



## Washington Report November 13, 2009

### CIRB News...

**2010 Annual Meeting Speakers Announced.** The 2010 “Meeting of the Year” is fast approaching, and we are pleased to announce that Dr. **Joe Glauber**, Chief Economist at USDA and Chair of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation’s Board of Directors, will serve as our Keynote Speaker. Glauber will discuss the current economic climate facing both American and international agriculture, and the future of risk management. We have also confirmed **Jim Wiesemeyer** of Informa Economics for Friday morning; Wiesemeyer regularly offers his insights on farm policy to the agriculture community and has been a favorite at past CIRB Annual Meetings. The meeting will be held from February 10 – February 13, 2010 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront in San Diego, California. We would like to remind CIRB members to watch their mail for registration information; **members who have not yet made their hotel reservations may do so [here](#).**

### SRA News...

**SRA Draft Likely After Thanksgiving.** While subject to our change, it is our understanding that the Risk Management Agency will present the crop insurance industry with an initial draft of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement during the week of November 30. We currently expect to RMA to issue a second draft in mid-January 2010, after meeting with the industry on the first version. We believe that RMA intends to complete the SRA renegotiation by April 2010. For more information, contact Mike Torrey at (202) 544-0067.

### USDA News...

**FCIC Board of Directors Meeting.** The FCIC Board of Directors will meet next Thursday, November 19 in Washington, D.C. For more information, click [here](#).

**Leach Heads to RMA.** Barbara M. Leach, President of a non-profit organization known as My Rural American Action Fund, has been appointed as Associate Administrator of RMA and as Deputy Manager of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation. Leach previously worked at RMA and the Department of Transportation during the Clinton Administration and subsequently lobbied on behalf of Iowa-based crop insurance companies.

**RMA Reminds Producers of LGM Sales Closing Dates.** The RMA recently reminded producers that the sales closing date for Livestock Gross Margin sales this month will be Friday, November 20, 2009. For next month, the closing date will be Friday, December 18, 2009. For more information, click [here](#).

**Vilsack: USDA Not Shortchanging Production Agriculture.** Agri-Pulse reported this week that, in a recent address to the National Association of Farm Broadcasting, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack attempted to dispel the impression that USDA is ignoring the needs of production agriculture. Vilsack noted the Department's ongoing work on behalf of commercial scale farmers and ranchers, specifically the focus on research and export promotion. He also noted that the Administration's strong support for organic agriculture and small farms reflects the importance of repopulating rural areas. To listen to the full story, click [here](#).

**USDA Sends OMB Proposed Rule on SURE.** USDA recently sent the Office of Management and Budget a proposed rule dealing with the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), a permanent disaster program created in the 2008 Farm Bill. According to OMB, the new provisions in the proposed rule "are for SURE payments to eligible producers on farms in disaster counties and on farms in which weather-related losses exceeded 50 percent of the normal production for that year." The final rule will be published within a few weeks and disaster payments will be made by year's end. For more information, click [here](#).

**USDA Reduces Production Forecasts.** USDA noted in its most recent monthly crop report that it expects corn farmers to harvest 12.9 billion bushels during the 2009-10 crop year, a one percent decrease from its October forecast. Additionally, the Department now expects smaller yields for cotton and rice fields, reducing its cotton production forecast to 12.5 million bales, a 3.8 percent decrease, and cutting its rice forecast by one percent. For more information, click [here](#).

**Underwriting Guidelines for Oklahoma and Texas Peaches.** RMA recently issued underwriting guidelines for Approved Insurance Providers for peach crop policies in Oklahoma and Texas. For more information, click [here](#).

## **Congressional News...**

**Busy Autumn for Agriculture Committees.** Although health care reform continues to dominate the agenda in both houses of Congress, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees will continue to review a wide range of issues this fall. Next Tuesday, the House panel will review the Financial Stability Improvement Act, a bill recently reported out of the Financial Services Committee; the Committee will then hold a hearing on Thursday on the rural broadband programs funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, otherwise known as the Administration's "stimulus" bill. The Senate Committee is conducting hearings next week on the reauthorization of child nutrition programs and on financial regulatory reform.

**House Outlook.** With 21 legislative days remaining this year, the House plans to remain in session until December 22. With **passage of health care legislation** last weekend, the chamber must now wait for the Senate to complete its own health reform bill and its Appropriations process. In the meantime, the Financial Services and Agriculture Committees continue to prepare **financial regulatory reform** legislation for eventual floor consideration.

**Senate Outlook.** The Senate's home stretch for 2009 is poised to be much busier than the House's. For one, the chamber has yet to complete work on its **Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations measures**. Moreover, Senators on both sides are gearing up for a bruising battle on **health care overhaul legislation**, which may begin later this month or early in December. Additionally, the HELP Committee will vote next week on **food safety legislation**, which may be used to fill floor time while leaders work out the terms for taking up their health care bill.

### **Industry News...**

**Iowa Ag Review Articles on Crop Insurance.** The most recent edition of the Iowa Ag review contained two brief articles pertaining to crop insurance. To read "Examining the Health of the U.S. Crop Insurance Industry," by Bruce Babcock, click [here](#). To read "Drought Tolerance and Risk in the U.S. Crop Insurance Program," by Bruce Babcock and Tian Yu, click [here](#).

### **Member News...**

**Aon's Jenkins Elected LBIA Deputy President.** Diane Jenkins of Aon has been elected Deputy President for 2009-10 of the London Business Insurance Association, which works to promote greater knowledge and understanding of business interruption insurance (BI) through technical lectures and education days. Aon provides risk management services, insurance and reinsurance brokerage, and human capital consulting. For more information, click [here](#).

**James River Now Open in Ohio.** James River Insurance Company is now open for business in Ohio and can write on a surplus lines basis in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. All Ohio-based accounts will be written by James River Casualty Company, a newly-formed subsidiary of James River Insurance Company. For more information, click [here](#).