Attendance at the Colorado Ag Classic continued to grow, as 200 agricultural producers participated in the event held Dec. 12-13 at The Embassy Suites in Loveland. The eighth annual event was jointly hosted by the Colorado Association of Wheat Growers/Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee/Colorado Wheat Research Foundation, Colorado Corn Growers Association/Colorado Corn Administrative Committee, Colorado Sunflower Administrative Committee and Colorado Seed Growers Association.

The Colorado Ag Classic opened the afternoon of Dec. 12 with a panel on “Getting Capital at the Capital.” State legislators and representatives of national legislators updated attendees on the current political situations in Colorado and Washington, D.C. and advised farmers on how to best represent themselves to legislators. That evening, a dinner, casino night and auction raised funds for CAWG and CCGA state and national legislative efforts.

Dec. 13 started with a unity breakfast hosted by Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture John Salazar. The boards of the host organizations discussed issues of common interest to all of the participating organizations.

Salazar opened the general session with remarks on the state of agriculture in Colorado. Keynote speaker Jim Wiesemeyer of Informa Economics presented “Future Factors Affecting Global Agricultural Markets,” discussing factors impacting U.S. and global food and agricultural markets over the next decade. Wiesemeyer’s presentation was sponsored by CoBank.

“As in past years, the Colorado Ag Classic was an interesting, eye-opening experience. Jim Wiesemeyer gave a realistic assessment of what our country faces, within and without, unless things change dramatically and soon.

“Meteorologist Brian Bledsoe presented a worrisome possibility of a continued long-term drought similar to what was experienced in the 1950s,” said Mark Linnebur, CAWG president.

“Another session told us how we might weather the storm with drought tolerant genetics. As always, Dan Maltby gave an entertaining assessment of how he would face the uncertain marketing environment ahead. I went home with a lot to think about and prepare for.”

Additional sessions on Dec. 13 included a panel, “When Ag Gets Attacked,” and a Workers’ Compensation safety meeting was also held during the day.

Holyoke Enterprise December 27, 2012