



NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

MARCH 16-22



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Agriculture council sets national ag day

National Agriculture Day takes place on the first day of spring as a way to celebrate American agriculture and the farmers who help provide the food, fiber, shelter, energy and other materials we use on a daily basis. In honor of this special time of the year, the Agriculture Council of America (ACA) is coordinated events in Washington, D.C. on March 11, 2008, to celebrate the importance of agriculture to America's economy and society.

"Fewer than 2 percent of our population is directly involved in production agriculture, he said ACA Chairman and Minnesota farmer Gerald Tumbleson. Na-

tional Agriculture Day is a great time to create awareness of the significance that agriculture plays in our everyday lives.

Several events kicked off National Agriculture Week on March 11, 2008, in Washington D.C. At this year's events various associations, corporations, universities and government agencies gather in our nation's capital for a variety of activities that include a meet-and-mingle luncheon at the Hart Senate office building and a National Celebration of Agriculture dinner at the Whitten building patio. Iowa Senator Tom Harkin was invited to speak at the luncheon, and Secretary of Agriculture Ed

Schafer was invited to speak at the dinner. In addition, there was also an FFA Rally that afternoon.

"Through technological improvements, American agriculture continues to advance, Tumbleson said. Environmentally-friendly production practices, products and methods that help with United States security and innovations in efficiency are all examples we are proud of and want the general consumer to know too.

The events in Washington, D.C. are organized by the Agriculture Council of America (ACA), which is a nonprofit organization composed of leaders in the agricultural, food and fiber community,

dedicating its efforts to increasing the public's awareness of agriculture's role in modern society.

Each year, the National Ag Day program gathers members of the agricultural industry in an effort to promote American agriculture. Focused on sharing how agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use and wear on a daily basis, the National Ag Day program helps educate millions of consumers each year. Join this effort to promote American agriculture to everyone during National Ag Week, March 16-22, 2008. For more information, contact the Agriculture Council of America at (913) 491-1895.

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Extension offering tractor safety class

By KEITH P. VANSKIKE
Norton County Extension Director

In 1970, the U.S. Department of Labor declared agricultural tasks as hazardous for children under the age of 16. With certain exemptions, this law made employment of youth under the age of 16 at these jobs illegal for anyone other than their parent or legal guardian.

The long standing tradition of youth finding summer employment on local farms prompted the development of the Hazardous Occupations Training (Tractor Safety) program to train and certify youth 14 and 15 years of age to work in agricultural jobs for someone other than their parents.

With the summer season right around the corner, you may be planning on working on a farm or if you are a producer, possibly you are planning on hiring a 14 or 15 year old youth. Youths that are now 13 and will be turning 14 this summer or fall can also take the course, but cannot be issued the certificate until their 14th birthday. According to the laws set forth by the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, he or she is required to take a farm/tractor safety training.

K-State Research and Extension councils from this area are combining efforts and hosting a Tractor Safety Training which will be held in Hill City on Saturday, May 3 at the Graham County 4-H Building. Registration needs to be into the Norton County Extension Office no later than April 18.

The cost of the course will be \$12, which will cover materials,

supplies and refreshments. Pre-registration is requested to distribute the manual prior to the course so reading and completion of the homework can be done before coming to the training.

If you are interested in taking the course, call the Norton County Extension Office before April 18 at (785) 877-5755. The youth will need to bring a sack lunch for the program.

Recent interpretations of the Hazardous Occupation Training (HOT) law indicates that there are several instances where this training is required even though the youth is working on their family's farm. Specifically:

- The farm is a partnership with the youth's parents being one of the partners. Technically, the youth is working for the partnership and not the parents.
- The farm is incorporated. Here again, the corporation is the employer, not the parents.
- The youth is working on a grandparents farm. Exemptions for the HOT exist only for the youth employed by their parents or legal guardian.
- Youth that are 13 years of age are welcome also, but cannot be given the actual certificate until they turn 14 years old.

Older youth and parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the training. Information presented should benefit all farm residents and workers who have not previously attended these sessions. However, youth 16 and over are not required by law to take the training, but are highly encouraged to participate in the course if they have not taken it before.

AG DAY Q&A

What Is Ag Day?

It's a day to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. Every year, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America join together to recognize the contributions of agriculture.

When Is Ag Day?

Ag Day is celebrated on March 20, 2008 - the first day of spring. National Ag Day falls during National Ag Week, March 16-22, 2008.

Who Hosts Ag Day?

The Agriculture Council of America hosts the campaign on a national level. However, the awareness efforts in communities across America are as influential - if not more - than the broad-scale effort. Again this year, the Ag Day Planning Guide has been created to help communities and organizations more effectively host Ag Day events.

What Is Ag Day All About?

Ag Day is about recognizing - and celebrating - the contribution of agriculture in our everyday lives. The National Ag Day program encourages every American to:

- Understand how food and fiber products are produced.
- Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.
- Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products.

Why Celebrate Agriculture?

Agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use and wear on a daily basis. But too few people truly understand this contribution. This is particularly the case in our schools, where students may only be exposed to agriculture if they enroll in related vocational training. By building awareness, the Agriculture Council of America is encouraging young people to consider career opportunities in agriculture. Each American farmer feeds more than 144 people... a dramatic increase from 25 people in the 1960s. Quite simply, American agriculture is doing more - and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the United States.

What Can I Do to Help?

Put simply, get involved! Your participation in Ag Day is critical in helping us spread this positive message about agriculture. If you are interested in planning an event, download your Planning Guide today. Of course, there are other ways you can lend your support, including sending a letter to your local newspaper, calling your Congressional representatives or simply sharing information about agriculture with youngsters in your community.

Where Can I Find More Information?

Contact the Agriculture Council of America at (913) 491-1895.



We salute everyone in agriculture that we have served in the past and look forward to serving you in the future

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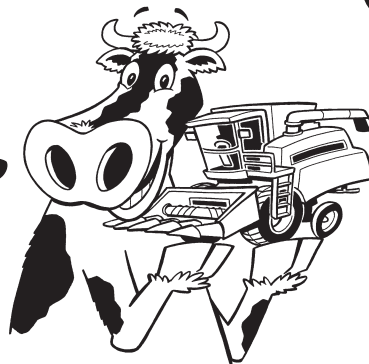
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