland outside the levees were experiencing significant drought. Despite the adversity, commodity prices reached very high levels.

