

Farm Leaders Say U.S. Food Crops Endangered

June 1—On The LaRouche Show May 28, the Saturday Internet radio program (www.larouchepub.com/radio), hosted by Marcia Baker, longtime farm leaders John R. “Rich” Anderson of the Texas and Southwest Cattlemen’s Association, and Ron Wieczorek of South Dakota gave firsthand reports of the devastation to crops, livestock, and farm operations, from the combination of extreme weather, and extreme inaction by Washington, D.C., on national protection measures. As Anderson stated, “all the foodstuffs in this country” are endangered.

Dennis Mason, who worked with the team that produced the new LPAC-TV feature report, “[Weather or Not, Obama Must Go](#),”¹ began the discussion by pointing to the incompetent media coverage, in which they feature one event (tornado, flood site, etc.) with great fanfare, and then flit to the next one, giving no sense of the reality of the entire situation. The new LPAC video does present the entire picture, and shows that the non-response in Washington, D.C. is tantamount to treason.

Anderson and Wieczorek amplified the picture from their firsthand experience.

Southern High Plains Drought

Rich Anderson, Texas cattle rancher and dryland cotton farmer from Borden County (near Lubbock), said that he has seen droughts before in his 82 years, but this is the worst ever.

“I want to tell you that several years ago, I read a book by a Dr. Browning, and he discussed weather, and he went back centuries and centuries and centuries, to talk about weather. And he came up to modern day; and in the 1960s and ’70s and ’80s, and ’90s, were moderate weather. We had rain. We didn’t have all the floods. We didn’t have all the problems. But he said, after about 2005 or 2006, people were saying, we wish the weather would go back to normal, and he said, ‘You’re mis-

1. <http://larouchepac.com/node/18280>



National Ranching Heritage Center



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Texas cattle rancher Rich Anderson (left) and South Dakota farmer Ron Wieczorek painted a sobering picture of the devastation of U.S. food production in the Great Plains heartland, a result of the combination of extreme weather and criminal neglect by the Obama Administration.

taken.' He said, 'After about 2005 or 2006, the weather's going to turn to normal, and you're not going to like it. Because you're going to have storms and floods and bad weather.'

"And so, this has happened, and it's something that anyone who has planned for the future, has to look at the past, and this is not the first time I've gone through this. I went through the drought in the '50s, the five- or six-year drought that we had. And we've had small droughts ever since that time. But since about 1980, we're in a 20- or 30-year drought cycle, and this has happened before. Because, if you remember, people wonder in New Mexico what happened to the Anastasi Indians: Well, hell, they had dried out! They ran out of water; they couldn't grow food or anything; they moved. They just disappeared, and went to other areas.

"And we're in one of those periods right now. And it's drastic where we live right now. Texas has lost over 2 million acres just to fire. Part of Texas is in good shape. You take, you get east of Abilene, 50, 60, 75 miles, and Fort Worth and Dallas—they've had good weather, they've had water, the grass is green down there, but La Niña has just changed the weather pattern, and these things happen. But it's bad right now.

"But, one of the things that bothers me about not only this Administration, but the Bush Administration, is the burying of our food supply—corn, to make ethanol—which no one wants. Nobody wants ethanol. It's just the environmentalists that have forced this upon us,

like they forced the wind power on us—which is not a good way to make electricity. The Administration is putting this on us. . . .

"And it's a disaster here in Texas, and it's going to have long-term consequences, because our cattle herd has been decreasing for the last several years. And this is going to decrease it more, so that's going to drive the price of meat up. Besides, we're exporting a lot of meat, and the people are going to have, they're going to reach a point where we just can't afford this meat any more—it's going to get too high.

"So, this drought has long-term consequences."

Wieczorek pointed out that cattle are showing up in northern sale barns, from ranchers forced to reduce or sell off their herds in the South, because of the water and feed crisis.

"The first bunch of cattle that came to the sale barn here in Mitchell, last Wednesday, was from the drought region," Wieczorek said. "It came from someplace in the Panhandle, southern Texas or somewhere. They wouldn't tell us where they came from. There were a couple hundred cows, semi-ed in here on trucks. They were starved out. They said they were out of the drought area, but they wouldn't tell us the name of where they came from. They wouldn't even tell us what the cows were bred to, and they had calves at their side."

Baker asked Anderson to describe the implications of the fact that a lot of Winter wheat wasn't planted, or what was planted got scorched and didn't produce at all:

"We drove up to Oklahoma City here, oh, two or three weeks ago, and I noticed in the wheat country around Wichita Falls, and all up in through there, people had turned cattle out on their wheat, because they had not had any rain, and so instead of being able to harvest the wheat, they put their cattle on, out of necessity, and so, there's going to be a wheat shortage here in Texas.

"During the Winter, they graze the wheat, and in March, they take the cattle off and let the wheat grow, and it's harvested. But this didn't happen this year, so there's going to be a shortage of wheat."

Baker then noted that the region comprised of West Texas through Oklahoma, and up into Western Kansas



Anderson described the drought in Texas as the worst he's seen in his 82 years. "It's drastic where we live right now," he said. At the same time, the Missouri River floods are destroying cropland all along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, "So, it's a disaster all the way around," summed up Wieczorek.

represents over half the wheat of all varieties of the country.

"That's right. It's the old Dust Bowl."

Northern Plains Flooding, Cold

Ron Wieczorek, from southeast South Dakota, in Aurora and Davison Counties, gave a detailed report on the scope of the crisis in the Northern Plains:

"The Missouri River Basin here has—if you convert the snow-pack to water—it's an increase of 250% almost over average. And in the last two weeks, much of that area has had 10 to 15 inches of rain on top of that. The Missouri River now, all the basins, all the reservoirs are full. In Pierre, they're letting water out, they're

flooding parts of Pierre and Fort Pierre, that have never been flooded before, since they put the dams in.

"I just got an e-mail from a gal in Niobrara, Neb., who said Niobrara would be shut down because the water was backing up the Niobrara River, which runs into the Missouri, and the roads were underwater in her town.

"So, I mean, it's a disaster all the way around, as far as the weather situation, and crop production.

"Rich was talking about the drought in the South. I remember in the '50s, I think it was '57-58, when as a young man, I helped bale hay, and we put it in boxcars and shipped hay to Texas. It was a government program that helped do that, to help save the Texas herds there, and then also in '74 and '75, we had a severe drought here, where we had to move cattle and get hay moved in. And the government had a program which helped move cattle to areas where they had pasture, and also helped us bring hay into our area, with trucking and funding, and organized a situation where they could locate the hay in the pastures, run by a coordinator like I think Dennis [Mason] had mentioned.

"This is the type of government we need. I mean, this concept of doing away with our government, and 'the least government you can have is the best,' is an insane notion that's going to take us to a food crisis, the way it looks to me.

"The other thing is, that Rich touched on, was this ethanol situation, with 40% of our corn production from the past year, going to ethanol production. I mean, much of the grassland in this area, and hay lands in this area, have been plowed up, along with an almost privatized crop-insurance program that will guarantee you a crop, if you farm the bottom of the ocean. In this area, the preventive crop checks are probably going to be the biggest source of income for a number of farmers in North Dakota/South Dakota, and probably Montana and Wyoming. I mean, basically Wyoming and Montana have turned into the Louisiana bayous, and I doubt if there's going to be much barley, or Spring wheat planted in Montana, in western North Dakota, probably even in eastern North Dakota, because of the flooding along the Red River up there, and going north, in the water situation.



NOAA/George E. Marsh

The region now struck by drought, from West Texas through Oklahoma, and up into Western Kansas represents over half the wheat produced in the U.S. "It's the old Dust Bowl," remarked Anderson. Shown: a dust storm approaching Stratford, Texas, April 18, 1935.

"Right here, locally, in South Dakota, they have made some pretty good progress. Last week, we had three and a half days where we could probably have planted some things, and people were out there, and they have about 73% of the corn planted. But that's a figure that the Department of Agriculture has put out. And when they say that, I mean, some of these people have finished the field and called it planted. But there's probably 50% of the field that was not planted, because it was too muddy, and probably a portion of it was even underwater.

"So, when they come to the final crop figures, and acres on how much they have planted, they're going to be way short of what they're commenting right now.

"So, I think we've got a situation that is really a disaster. And as somebody said, here's Obama on vacation, celebrating, rather than being on top of what's going on here with the weather crises that we have.

"Another thing that I noticed here just a couple days ago, was, there was a report out on FEMA being a billion dollars short as of the first of January; and in the past several months, they've had 28 disaster declarations. And where's the money going to come from? And when I think about—our tornado period is usually June, and that's just coming. And with the still cool temperatures, and the extreme heat in the Southwest, we have

nothing to look forward to except the same thing that the South has seen with the tornado damage, and maybe even worse.

The Future of America

"Another thing—I've never met Dennis, but I personally feel like I've known him for a long time, just from following him on the LaRouchePAC website, and the reports that those young people are putting out—and I know the commitment they have made to a new renaissance, and I've been following that. So, that is one of the things that really gives me hope, is the Basement Team, and the commitment of these young people under Lyn

[LaRouche]'s guidance.

"This is the future of America. We need a new renaissance. We need a total change of our culture, back to the American political-economic system, and I want to thank Dennis and the crew on the Basement Team, and all the young people that are involved around the country, that are fighting to do this. It really inspires me to stand up, and do whatever I can to get things passed, like Glass-Steagall, which is an absolute necessity, so again we could move with projects like NAWAPA, which were engineered clear back in the '50s when we had people with some sense of natural law, and scientific mind. . . .

"Again, I see here on the Missouri River, all the reservoirs are full, and if they would have encouraged the Corps of Engineers to manage it the way it was originally intended, and if they had followed through with the Missouri River Basin Development [See following article], there would have been a lot more dams in the area to control the problem. We would have drainage ditches. I think of the Dakota Canal that has been proposed to be built, kitty-corner across North Dakota, taking water out of North Dakota, and taking it into the Mississippi on a different route; I mean, there's so many things that could have been done that could be preventing the crisis that we're facing now."