

UNITED SORGHUM CHECKOFF PROGRAM

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) is the newly established national checkoff program for sorghum producers. The USCP is responsible for promotion, research and information programs for the U.S. sorghum industry. USCP has hired the National Sorghum Producers (NSP) as the management entity for the USCP.

POSITION: Communications Director
Exempt position

REPORTS TO: Virgil Smail, Executive Director

HOURS PER WEEK: 40 hours/week plus additional hours as needed

LOCATION: Lubbock, Texas

POSITION SUMMARY

This position manages all aspects of Communications for the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. Responsibilities include managing the day to day operations; management of related projects and contracts; compliant operations; building of checkoff related messaging in all types of communications media (print, broadcast and electronic); special events; work with the volunteer board and committee(s); media relations; maintenance and oversight of related database(s). Some travel is required (30%).

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Member of the USCP staff leadership team, responsible for such things as planning for upcoming board and industry events, staff training and overall checkoff program compliance.
- Manage the day-to-day departmental operations; oversee communications and messaging related compliance; works with communications contractor(s) and/or internal resources to implement all strategies and projects to assure maximum return on investment.
- Ensure streamlined workflow and documented standard operating procedures; participate in departmental strategic planning and budgeting; and continually review, and, when necessary, reengineer quality control measures to protect the integrity of all work processed in the department.
- Work with the CEO, Executive Director, Research Director and Field Services on an ongoing basis to ensure continued alignment between identified key audiences of USCP and the messages to ensure there is effective messaging; meet regularly with the USCP leadership team to evaluate and improve operational performance and coordinate departmental activities with the needs and activities of other departments.
- Works with contracted communication companies to ensure that works developed have a clear, concise, professional image for USCP in all visual and written pieces.

Review and coordinate contracted agencies activities and interaction with USCP staff to ensure a consistent message is being developed and that agreed upon tasks are being met on a timely basis.

- Responsible for the overall management and collection of news media information (database) necessary for communications and relationship-building. This includes the development of media information on USCP, its goals, purpose and sources.
- Responsible for working with the Board to develop all communications plans, messaging points, and coordinating tactics. These should coordinate with the USCP's Strategic Plan.
- Responsible for internal and external communications vehicles.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist with rapid response issues, special projects and other duties as assigned.
- Actively participate in industry and other professional associations and networks to ensure awareness of industry standards, trends and best practices to strengthen and support the USCP and the sorghum industry.
- Keep the CEO and the Executive Director informed as situations develop and are resolved or assistance is needed to accomplish resolution.

QUALIFICATIONS

Experience

- At least 5 to 7 years of experience in agricultural communications, preferably in an association or checkoff environment
- At least 3 years experience managing communication contracts

Skills, Knowledge, and Ability

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality
- Positive attitude centered on superior service
- Critical thinker who can break down complex issues and recommend proactive solutions
- Ability to work independently or as part of a team
- Demonstrated flexibility and adaptability to changing priorities
- Excellent time management skills with demonstrated ability to manage and prioritize work flow independently
- Intermediate knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publishing
- Experience with marketing and communications plans, including surveys and data use
- Experience in a checkoff or related situation requiring compliance standards

- Demonstrated writing skills
- Spirit of teamwork

Education/Certification

- A 4-year college degree and/or equivalent experience in a field relevant to Communications/Ag Communications, Journalism, Public Relations or a related association management degree is required.

Please send your application attention:

Joy Fassauer
United Sorghum Checkoff Program
4201 North Interstate 27
Lubbock, Texas 79403
1-806-687-8727