

Saturday, March 18, 1995

New Uses, Fresh Ideas At Corn Classic

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—New corn-based products and fresh farm policy ideas were rolled out here during the National Corn Growers Association's (NCGA) Corn Classic, where nearly 2,300 corn farmers from across the country assembled.

NCGA President and Shelton, Neb. farmer Rod Gangwish noted the farm bill is one of the major issues receiving attention from voting delegates during the resolutions process.

State representatives discussed the concept of a whole farm base, extending the current nine-month loan, continuing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Farmer Owned Reserve (FOR), and establishing multiyear, paid programs rather than the current Acreage Reduction Program (ARP).

Gangwish said ethanol will also remain a key focus for NCGA. "Ethanol continues to be one of our fastest growing and most dynamic markets," he said. "We have every right to be optimistic. Ethanol is the nation's only domestically produced, renewable liquid fuel. It will continue to play an important role in the energy future of the United States and the economic well-being of rural America."

Gangwish says ethanol's future is also bright because of its versatile use in other products. Ethanol is the center for both of the new corn-based products made public today. Aquinas Technologies Group, Inc., St. Louis, Mo. unveiled America's Solution (TM), a windshield washer fluid made from ethanol.

The product will appear on Kmart shelves in Minneapolis, Chicago, and Des Moines beginning March 15, with a complete national roll-out program to be completed by fall. Aquinas worked closely with NCGA and the Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Center (AARC) in developing and commercializing the product.

Ford Motor Company introduced its 1996 Ford Taurus Flexible Fuel Vehicle (FFV) as well. The new FFV will have the capability of operating on E-85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. The technology also allows the vehicle to run on traditional unleaded gasoline, or any combination of the two fuels.

During the General Session, NCGA President Gangwish applauded corn grower efforts to add value to corn and build new industrial markets, such as ethanol. He urged farmers to prepare for any situation in telling agriculture's story.

"You need to get to know your Sentors' and Representatives' names and staff, know our story and get our message out in rural America," he said.

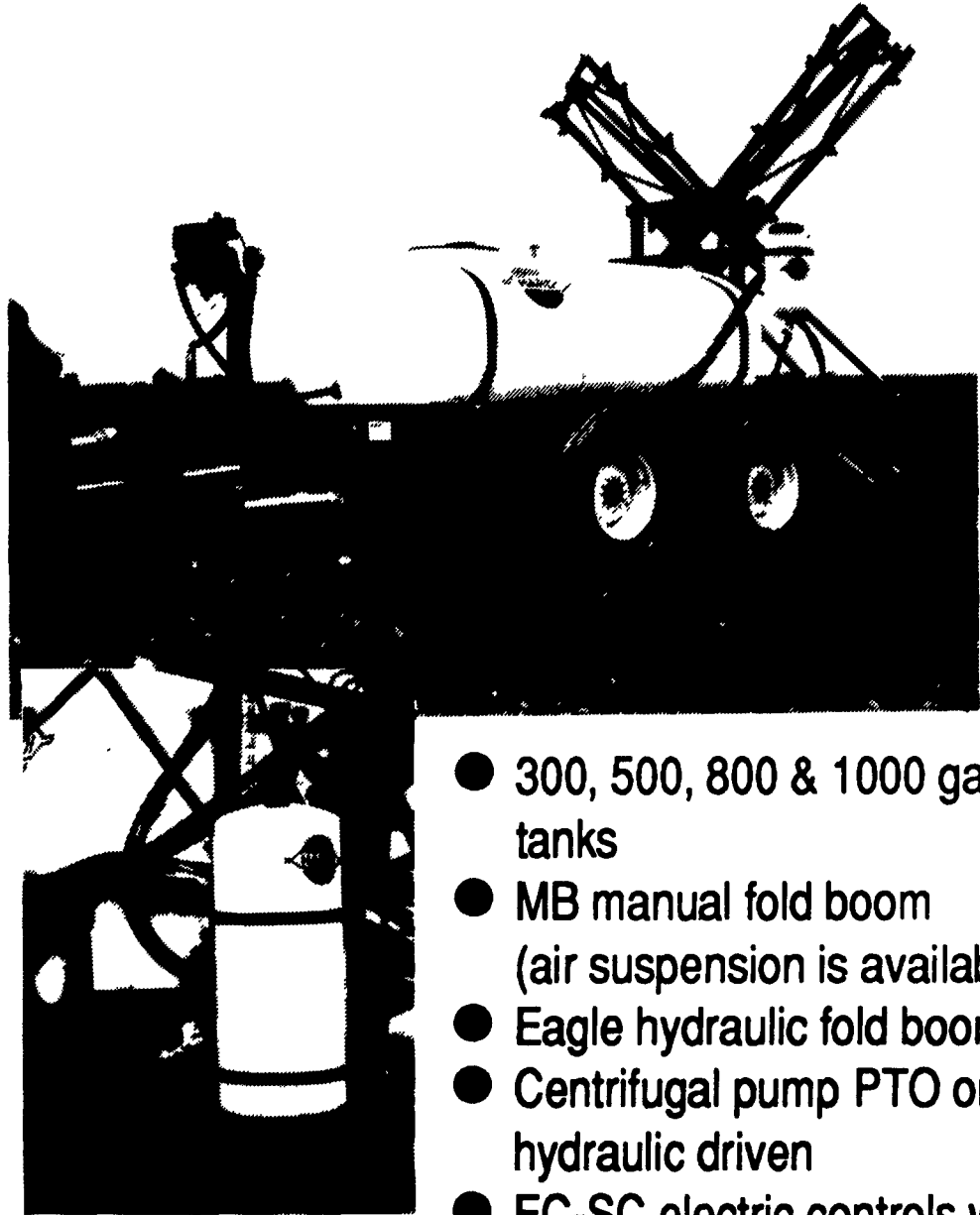
NCGA Chief Executive Officer Chris Wehrman addressed General Session participants about ethanol. She stressed to growers that NCGA will remain at the forefront of the ongoing dispute over reformulated gasoline (RFG).

"Ethanol blends are not the problem. Ethanol performs will without consumer complains," she said. "RFG should not be suspended. It is an effective program, and we should continue to work together in a cooperative manner."

General session attendees also heard from keynote speaker and Football Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw and Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Dan Wheeler. The general session was sponsored by DowElanco.

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