



News Release

For Immediate Release, May 10, 2010

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NAFB Travels Inside the Beltway for Washington Watch 2010

KANSAS CITY – NAFB Broadcast Council members visited Washington, DC May 3-5 during their annual Washington Watch event. Thirty-three members and friends of NAFB attended this year, including 25 broadcasters. The group had the opportunity to engage with leading policymakers and experts in the 48 hours of non-stop events and news-gathering.

On Monday, the event began with the Issues Forum—a two hour interview-fest with 23 of the nation’s issues and policies organizations. That evening, the group was joined by Steve Kopperud, Exec. Vice President at Policy Directions, Inc., who shared his insights on the current issues and obstacles facing the agriculture industry today.

Tuesday morning, the meeting moved to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, where attendees heard from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Under Secretary James Miller, Chief Economist Joe Glauber, as well as special guest Larry Elworth, Chief Ag Counselor at the Environmental Protection Agency.

Programming continued through the morning and afternoon, including a briefing from the Canadian Embassy on trade updates, former Secretary of Agriculture John Block on his views and opinions of agriculture today, and regulatory updates from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and Syngenta.

The group finished the afternoon at the White House, getting a chance to see the First Lady’s Garden up-close-and-personal, then over to U. S. Trade Representative Office to hear from the newly appointed Ambassador Isi Siddiqui, Chief Agricultural Negotiator, on the current status of many of the U.S.’ key exports. Tuesday concluded with a meal among friends at Founding Farmers, whose mission it is to help make sure everyone understands more about the sources of the food they eat.

Wednesday morning NAFB members headed to Capitol Hill for briefings and Q&A with our nation’s leading agricultural legislators including: Sen. Mike Johanns (R - NE), Sen. Kent Conrad (D - ND), Rep. Jerry Moran (R - KS), Rep. Frank Lucas (R - OK), Rep. Collin Peterson (D - MN), and Sen. Blanch Lincoln (D-AR).

Reflecting on the event, NAFB Executive Director Mark Vail says, “This year’s event was very productive and full of quality programming and information for NAFB broadcasters to take back to their listeners at

home. Washington Watch Committee Co-Chairs Ken Rahjes, KRVN/Rural Radio Network and Michelle Rook, WNAX Radio did a great job of piecing together this year's program—all of which, would not have been possible without our sponsors."

Sponsors of this year's event included American Farm Bureau, Associated Milk Producers Inc., American Soybean Association, National Farmers Union, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Renewable Fuels Association, SweetSurprise.com/Corn Refiners Association, Syngenta Corporation, The Fertilizer Institute and the United Soybean Board.

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The **National Association of Farm Broadcasting**, founded in 1944, is dedicated to serving the interests of the agricultural community and creating value for its Broadcast member stations and networks. NAFB is an established liaison between farm broadcast stations and networks and the agri-marketing community of companies and agencies, commodity groups, government organizations, advocacy groups and other agribusinesses.