

Around Dakota Ag

New ag secretary aims to keep industry No. 1 in South Dakota

By LON TONNESON

AGRICULTURE is the state's No. 1 industry, and it's my intention to keep it that way," says Bill Even, South Dakota's new secretary of agriculture.

Gov. Mike Rounds appointed Even to the post earlier this year. Even, 41, is a fourth-generation farmer from eastern South Dakota and has had held several other posts in Rounds' administration.

"One of my goals is to promote policies that help produce healthy crop, livestock and renewable energy industries in South Dakota," Even says. "I want to see long-term balance in all these sectors."

Even says he plans to continue former Secretary of Agriculture Larry Gabriel's work in the state, particularly in livestock and renewable energy development. Gabriel recently resigned after serving seven years.

"I want to provide opportunity for everyone in agriculture," Even says.

Active producer

Like Gabriel, a Quinn, S.D., rancher, Even is an active ag producer. He farms with his father, Neal, and brother, Tim,

Key Points

- Bill Even is South Dakota's new secretary of agriculture.
- Even farms and raises cattle with his brother and father.
- He also has held top posts in energy and economic development.

at Humboldt, S.D. On their 1,000-acre farm, the Evens raise corn and soybeans, run 100 stock cows, and operate a farm repair business.

Even started farming in 1983. He holds an Associate of Science degree in Agricultural Production from Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, S.D.; a bachelor's in Agricultural Business with highest honors from South Dakota State University in Brookings, S.D.; and a Juris Doctor degree with high honors from Drake University Law School in Des Moines, Iowa, where he was an Opperman Scholar and received a certificate in Food and Agricultural Law.

While in law school, Even served as executive editor of the *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law*, clerked for the law firm of Hefner and Bergkamp, and interned on the U.S. Senate Agriculture



GOOD FIT: Bill Even, South Dakota's new secretary of agriculture, farms with his brother at Humboldt, S.D. Before being named to the ag post, he headed up energy and economic development departments in Gov. Mike Rounds' administration.

Committee in Washington, D.C.

Before his appointment as secretary of agriculture, Even served as director of the Governor's Office of Economic Development and deputy secretary of Tourism and State Development. He also served as the state's energy director and executive director for the South Dakota Energy Infrastructure Authority. He is also a member of the State Energy Advisory Board, which advises the U.S.

Department of Energy on Policy.

Even is a member of the South Dakota Bar Association and the American Agricultural Law Association. He served for 10 years on the board of directors of the Humboldt Farmers Elevator Co., and 15 years as a volunteer emergency medical technician and firefighter.

Even and his wife, Janell, live in Pierre with their three children, Sarah, Anthony and Jill.

Calendar of Events

June

12-14: Basics of Wheat and Flour Quality — Short Course, Northern Crops Institute, Fargo, N.D. Phone: 701-231-7736. Web site: www.northern-crops.com/education/education.htm.

15-20: Red River Valley Fair, West Fargo, N.D. Web site: www.redrivervalleyfair.com.

19: Dakota Lakes No Till Tour, departs from Jamestown, N.D. Contact: Thomas Olson. Phone: 701-252-9030.

21: Crop Management Field School, Carrington, N.D. Contact: Greg Endres. Phone: 701-652-2951. Web site: www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/carringt.

21-22: Compost Dairy Barn Conference and Tour, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn., Campus Continuing Education Center. Web site: www.extension.umn.edu/dairy/efforts/compostbarnconference.htm.

22-25: Howard Wyman Sheep Industry Leadership School, Sioux Falls, S.D. Contact: National Lamb Feeders Association office. Phone: 503-364-5462. Web site: www.nfla-sheep.org.

26-28: 2007 National Sunflower Association Summer Seminar, Medora Community Center, Medora, N.D. Contact: Lerrene Kroh. Phone: 701-328-5107.

27: Central Grasslands Research Extension Center field day, Streeter, N.D.

27: North Central Research Extension Center Canola Day, Minot, N.D.,

Phone: 701-857-7679.

27-July 1: American Jersey Cattle Association and National All-Jersey Inc., Sioux Falls Convention Center, Sioux Falls, S.D. Web sites: iowajersey.usjersey.com or www.usjersey.com.

29: Williston, N.D., Research Extension Center Pulse Crop Field Tour, Phone: 701-774-4315.

July

7: North Dakota Pinto Horse Show, West Fargo, N.D. Web site: ndpinto-horse.org.

10: Hettinger, N.D., Research Extension Center field day.

11: Dickinson, N.D., Research Extension Center field day.

12: Williston, N.D., Research Extension Center field day.

17: Carrington, N.D., Research Extension Center field day.

18: North Central Research Extension Center field day, Minot, N.D.

19: Langdon, N.D., Research Extension Center field day.

20-28: North Dakota State Fair, Minot, N.D. Phone: 701-857-7620. Web site: www.ndstatefair.com.

23-28: International Bison Conference, Rapid City, S.D. Phone: 303-292-2833 Web site: www.ibt2007.com.

26-28: National Sunflower Association Summer Seminar, Medora Community Center, Medora, N.D. Contact Lerrene Kroh. Phone: 701-328-5107. Web site: www.sunflowermsa.com/events.

27: Central Grasslands Research Extension Center field day, Streeter, N.D.

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