

weather report

77°

at noon



Today

- Sunset, 7:05 p.m.
- Tomorrow
- Sunrise, 6:24 a.m.
- Sunset, 7:04 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 59 degrees
- Humidity 34 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds south 22
- Barometer 30.18 inches and falling
- Record High 100° (1936)
- Record Low 36° (1970)

Last 24 Hours*

High	74°
Low	39°
Precipitation	none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: clear, low 50-55, winds south 5-15. Tomorrow: sunny, high 90-95, low 55, winds south 5-15.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday and Thursday: partly cloudy, chance of thunderstorms, high 85-90, low 50s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

Weather, prices dip at approach of harvest

By Reagan Smith

The Goodland Daily News

With harvest coming on, farmers are watching the weather more closely, keeping an eye on market prices and tuning up their combines and other equipment.

Joel Phillips, parts manager at W-R Equipment in Goodland, said there has been an increase in sales of combine parts in the last few weeks. He said overall, sales are slightly up compared to last, and the firm has sold two combines.

"A lot of farmers do their own harvesting instead of hiring it done," he said, "especially fall harvest."

Marvin Duell, who has a farm three miles north of Ruleton, began harvest of his 120 acres of pinto beans this week and will begin harvest of 500 acres of corn the first part of October.

He said right now he is checking over his equipment to make sure it is all in working order, and watching prices and weather.

The weather is an important factor when it comes to harvesting, said Dean Graber, a self employed crop consultant. Too little rain, and the ground is dry and harvesting is difficult. Too much rain adds too much moisture to the crop and makes the ground muddy, which halts the harvest when farmers can't get tractors and heavy equipment in to the fields.

In addition to current conditions, farmers also have to keep an eye on long range forecasts.

The harvest has to be completed as early as possible, before early winter storms move in.

Early storms not only put a halt to harvest, but can hinder planting of next season's wheat crop.

The approaching harvest gives those farmers with irrigated crops the opportunity to turn off irrigation systems that have run all summer and increased power or fuel bills this year, Graber said.

"That will help some of them cut costs," he said.

With the prices not looking so good right now, and lower yields overall this year, farmers want to save money anywhere possible.

As soon as this harvest is finished, many farmers will begin watching crops to be harvested in the spring, and the worry about weather, prices and equipment will begin again.

Making way for the new ...



Dick Brock and Vic Crouse (above) were busy today removing the outbuildings and house south of the school district office on Main to make room for the new office building for S&T Communications (left). S&T is planning to build a new telephone system in Goodland with fiber optic transmission lines and digital cable television.

Photos by Tom Betz/
The Goodland Daily News

Cooling bids on agenda

The Goodland School Board will discuss bids on an air conditioning system on the second floor of the high school, where contractors are building three new science rooms and remodeling two others, when it meets at 7 p.m. tonight.

Members will also hear a report from Superintendent Marvin Selby, who will talk about a ribbon cutting ceremony at the tennis courts, which the city and district paid to remodel this summer.

Member Ron Schilling will give a report on the Northwest Kansas Technical College board, on which he represents the district.

Schlyer Goodwin, director of the Goodland Development Corp., will discuss a joint city, county, school district grant writer position and a float for the Junk Parade the corporation is organizing later this month.

The board will also have a first reading of school policies and hear reports from the five principals in the district. It meets at the district office at 13th and Main.

County faces carpet bids

Sherman County commissioners will meet at 8 a.m. Tuesday, in their first meeting of the month, and plan to open bids for carpet in front of the counter in Treasurer Shelby Miller's office.

Miller asked the commissioners for permission to replace this carpet in August, and will be bringing in bids for the commissioners' approval.

Randy Hrabe of the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development Commission and Stephen West, president of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce and of Western State Bank, will appear to explain a micro loan program available for small business development and expansion.

Curt Way, county public works manager, will talk to the commissioners about a six-month evaluation of a landfill employee.

Richard Bursch, who farms in northeast Sherman County, wants to discuss an access road to his field.

The commissioners meet in the commission room on the main floor of the Sherman County courthouse, Eighth Street and Broadway Avenue.

local markets



Noon

- Wheat — \$2.56 bushel
- Posted county price — \$2.55
- Corn — \$1.99 bushel
- Posted county price — \$1.90
- Loan deficiency payment — 9¢
- Milo — \$3.11 hundredweight
- Soybeans — \$4.17 bushel
- Posted county price — \$4.15
- Loan deficiency payment — 7¢
- Millet — \$3.50 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$7.40 cwt.
- Oil new crop — \$6.90 cwt.
- Loan deficiency pmt. — \$1.71
- Confection current — no bid
- Pinto beans — \$20 (new crop)

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon wire



Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

Shooting suspect kills himself

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A former security guard wanted in the slayings of five people shot himself to death after a high-speed chase and police shootout today, capping a weekend of violence that followed another Sacramento rampage three weeks ago.

Joseph Ferguson, 20, killed himself after leading officers on a 40-minute chase through suburban Rancho Cordova, shooting an officer and a bystander during the pursuit, said Sacramento County Sheriff's Capt. John McGinness.

The chase began after Ferguson claimed his fifth victim late Sunday, police said. Ferguson exchanged fire with officers during the chase, then smashed into a light pole in front of a fast-food restaurant, police said.

Ferguson remained sprawled in the car while authorities waited, and when they approached they found he had shot himself.

Kansas base will get B-1 successor

WASHINGTON (AP) — Officials planned to announce a successor to the B-1 bomber at McConnell Air Force Base during a news conference there today, a source said Saturday.

The new mission will retain the presence of the Kansas Air National Guard's 184th Bomb Wing, a source told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity. Whether the 184th would maintain its identity as an independent unit had been in doubt as recently as last week.

The Air Force intends to eliminate B-1s in Wichita, Georgia and Idaho, using the savings to upgrade its remain-

ing bomber fleet, which will be consolidated in Texas and South Dakota. Announced without warning to lawmakers who control Pentagon purse strings, the decision to pare the force from 93 to 60 placed top brass under fire on Capitol Hill.

Word first came from Sen. Pat Roberts, who said during a Kansas Farm Bureau meeting in Hutchinson Saturday that an announcement was coming about the B-1 bombers.

Roberts later told the AP that officials including Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Joseph H. Wehrle would be meeting Monday, and that a news

conference would be held at McConnell after lawmakers "got it in writing" this time.

In July, Roberts and two fellow Kansas Republicans — Rep. Todd Tiahrt and Sen. Sam Brownback — announced that the Air Force would wait at least 16 months to pare the fleet. They were contradicted the next day by Air Force Secretary James Roche.

The confirmation that the mission would retain the presence of the 1,200-member Guard unit came from the unnamed source, who was familiar with the decision, but refused to say exactly what the B-1 successor would be.

Mega farms, richest get bulk of federal farm aid

By John Kelly

Associated Press Writer

Almost two-thirds of the \$27 billion in federal farm subsidies doled out last year went to just 10 percent of America's farm owners, including multi-million-dollar corporations and government agencies, a review of Agriculture Department records by The Associated Press shows.

Rules that base subsidy payments on farm acreage, rather than financial need, mean taxpayer money flowed to people like media mogul Ted Turner, pro basketball star Scottie Pippen and an heir to the Rockefeller fortune. They also mean some of the wealthiest members of Congress received aid from programs they voted for.

At least 20 Fortune 500 companies and more than 1,200 universities and government farms, including state prisons, received checks from federal programs touted by politicians as a way to prop up needy farmers. Subsidies also went to real estate developers and absentee landowners in big cities from Chicago to New York.

Sen. Tom Harkin, an Iowa Democrat and chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, called such examples an "embarrassment, a black eye that can only undermine public and taxpayer support for the programs."

The American Farm Bureau Federation, the nation's largest farm group, supports the rules, passed by Congress since 1996. But many individual farmers and other critics question a system that gives the country's biggest farm-

land owners the fattest checks.

"There have to be limits," said Mike Korth, who received about \$73,000 in payments last year to help keep his Nebraska corn farm afloat. "Why are we giving millions of dollars to millionaires?"

Government aid made up almost half of total farm income nationwide last year, most of it parceled out through programs aimed at making sure farmers don't go under when the price they get for crops is not enough to pay their bills. But recipients don't have to be cash-strapped farmers, or even farmers at all. The subsidies flow to anyone with a stake in farmland and the crops that land produces.

The AP analysis of more than 22 million checks sent out by the Agriculture Department in fiscal year 2000 shows 63 percent of the money went to the top 10 percent of recipients, including many that don't fit the image of the struggling family farmer.

That's how the heirs of billionaire John R. Simplot, a retired tycoon worth \$4.7 billion by Forbes magazine's last tally, received \$167,000 in aid through the family's Idaho farming empire. A trust in Simplot's name got another \$92,000.

Though J.R. Simplot Co. of Boise recorded \$2.7 billion in sales last year, not all the Simplot farms do well, family spokesman Fred Zerza said.

"Each of these farm operations is a separate entity that has to stand on its own, and farming has been a tough business lately," Zerza said.

In the last three years, with prices for corn, rice and other crops tumbling to near-record lows, Congress passed a series of bailouts, sending billions of dollars in extra aid to rescue farmers from mounting debt, foreclosure and bankruptcy.

The result? Farm subsidies that politicians predicted would decline under the so-called Freedom to Farm bill of 1996 instead exploded.

Of the 1.6 million farm aid recipients last year, the average recipient got about \$16,000. About 57,500 recipients got more than \$100,000, and at least 154 got more than \$1 million. Because recipients can receive payments under several different names, it is likely there are many more who passed the million-dollar mark.

Mary Kay Thatcher, a lobbyist for the American Farm Bureau Federation, argues against limits, saying big farms take bigger risks, log higher expenses and produce more of the crop.

"It's not like these guys are getting rich from government payments," Thatcher said. "They've had to have them in order to survive."

Among last year's recipients are people, companies and organizations that clearly did not need taxpayer handouts.

In New York's Hudson Valley, former Chase Manhattan Bank chairman David Rockefeller, grandson of famed oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller, received \$146,000 in subsidies. Employees said the money goes into running the family's 3,000-acre farm, not into Rockefeller's pocket.

Agriculture Department records show checks sent to at least 20 Fortune 500 companies, including IBP, Chevron (\$100,770), Archer Daniels Midland (\$17,793) and Caterpillar (\$59,184).

"The price support program is to encourage production of the crops, and we are just as much a part of that program as anyone else," said spokesman Ed Spaulding of Chevron, which hires tenants to farm some of the oil-bearing land it owns in central California and then collects crop payments to maximize its return on the property.

U.S. Rep. Doug Ose, R-Calif., a developer ranked 22nd on Roll Call magazine's list of the richest members of Congress with a net worth of \$12.5 million, owns part of two companies that got about \$149,000 in rice subsidies.

Ose, who sits on the House Agriculture Committee, gave up his decision-making roles in the two companies when he took office, spokesman Yier Shi said.

Scottie Pippen, whose Portland Trailblazers contract pays him about \$14 million a year, received \$26,000 for growing hardwood trees on an environmentally sensitive plot in his native Arkansas. When Pippen bought the land in 1993, it already was enrolled in the conservation program, according to USDA records.

And Ted Turner, one of the largest private landowners in the United States, and Turner's companies collected at least \$190,000 in subsidies last

year for ranches he owns in Montana, South Dakota and Florida.

Russ Miller, manager of Turner's farm and ranch companies, based in Bozeman, Mont., said more than half the subsidies his boss got were for conservation programs and added that Turner has spent millions of his own money on such projects. "We feel there is a public good from what we are doing on our farmland," Miller said.

At least \$17 million in crop subsidies went to government agencies of all stripes — airports, wildlife departments and prisons. Colleges and universities got another \$6.3 million on research crops or farmland bequeathed by benefactors.

Montana received \$5.4 million for land set aside for the state in its constitution to help pay for public schools. Montana's Department of Natural Resources partners with tenant farmers, then shares in the subsidies paid for the crop. Louisiana was among at least 14 states to get subsidies on crops grown by convicts on prison farms.

The House Agriculture Committee already has endorsed a package that funnels more money into the existing system and adds some new subsidies, but critics say it does not curb payments to mega-farms or the rich.

Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman has said only that the Bush Administration will offer Congress guidelines for "ensuring a strong income safety net, pursuing a more market-oriented U.S. farm policy and opening up new trade opportunities abroad."