

**COUNCIL'S AFTER-WORK GATHERING A SOCIAL SUCCESS**

At least 30 members of the Agri-Business Council of Wichita showed up for their first networking social last month. The gathering, held at Louie's in east Wichita, was deemed a success by many in attendance.

"I felt it was a great way to meet people on an informal basis," Jim Mock says. "Some attendees have not been able to come to the luncheons because of other conflicts during the day but were able to come after work."

Conversations during the three-hour event ranged from small talk to politics to agribusiness topics and accomplished its mission of providing an informal networking opportunity. Though the bi-monthly luncheons featuring industry speakers have been positive, ABCW members were without a low-key, yet structured gathering. Plans for the next social are underway.

"The social turned out to be a lot of fun and I met several new people and talked to others I hadn't seen in a while," Jesse McCurry says. "Having it on a Friday was good because most of us are back from week-day travels by then. It was just smart on the Council's part to hold a social event so many of us could participate in." —

**BUSINESS PROFILE:  
POTWIN LAND & CATTLE**

Farming has been a part of Potwin Land and Cattle since the 1870s, when Sidney Joseph homesteaded the land west of Potwin.

Years later, his son, Charles R., then Sidney's grandson, Charles B., have continued the operation and today,



Joseph

Alan Joseph and his two brothers, Bob and Fred, co-own and manage Potwin Land and Cattle. The business has changed in structure but the traditions of raising crops, cattle and family in the Flint Hills has remained intact.

Alan says his ancestors farmed and then in the 1920s and

**CHINA BOOKS 1 MILLION TONS OF CORN IMPORTS**

China, the world's second biggest corn consumer, has booked nearly one-million metric tons of corn imports from the U.S. and will probably buy more, according to the U.S. Grains Council.

The U.S. could double or triple sales to China, as the nation seeks to complement domestic supply and satisfy expanding demand. In April, China purchased about 600,000 tons of U.S. corn, according to the U.S. Agriculture Department. It is securing imports and selling from state inventories to cool domestic prices that have rallied 11-percent in the past six months to near record levels. A reduced crop last year and planting delays have increased speculation of a supply shortage.

In addition, the country's demand for soybeans is expected to climb as the expanding economy raises incomes and improves diets, says an executive at Cargill Inc. China's annual soybean consumption will rise as much as eight-percent in the next four years, and corn will gain about five-percent a year as the growing livestock industry demands high-protein and energy-rich animal feed.

China buys more than half of all globally-traded soybeans and may become a net corn importer this year, as its citizens eat more meat, supporting global prices for bulk grain products. The country's soybean imports have outpaced forecasts for the past five years and May's USDA import estimates forecasts 49 million tons for 2010-2011.

The world's second-biggest corn producer now

30s purchased native grass pastures. The farm name officially became The Potwin Land and Cattle Company, Inc. in the 1950s, when Alan's dad built a 2,000-head feedlot.

Later, Excel's Sam Marcus approached Alan's dad, Charles B., about buying 80-acres to build a feedlot because Marcus thought it would be a convenient place to feed out Excel-owned cattle before bringing them to Wichita for harvest. The now 20,000-head feedlot is called Haw Ranch Feedlot II and managed by Dave Lowe, another member of the Agri-Business Council of Wichita.

In the 1980's, the Josephs took to managing cows and calves. And since then, the 2,000 head feedlot business has transitioned to buying yearling Angus-influenced stocker steers to graze on native grass for 90-days. Alan says he and his brothers have pastures ready for cattle

to graze by April 15. Steers are fattened in feedlots nearby and in western Kansas once they are taken off pasture around mid-July. The Joseph's are also landlords now, with tenant farmers to farm the dry land wheat, milo, soybean and corn operation. All three brothers make a living off the farm as well but still take active roles as owners, overseeing the land and cattle in the same way their parents and grandparents taught them.

“I enjoy the variety, the change and being involved in the agriculture and cattle industry,” Alan says. “I enjoy being outside and continuing my family's heritage. My brothers and I are committed to making our farm and ranch operation successful even though we all three work away from the farm as well.”

Alan says Potwin Land and Cattle joined the ABCW to network with fellow agribusiness leaders and hear from quality speakers during Council luncheons. He says he believes the ABCW serves an essential purpose of educating the Wichita community on ag issues and developing an enhanced agribusiness presence.

“We need to keep the public educated about the facts in order to counteract groups that are anti-ag and not favorable to our industry,” he says. —

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#### HOUSTON HIGHLIGHTED AS “MODEL” CITY

More than 141,000 new residents flocked to Houston last year, making it one of the fastest-growing cities in the nation, second only to sprawling Dallas-Ft. Worth. Better opportunities for employment compared to other cities was the driving force behind the growth. Between 2000 and 2009, a total of 260,000 new jobs were added in Houston. During the same time period, just 96,000 new jobs were added in New York City, which is three times as large, while 258,000 jobs were lost in the Chicago area, 217,000 in San Francisco, 168,000 in Los Angeles and 100,000 in Boston.

Most new jobs in Houston were added in manufacturing, professional services, international trade and technology services. The cost of government borne by residents is low, while at the same time investments in airports, ports, roads, transit systems and schools is attractive. New suburban town centers, revival of inner-city neighborhoods and growth in recreational areas and museums also has helped foster interest in the Lone Star State's largest city.

Communities with ample job opportunities, recreation and high-quality schools are critical for attracting new business and residents to both rural and urban areas. American Farm Bureau Federations (AFBF) offers a Rural Community Building Blog as a resource for state Farm Bureaus to help improve the quality of life in rural communities. —