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MU lecture series to honor Kit Bond

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Friends and colleagues of former Sen. Kit Bond have raised and donated more than \$1.3 million to create a University of Missouri lecture series in his honor.



Kit Bond

The Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Distinguished Lecture Series will bring nationally recognized leaders to the university and the state.

Bond and university leaders were to announce the donation and unveil the program at a reception Monday at the Reynolds Alumni Center. Among scheduled attendees was former Sen. Jack Danforth, who contributed to the donation and assisted in the fundraising efforts.

The money will create an endowed fund at MU to bring speakers who will focus on economics, science, politics and security policy. Those guests won't just speak at MU, though; they'll lecture in cities and at campuses across the state.

Selecting the speakers and locations will be up to a committee that includes Cathy Scroggs, MU's vice chancellor for student affairs, and three academic deans.

"We will take to heart the charge to provide a forum for world and national leaders who are experts in the areas that are so important to Senator Bond," MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said in a prepared statement.

Deaton said he's honored MU will house the series that pays tribute to Bond, who for years secured millions of dollars in federal earmarks for university projects.

Supporting education is critical, Bond said.

"If you want the state to be well-educated, if you want the state to have the research to create jobs, if you want to have a university that will establish Missouri as a first-class state, you need to support the

university," he said in a statement. "I am deeply honored and have been truly blessed by the opportunities I have had, and I give my whole-hearted thanks to the people of Missouri who have given me the opportunity to serve."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

\$1.3 million endows MU lecture series to honor Sen. Kit Bond

By Michael Davis

March 7, 2011 | 8:08 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A new lecture series honoring former U.S. Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond will feature speakers on economics, science and public policy.

Chancellor Brady Deaton announced the Christopher Bond Distinguished Lecture Series on Monday at the Reynolds Alumni Center. Friends and colleagues of Bond raised more than \$1.3 million for the endowment. Deaton said the fundraising will continue.

Deaton has appointed a committee to select the speakers. The committee will designate the cities across Missouri that will host the lectures.

At the announcement, UM Board of Curators Chairman Warren Erdman spoke glowingly about Bond's service to the state.

"Kit loves Missouri," Erdman said. "In everything Kit has done, you can tell he loves this state."

The mood in the Great Room of the Reynolds Alumni Center became more sentimental when Bond's friend and former Missouri colleague, U.S. Sen. John C. Danforth, came to the stage.

Danforth spoke about their time together working in the Senate, calling it an "absolute pleasure to be his colleague."

"He is so tenacious, focused ... and such a standard for what public service should be," Danforth said. In his speech, Bond said today's issues in a global society need to be dealt with in a "constructive and productive manner."

"We have all kinds of challenges," Bond said. "I hope we can bring distinguished speakers here to talk about national and international issues of importance."



The★Star. **ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**
THE KANSAS CITY STAR

MU unveils Bond lecture series

COLUMBIA, Mo. | **Former U.S. Senator Kit Bond continues to help steer big money to the University of Missouri system.**

Bond, who retired from politics last year after 24 years in the Senate and a stint as Missouri governor, was on campus Monday to help university leaders unveil their latest tribute to the 72-year-old Republican: the Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Distinguished Lecture Series.

The \$1.3 million endowed lecture series will bring nationally known speakers to the campuses in Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis as well as other cities in the state. A group of four university administrators will select the speakers.

The lecture series will focus on economics, science, politics and national security.

"The world is flat," Bond said at a news conference Monday. "We are living in a global society."

Former U.S. Sen. John Danforth, a fellow Republican, introduced Bond at the unveiling. The gift wasn't donated by Bond, but officials said that having his name attached to the project made for a relatively easy fundraising pitch.

Columbia campus chancellor Brady Deaton said that Bond was responsible for steering more than \$500 million in federal research money to the university system during his time in Washington.

That includes \$33 million toward the Bond Life Sciences Center in Columbia, which is named for the former senator, and numerous other earmarks for agricultural research, the Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital, cancer and autism research centers, the university's nuclear reactor and more.



University selects presidential search firm

By **JANESE SILVEY**

The **University of Missouri** is "well-positioned" to attract an outstanding president, a Florida consultant hired to help with the search said.

"There's a lot of buzz out there already on this search," Jan Greenwood of Greenwood/Asher & Associates said in a statement. Former UM President Gary Forsee, she said, "leveraged his business leadership to position the enterprise well in this tough economy, and that caught the attention of a lot of people."

Greenwood/Asher has been hired to assist in the presidential search process, the UM System announced today. The news was expected: The firm's Betty Asher participated in a search advisory committee meeting Friday.

The university expects to pay Greenwood/Asher about \$120,000 in fees, although final costs depend on a number of factors, such as travel costs.

The search for a president is under way after Forsee resigned in January, just shy of his third anniversary on the job. Steve Owens, the system's general counsel, is filling in as interim and has repeatedly said he is not interested in the permanent position.

The UM Board of Curators required firms to submit proposals with fixed costs rather than fees based on a hire's compensation, board Chairman Warren Erdman said. That likely cut the price; Greenwood/Asher normally charges one-third of a hire's first-year cash compensation. A third of Forsee's first-year compensation, for instance, would have been more than \$160,000.

"We got a good deal," Erdman said, adding that the UM search is a "prestigious" one.

Greenwood/Asher has completed more than 1,000 searches and has worked with the university on a campus level, conducting searches at UM-Kansas City and the Rolla campus. The firm also was responsible for recruiting then-UM System President Elson Floyd to Washington State University.

Erdman said in a statement that working with the firm will help the university streamline the search process in a cost-effective way.

"They have a strong track record of winning repeat business from their clients," he said, "and they have an extensive database and network of contacts."

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New UM president will have lots of roles to play

By Dale Singer, Beacon staff

Posted 3:40 pm, Mon., 3.7.11

The new president of the University of Missouri system should be an enthusiastic supporter of higher education and possess keen insights into business.

The ideal candidate would know how to manage a large, complex organization and get along well with outside groups.

The best person for the job would embody strong positive values and integrity and nurture an atmosphere that focuses on performance and results.

Oh, yes, whoever moves into the top spot of the four-campus system should know how to balance a public life with a personal one.

Or as Betsy Rodriguez, the system's vice president for human resources, put it at a session on the UMSL campus Monday morning, the search process getting under way hopes to find a president "somewhere between God and Superman or Superwoman."

The forum was the second in a series being held across Missouri as the university's search for a successor to Gary Forsee accelerates. Forsee resigned last year to care for his wife after she was diagnosed with cancer.

University curator Wayne Goode noted that Forsee's skill as a manager and administrator helped him accomplish much of what he wanted done even though his tenure was cut short. With former university general counsel Stephen Owens now acting as interim president, Goode said the school is "not in any big hurry. We have an interim president who knows what needs to be done. The university is in good hands."

Still, the process is on a pretty fast track. After the seven scheduled public forums end next Tuesday afternoon in Springfield, curators will discuss the feedback gathered from the meetings at their March 21-22 meeting in Rolla, then approve a formal list of qualifications. The job will then be advertised, and the search committee will meet in April and May as the names of candidates emerge.

The university also announced Monday that it had retained the search firm of Greenwood/Asher & Associates to help find a new president. It said the consultants working on the search have completed more than 1,000 searches for a wide variety of colleges and other non-profit

institutions, and 97 percent of their business comes from repeat customers.

To get the consultants and the university's own search committee started, a list of desired characteristics for the winning candidate was drawn up and shown to Monday's forum.

Besides the wide-ranging attributes in education and business, with complex organizations and varied constituencies, in integrity, values and results, the university is looking for someone who can:

- Show understanding of the university system's role and mission in four basic areas: teaching, research, service and economic development
- Leverage the institution to advance the state of Missouri
- Be a compelling, effective communicator
- Lead with vision
- Think strategically
- Assemble and empower a team of proven leaders

And, noted UMSL Chancellor Thomas George, Forsee's successor will be able to work from a position of strength.

"The president of the University of Missouri system is not coming into a problem," he said. "The president of the University of Missouri system will come into a system that is thriving."

As if that job description weren't daunting enough, members of the search committee then asked members of the UMSL community for advice on what kind of candidates they should be looking for.

Education professor Kathleen Sullivan Brown said that the new president must recognize and appreciate the particular needs of a campus in an urban setting. Business skills are important, she said, but she added:

"An understanding of the historical role of the university in our city is really a key for this person."

For Deborah Burris, who directs the campus office of equal opportunity, another key is diversity.

"We need to be diverse in every aspect of this process," she said. "That's first and foremost. Individuals look at the top of institutions, and they base their opinions on what they see there."

Former state Sen. Joan Bray emphasized the need for someone with "strong academic credentials," and Betty Van Uum, assistant to the provost for public affairs and economic development, added that the new president will have to understand the political realities of the office.

Other speakers said they were hoping for someone who would appreciate the need to get input from staff and faculty when making decisions; someone who would know the importance of new

information technology; and someone who would take time to get to know students.

Goode and fellow curator Don Downing told the group assembled at UMSL that they realize the importance of their job in the selection process. "This is probably the most important task that falls to the Board of Curators," Goode said.

Downing added that no one should think that the process is just for show. "We are very open-minded," he said. "We are not coming to this with a preset disposition."

And he closed the meeting by inviting everyone to participate.

"If you think you have the perfect candidate in mind," he said, "nominate them from the floor, or better yet send their names to the committee. We don't want to sit back and let candidates come to us. Don't be bashful."



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Bill proposes small change

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The Missouri House has endorsed a small change in the makeup of the state Coordinating Board for Higher Education, the University of Missouri Board of Curators and the Missouri State University Board of Governors.

The Missouri Constitution requires that each board have nine members, and state law says each board can have a maximum of one member from each congressional district.

But Missouri is losing one of its nine congressional districts. In response, the Missouri House voted Monday to allow one of the eight future districts to have two members on each board. The governor would choose which district gets two members on a given board.

The bill needs a second House vote before moving to the Senate.

House members rejected an amendment to add a voting student member to the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

Curator bill, House Bill 174, is sponsored by Rep. Mike Thomson, a Maryville Republican who serves as chairman of the House Higher Education Committee.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

House votes against adding voting student to UM Board of Curators

By Jamie Hausman

March 7, 2011 | 7:09 p.m. CST

JEFFERSON CITY — Two of the nine members of the UM Board of Curators will come from the same congressional district beginning next fall.

Missouri will be losing one congressional seat because the state's population is growing at a slower rate than other states, so the Board of Curators will also lose its seat representing that district. The board must account for the loss in order to maintain an odd number of voting members to break ties.

The Missouri House voted 99-53 against adding a student as a voting member to the board.

Rep. Mary Still, D-Columbia, presented the bill that would have given a UM System student the power to vote on the Board of Curators. The House, though, sided with Rep. Mike Thomson, R-Maryville, who sponsored the bill allowing a second member from one of the districts to step in as the ninth voting member.

Thomson said a student has "no place in running the school."

Still tried to rally support for her bill and student competency by using legislator and MU law school student Rep. Stephen Webber, D-Columbia, as an example.

"This is a perfect time for this to happen," Still said.

Laura Confer, an MU student, is the current non-voting student member of the board. When Thomson's bill was filed, she disagreed that a student shouldn't have a say in running the university.

"Students are the constituency of the university and would represent the interests of the whole student body instead of a member representing their own district," she said.

Missourian reporter Jordan Shapiro contributed to this report.

The Washington Times

NPR, PBS campaigns to keep federal funds called unlawful

By Seth McLaughlin and Stephen Dinan

The Washington Times

8:47 p.m., Monday, March 7, 2011

NPR and PBS stations nationwide are rallying their audiences to contact Congress to fight against Republicans' proposed spending cuts, but some affiliates' pleas may violate laws preventing nonprofits or government-funded groups from lobbying.

Interrupting popular programs, the stations air warnings that cuts could end beloved children's television shows such as "Sesame Street." Some stations urge their audience to call and let Congress know their feelings, while others go further, instructing viewers to "stop the Senate" or "defend federal funding" for public broadcasting.

The ad campaigns are a direct response to House Republicans' push to eliminate all Corporation for Public Broadcasting funds for the rest of the fiscal year. Democrats have fought the cuts and President Obama asked for \$451 million for CPB in his 2012 budget request — a \$6 million increase.

But lawmakers and conservative critics argue the stations are breaking two laws, one that prohibits using taxpayer-funded grants to petition Congress for more taxpayer money and the other that bans nonprofits from doing much lobbying of any kind.

With upward of \$190,000 riding on the congressional spending fight, KBIA public radio at the University of Missouri has run radio and website ads urging listeners to "tell Congress funding for KBIA and other public broadcast is important to you," and also directed viewers to visit "170 Million Americans for Public Broadcasting," a campaign created by public media executives that is fighting to save CPB's taxpayer funding, which is distributed to more than 1,300 stations nationwide.

Mike Dunn, KBIA's general manager, said he doesn't think the station's ad is "inappropriate" because it doesn't tell people what side of the spending battle to line up on, and costs next to nothing. The message, he said, took about 10 minutes to make and about 10 minutes to post to the website, and that the radio announcers reading the ad on air would have been reading some sort of ad anyway.

"It has taken up a little bit of time," Mr. Dunn said. "We put it out on the air. We put it on our website, but there was no tangible cost."

KBIA is one of the numerous public radio and television stations that are running ads aimed at getting a lawmaker's ear while also being organized as nonprofits, which means they function as educational organizations. The payoff is that donations to them are tax-deductible, but they're limited in what lobbying they can do as federal law says nonprofits cannot have a substantial part of their activities be designed to lobby government officials.

Sen. Jim DeMint, South Carolina Republican, wrote a letter last week asking the Senate Finance Committee to look into whether any stations have crossed that line by pushing their audience to contact Congress.

Among the questions he suggested to the committee were to look into what the fair market value is of the airtime used to broadcast appeals, and to determine whether the appeals were run disproportionately during children's programming.

"Can taxpayers be guaranteed that no government funds were used to broadcast these calls to action and lobby Congress for funding?" Mr. DeMint asked.

Separate funding

Officials at two of the larger stations in the public broadcasting network say that's exactly what's happening under their roofs, where they take extra pains to make sure they've followed the letter of the law.

Jeanne M. Hopkins, spokeswoman for WGBH TV and radio in Boston, said her station received about \$8 million in CPB grants and that they've been "very careful" about documenting where federal dollars are spent, making certain they don't use the grants to cover the cost of crafting or airing the ad campaign.

"In letting people know about this funding question, we are not using federal funds to do that work," Ms. Hopkins said, adding that the grants often become seed money for programs they create, including children's programs that involve curriculum development and education based work. "So, that means any staff member that writes something, records something or put it on air — we categorize that specifically. We are very aware of the importance of that."

They also "make sure our messages are appropriate, so we do not tell people what they should think, we just let them know that this is happening in Congress, you can let your representatives in Congress know however you feel," she said. "It really should be your choice because it is your tax dollars."

At WETA television and radio in Arlington, Va., Mary Stewart, vice president of external affairs, said employees are "very conscious of the accounting" involved in keeping federal grants and private donations separate — going as far as pegging "a value to our air time and a value to our staff time" to make sure they are billed appropriately.

As a result, the station says it has always come out clean on internal and CPB audits.

"We have faced federal funding challenges in the past and we are very confident in the types of messaging we are using and have used to inform our public, our members and our viewers of their right to contact their elected officials," WETA spokeswoman Kate Kelly said.

Drawing lines

Both WGBH and WETA said their appeals never told their audiences which way to lobby Congress, but only to call and let their feelings be known.

Many other stations drew a similar line, but some went further by urging their audience to take a stand.

WQED in Pittsburgh urges its website surfers to "Stop the Senate From Cutting Funding for Public Broadcasting and WQED!"

The station also is airing a television advertisement featuring throwback footage from a 1969 Senate hearing in which Fred Rogers, the host of the popular children's show "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," testifies before Congress in defense of former President Lyndon B. Johnson's proposed \$20 million grant for the newly formed CPB, an amount that President Nixon wanted sliced in half.

In the ad, Rogers says he is "concerned about what's being delivered to our children in this country" and that in his show "we deal with such things as the inner drama of childhood."

"We don't have to bop someone over the head to make drama on the screen," he tells them. "We deal with such things as getting a haircut, or the feelings about brothers and sisters and the kind of anger that arises in simple family situations."

The video then cuts to another part of his testimony, where he states, "I give an expression of care every day to each child to help him realize he is unique. I end this program by saying you've made this day a special day by just your being you. There is no person in the whole world like you and I like you just the way you are."

WQED did not respond to three telephone calls seeking comment.

In addition to the nonprofit law, other legal scholars said the stations could run afoul of a law that prohibits recipients of taxpayer money from using it to influence the government.

Hans A. von Spakovsky, senior legal fellow at the Heritage Foundation and a former Justice Department lawyer, said the law in question used to apply only to federal employees but under a 2002 change it now covers all organizations that receive federal money.

He also said stations that are counting on carefully worded appeals to get around the law are out of luck. The law is written broadly and applies to any effort "intended or designed to influence in any manner a member of Congress."

Mr. von Spakovsky said the key question for stations will be whether they're able to segregate federal money and show they did their lobbying purely with non-federal funds. He said he wasn't sure how a station could do that when it comes to broadcast time.

"I can tell you that I still have a lot of contacts in the Justice Department and I actually talked to some people I know over there," he said. "There's no question in their mind this would apply to anybody who gets a federal grant."

But Joseph Sandler, nonprofit and lobby regulation attorney with the law firm Sandler, Reiff & Young P.C., said it is possible to segregate spending so that federal dollars aren't used for lobbying activities.

"They would have to be using funds they are receiving through private sponsorships for this purpose," Mr. Sandler said.

The lobbying law has been on the books for nearly a century, but a 2008 Congressional Research Service report said nobody has been prosecuted under it. The law carries no criminal penalties, but does allow for a fine.



MU experts report to Congress on rising food prices

By **JANESE SILVEY**

The price of food, especially meat and dairy products, could spike this year, **agricultural experts from the University of Missouri say.**

Analysts from MU's Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute predict grocery costs could rise by more than 4 percent as the farm community recovers from the recession.

Director Pat Westhoff and livestock economist Scott Brown presented the institute's annual agricultural economic baseline report to Congress this morning. The report predicts farm income could reach a record level of \$99 billion in 2011.

Rising oil costs are partly to blame. In recent days, oil prices jumped from \$88 per barrel to more than \$100. Those prices not only affect transportation of products but also the cost of agricultural production, Westhoff said.

FAPRI projects corn prices at \$5.32 a bushel for the 2010-11 crop, breaking the previous record of \$4.20 per bushel for the crop harvested in 2007 and up from \$3.55 last year. For soybeans, the institute predicts \$11.70 per bushel, up from last year's prices of just less than \$10.

Meanwhile, the cost to feed and maintain cattle has been increasing while prices remained low during the recession, making production less profitable. At the same time, U.S. and international demand for meat is strong.

"Reduced production, growing exports and population growth combine to limit supplies of meat and milk for domestic consumers," Brown said in a statement.

Because supplies are limited, people are willing to pay more, Westhoff said. Expect that to translate to higher prices at the meat counter.

FAPRI's report assumes it's going to be a normal year for weather and supplies, so a lot depends on 2011 crop yields. If serious weather problems cause low corn yields, for instance, prices will spike. On the other hand, if there's a bumper crop this year, prices might fall.

"Prices could be much higher — or lower — than our projections," Westhoff said.

FAPRI's report is typically a joint project with experts at Iowa State University and other institutions, but because of budget constraints, MU is solely responsible for this year's projections. The MU team presented the report to a House committee this morning and was expected to take the data to the Senate side this afternoon.

People will have a chance to see the data in Columbia next week. FAPRI is hosting a Missouri Agricultural Outlook Conference next Monday at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3301 LeMone Industrial Blvd. The free program is open to the public. Registration starts at 8 a.m. After a presentation on financial forecasts, Westhoff will give a crop outlook at 9:45 a.m., and Brown will report on livestock and dairy trends at 11 a.m.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Food prices expected to increase in 2011

By Benjamin Zack

March 7, 2011 | 4:49 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Rising food prices could add about \$178 to your grocery bill this year.

A combination of higher energy costs and increasing farming expenses will likely cause the price of food to rise at twice the normal rate of inflation for 2011.

Prices are expected to rise on all foods, but meat was expected to see the sharpest increase, according to the institute.

On average, the cost of food rises about 2 percent each year. In 2011, the institute predicts, food prices will increase 4.2 percent and meat prices will increase 6.3 percent.

These predictions are part of an annual report put out by agricultural economists from the University of Missouri. On Monday, representatives from the MU Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute presented their forecasts to the U.S. Congress.

Food prices could be even higher than predicted as energy prices continue to increase. The research institute compiled the data in January. Since that time, conflicts in North Africa and the Middle East have contributed to a rise in oil prices.

“If we were doing a snapshot today, it might be even higher,” Pat Westhoff, director of the policy research institute, said on Monday.

High fuel prices not only increase production costs for farmers, they add to the shipping and storing expenses for products after they leave the farm.

Spending an extra 15 cents on a pound of ground beef might not grab shoppers' immediate attention. Combined price increases, however, could cost Americans \$67 billion extra over the year, according to the forecasts. That amount averages out to about \$178 per person.

As prices rise, net farm income in 2011 was expected to reach \$99 billion — a record high and approximately a 20 percent increase over 2010.

The quantity of major crops being planted this year was predicted to increase by 7.9 million acres, with the bulk of that increase in wheat and corn. The increases in farm income follow sharp dips in farm profitability during the recession.

In addition to fluctuating oil prices, variables such as weather can have unexpected effects on the success of crops and, therefore, the price of food.

“The reality is always going to be different,” Westhoff said.

The economists with the MU institute include some flexibility in the baseline report in order to compensate for weather that is too hot or too cold and spring seasons that are too wet or too dry.

“Once you correct for things like that,” Westhoff said, the reports “do a pretty good job.”

The main focus of this year’s baseline report is predictions for 2011, but the institute also includes predictions for the economic state of agriculture through 2020. After the price increases of 2011, the analysts expect food prices to settle down to the regular rate of inflation in 2012 and beyond.

After meeting with Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture this week, the institute will be presenting its report at the Missouri Agricultural Outlook Conference on March 14 at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3301 Lemone Industrial Blvd. The conference is at 8:30 a.m. and is free to the public.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Crop prices feed inflation of food bills

BY GEORGINA GUSTIN • ggustin@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8195 | Posted: Tuesday, March 8, 2011 12:20 am

EAST ST. LOUIS • A steady line of trucks rumbles under the Eads Bridge, winding its way to Cargill's hulking grain elevator across the Mississippi River from downtown.

Rising grain prices have farmers unloading crops here at a solid clip. "There was a long wait this morning," said trucker Troy Agney, stepping out of his black Peterbilt last week. "Trucks were stacking up."

Even Agney, who doesn't usually truck grain, has found himself in middle of the grain price frenzy, hauling multiple loads of corn a day.

And it's not just corn prices that are soaring. Soybeans are moving along with them. Wheat is climbing, too. So is sugar. And coffee. And cocoa. Some experts say they have never seen so many commodity prices so high at once.

"Everything's high," Agney says, in a booming twang. "Watch the grocery store."

Indeed, analysts and recently released government estimates predict food prices will rise this year, thanks to a tangle of factors, from rising grain prices to monetary policy to oil costs. Prices for U.S. consumers could surpass the spikes of 2008, while the United Nations said Thursday that its global food prices index has reached an all-time high. Food prices, many believe, ignited the pro-democracy unrest rippling through the Middle East and Africa.

For American grain producers, the situation could translate into a few boom years — what Sunset Hills-based investment manager Joe Terril calls "a golden age for Midwestern farmers." For Missouri, where crops brought \$4.7 billion to the state's economy in 2009, and Illinois, where they delivered \$12.6 billion, the current grain climate will boost revenue. Nationally, farm income this year could hit a record \$99 billion, University of Missouri economists predicted in a report to Congress on Monday.

But for American consumers struggling out of a recession — and those in developing countries who spend the bulk of their income on food — the price spikes will sting. "If you go back to 2008, it was gas prices going to \$4 that killed the economy. It left the average person with no discretionary income," Terril said. "I'm very concerned food prices are getting ready to do the same thing."

Perhaps more importantly, analysts say, soaring food costs will stir debate over what, exactly, is driving food prices in a complex and changing global food economy, one that's expected to remain turbulent for years.

The china factor

Analysts disagree on the extent to which certain factors are affecting grain prices, but most point to:

- Rising demand for grain from developing countries, primarily China, where a growing middle class has money to spend on meat from livestock that dines on grain.
- A poor 2010 wheat crop in some of the world's biggest wheat-producing countries.
- U.S. ethanol mandates, which divert roughly 40 percent of the country's corn crop away from feeding troughs and into gas tanks.

Another factor, analysts say, is a smaller-than-expected 2010 U.S. corn crop that has translated to smaller inventories.

"Even given the late economic unpleasantness, people in China and India are increasing their incomes and eating more food, more meat, more dairy," said Blake Hurst, a soybean and corn farmer and president of the Missouri Farm Bureau. "But all these things are driving prices."

Demand and production problems have shrunk the world's corn and soy stocks, which are at precariously low levels, driving up prices.

"The situation will continue to get tighter as we get into the 2011 crop," said Rich Pottorff, chief economist for St. Louis-based Doane Advisory Services. "Clearly we need to have big crops this year to ease the upward pressure on prices. At least so far, traders are concerned that that won't happen."

debate over dollar

Tight supplies could be a consequence of investors taking grain off the market. That, in turn, could be a consequence of U.S. monetary policy that has lowered the value of the dollar, some analysts say.

"Investors are hanging on to grain because they don't want U.S. dollars," Terril said. "That's limiting the grain supply."

"The rest of the world is screaming: Stop with your monetary policy," Terril added. "I remind people that what happened in Egypt started with wheat prices."

Unrest in the Africa and the Middle East also has prompted some countries to store grain.

"Leaders see there's a lot of unrest. They know it's fueled by food prices," Pottorff said. "They want to go out and buy more grain to keep their people satisfied. It isn't just the dollar."

Other analysts agree the dollar isn't entirely to blame.

"I don't see how policy affects the weather," said Darrel Good, an agricultural economist at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, referring to drought conditions in prime wheat-growing regions. "It can be argued that our renewable-fuels policies is supporting corn demand at very high levels. ... But those policies alone wouldn't have pushed prices to where they are."

In recent days oil prices have hit \$100 a barrel, another factor driving up food prices.

"Everybody's anxious to blame these food costs on higher cash grain prices," said Greg Guenther, a corn and soy farmer in Belleville. "But overall fuel is the biggest variable."

Regardless of the causes, many analysts say investors are taking advantage of the turbulence.

"These grain markets are driven by the people who trade these markets," said John Graverson, the grain department manager at Roy Carroll County Grain Growers, east of Kansas City. "When Wall Street gets a whiff of it, the investor crowd starts buying futures. There's no doubt you have tight markets, so any little move and the market goes fast and furious."

'up, up, up'

For the American shopper, all this will translate to higher prices. The U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts prices will rise by as much as 4 percent this year, and some believe that's conservative. University of Missouri economists said Monday that the rise will be slightly higher, at 4.2 percent.

"If the pressure mounts, it's hard to speculate," said Rich Wallace, director of grocery procurement for Dierbergs, referring to the store's pricing. "But all the commodities are going to keep going up, up, up."

Both Dierbergs and Schnucks say they have tried to hold the line on prices but in some cases have passed costs along to customers.

"In St. Louis, we're in a very competitive environment," Wallace said. "Everybody's looking at each other, and nobody wants to be the first to raise prices. ... As a retailer, we're the last line of defense."

But as grain prices drive up food prices, farmers will be converting crops into more cash.

The Department of Agriculture recently announced that agricultural trade will hit record levels this year, helping boost net farm income to record levels, despite rises in production costs. Farmland values are rising, too — in some areas they are reaching \$10,000 an acre.

"It's good times," said Hurst, the Missouri Farm Bureau president.

But farmers and analysts underscore that higher consumer prices don't equate directly to the cash that ends up in a farmers' pocket. On average, just under 16 percent of the price of a grocery item goes to the farmer, according to Agriculture Department data.

"I hate to see people thinking this is about farmers doing well and consumers not," said Rick Tolman, head of the Chesterfield-based National Corn Growers Association. "It's not the farmers' faults they're making money. They're responding to the circumstances."

Grain growers are enjoying the good times while they can — as are farm-related businesses. Equipment dealerships are seeing an increase in customers as cash-flush producers buy new implements and fix up old ones.

"There's been a lot of interest in upgrading equipment," said Keith Reichman, an owner of Okawville-based Reichman Bros., a farm implement dealership. "We're very busy."

That kind of news sounds pretty sweet to farmers. According to the recent census, rural Missouri counties lost more population over the last decade and are struggling financially because of it.

"We've suffered in my part of the world for decades," said Hurst, who lives in rural Atchison County. "If the good times last, there are some parts of Missouri that will benefit from high farm prices."

Grain farmers are hoping for a good year, which will help replenish stocks and eventually bring grain prices down. But in the meantime, the bins are looking pretty thin.

At the Cargill terminal last week, trucks idled just a few hundred feet from the Casino Queen, hauling payloads that are sure bets, at least for now.

"Come August, there won't be any grain around," Agney said. "That's what the elevators are telling us."

THE MANEATER

Administration joins ‘One Mizzou’ campaign

Maya Angelou will speak on campus as part of the initiative.

By Jimmy Hibs

Published March 8, 2011

A new administrative involvement in the “One Mizzou” campaign will expand the program’s reach but will also tweak some of its original plans, Missouri Students Association President Eric Woods said.

Last week, Chief Diversity Officer Roger Worthington informed Woods that MU wants to make One Mizzou, a diversity initiative launched after the Hatch Hall graffiti incident, a university-sanctioned program.

“What that comes with is a lot of resources and the potential to kind expand this from a small student initiative to a large university-backed initiative,” Woods said.

The logo will be different than the original one decided upon a few weeks ago. Woods said MU’s involvement in the campaign requires the logo fall under university standards in terms of font, color and design. But he said the elements of the design will be mostly similar to what the students decided.

“The thought behind this is that we want the campaign to be something that the university is able to market to prospective and current students,” Woods said. “To do that, logos have to meet certain university standards. We’re working with them to get that done.”

Representatives from the Legions of Black Collegians were somewhat relieved to hear of this, as the organization wasn’t initially fully supportive of the design, LBC spokeswoman Ashley Edwards said.

“Originally, we had a problem with the logo,” Edwards said. “We felt that it wasn’t diverse enough, and people didn’t know what that meant. Pretty much what it came down to was that it looked like everything else in the bookstore – tiger print. If you think about it, if it looks like everything else, that is the exact opposite of diversity.”

But after the initial skepticism concerning the logo, LBC is fully supportive of the program, Edwards said.

“We don’t really have a problem with it, but we just need to know that it’s going to happen,” Edwards said, in reference to the campaign in general. “We need to know everything is going to follow through. This can’t just be something that is said and then disappears.”

Because MU is making the program “official,” it will be conducted on a much larger scale, Woods said. Originally, the One Mizzou banners were intended to hang in the Student Center. Now, with the new administrative support, the banners will hang around the rotunda of Jesse Hall, as well. In addition, an even larger banner might be hung from the columns.

Also growing in size is the launch of the campaign. Tentatively, the launch will take place outside of the Student Center. If plans go accordingly, an administrative representative will speak, in addition to a few student leaders.

Throughout April, numerous events will occur affiliated with One Mizzou. Some events will correspond with Black Love Week, Greek Week and the Graduate Education Week, all which occur during the third week of April. Additionally, Maya Angelou will speak on campus as a part of the campaign.

“We’re trying to think of events that exemplify the diversity and community themes that we’re trying to promote,” Woods said.

All of these ideas are still tentative, as the task force will continue to meet, Woods said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Columbia sees shorter flu season this year

By [Rachel Stinebring](#)

March 7, 2011 | 4:18 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Columbia has seen relatively low rates of influenza during the 2010-2011 flu season, compared with 2009-2010.

According to [reports from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services](#), Boone County has seen more than 100 cases of influenza this flu season so far, a relatively low number in comparison with the H1N1 outbreak that marked last year's flu season.

"Last year wasn't a typical year for the flu," said Sarah Rainey, epidemiologist for the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services. "We almost had a second flu season in April and May and were dealing with a high number of H1N1 cases."

However, Rainey said tracking the flu can be difficult, as only those who are tested positive for influenza are counted in the department's figures.

"Our numbers are just numbers," Rainey said. "Many people aren't tested for the flu or simply don't report cases. Our count is a representative figure."

Because the department cannot be certain of the number of flu cases in Columbia, Rainey said she focuses more on trends than actual figures.

At MU, the trend seems to be a decrease in flu cases in the month of February.

Susan Even, director of the MU Student Health Center, said 67 cases of influenza were identified the first week of February at the center. Figures from the second week of February showed that the number of influenza reports leveled off at 59 cases, and by the third week of the month, the center saw an almost 50 percent reduction in cases, with 33 reported.

In response to the increased number of identified influenza cases last year, registered nurses at the center began advising students on flu treatment over the phone.

Pam Roe, senior information specialist for the center, said that, because the flu is a virus, doctors at the center cannot treat it with antibiotics. And students with the flu are likely to spread the flu by visiting the center.

Roe said most students simply need rest and recuperation to recover from the flu. However, she noted that for students with chronic illnesses, influenza can be a major health issue.

"Students with underlying chronic illnesses such as asthma can be greatly affected by the flu," Roe said. "We will see these students right away because the flu can make these illnesses chronically worse."