



**National  
Barley  
Growers  
Association**

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# **WELCOME TO**

## **National Barley Growers Association**



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### **Congress Passes Omnibus Appropriations Bill, Concluding their Business for the Year**

It took them right up until Christmas Eve, but Congress passed an omnibus appropriations package to fund government programs for fiscal year 2023. As reported previously, Congressional leaders reached agreement on the appropriations package totaling \$1.7 trillion including \$858 billion in Defense funding and \$772.5 billion for non-defense discretionary programs. For agriculture, the bill includes discretionary funding of \$25.48 billion and the Barley Pest Initiative is listed among the USDA ARS research projects to receive increased funding in FY2023.

### **Midterm Congressional Elections Result in Divided Congress**

The November mid-term elections saw the Republicans win control of the U.S. House of Representatives while Democrats retained control of the Senate. The margins in the Senate and the House will be very narrow and, unless there is a

sudden outbreak of bipartisanship, the divided government will likely result in very little legislation getting enacted over the next two years. The House and Senate Agriculture Committees will have the same four leaders at the top, with the gavel swapping hands in the House. Rep. Glenn (GT) Thompson (R-PA) will assume the Chairmanship and current Chairman David Scott (D-GA) will now be the Ranking Member for Democrats. On the Senate side, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and John Boozeman (R-AR) remain as the Chair and Ranking Member.

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### **Thompson Selected by Republicans to Chair House Ag Committee**

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, the House GOP steering committee elected Rep. Glenn “GT” Thompsons (R-PA) to lead the House Agriculture Committee. Thompson is currently the committee's top Republican and faced no clear challenger in his bid to lead the committee. He will succeed Rep. David Scott (D-GA) as chair. Thompson has led Republicans on the committee since 2021 and has championed deregulation in farming and increasing agricultural production.

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### **NBGA Urged Congressional Action to Avert Rail Strike**

After four of the twelve rail labor unions rejected a proposed agreement creating the potential for a strike in early December, NBGA and over 200 agricultural groups urged Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to adopt the Tentative Agreement between railroad unions and management and avert a strike. A strike or lockout would have had harmful consequences for the agricultural and broader U.S. economies, especially when combined with existing challenges in the rail system, at ports, with trucking and barge shipments. The Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) appointed by President Biden had been urging the involved parties to reach an agreement in order to avert a shutdown or Congress intervening. However, on November 28<sup>th</sup> the White House acknowledged that a negotiated settlement was not likely and urged Congress to take action.

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### **NBGA President Elected to North Dakota State Senate**

NBGA congratulates our President, Greg Kessel, on his election to the North Dakota State Senate. Garnering over 70% of the vote, Greg was elected to represent State Senate District 39 in southwestern North Dakota.

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### **Barley Project Selected for USDA Climate-Smart Partnership**

A project led by Proximity Malt was selected to receive a \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Climate-Smart Partnership initiative. The Proximity Malt project plans to financially assist farms, and other partners, in developing and implementing regenerative barley practices and building a climate-smart barley market. The project will be targeted to the following states: CO, DE, KS, MA, NE, NM, NC, PA, WY, VA and Tribal lands. Participating producers, who meet the science-backed certification requirements, would receive an additional percent premium over conventional barley contract pricing plus an annual transition incentive during the project. Funds may be used by

farmers to obtain equipment necessary for transitioning to regenerative barley. A percentage of funds, partially used for subsidizing verification services, would be set aside specifically for small and underserved farmers who would receive priority. Other partners in the project include: Sustainable Environmental Consultants (SEC); Grey Snow Management Solutions; An Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska Company; New Belgium Brewing; Brown-Forman; Brewers Association; Founders Brewing Company; Odell Brewing Company.

## **PRIA Reauthorization**

NBGA joined a letter to the House and Senate Agriculture Committee leaders encouraging them to pass the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act reauthorization (PRIA 5) before the end of the year. Passage of PRIA 5 will provide the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the resources it needs to process registrations, improve worker protections, and strengthen training for pesticide products for the benefit of farmers, farmworkers, consumers and the environment.

PRIA provides for specific time periods for EPA to make a regulatory decision on pesticide registrations and tolerance actions submitted to the Agency. The goal of PRIA is to create a more predictable and effective evaluation system for applications. Since PRIA was first enacted, management challenges and resource constraints have eroded the progress achieved under the original law. Over the last decade, the program has lost over 200 full time equivalents while pesticide submissions have increased rapidly. Moreover, the Agency is struggling to resolve a backlog of over 11,000 related regulatory actions.

Without adequate resources, innovations in conventional pesticides, antimicrobial disinfectant products, biopesticides, and emerging technologies could be delayed for years. PRIA 5 reflects the input from regulated industry, environmental NGOs, and farmworker advocates.

## **Treasury Department Plans Rulemaking on Alcoholic Beverages**

In response to a petition and lawsuit from consumer groups, the Treasury Department's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) announced its intent for new rulemaking on alcohol facts labeling.

In a November 17 letter to the groups that filed a petition and lawsuit, TTB wrote that it "is hereby granting the 2003 petition to the extent that TTB will engage in a new rulemaking on the issues of nutrient content labeling, expanded alcohol content labeling, major food allergen labeling, and ingredient labeling. To the extent the petition requests additional or different action by TTB, we are denying it."

In October, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) filed a lawsuit against TTB "for failing to act on a 2003 petition to require alcohol labeling with the same basic transparency consumers expect for non-alcoholic beverages and food products."

NBGA and our industry partners will be monitoring and providing input on the proposed rulemaking that comes from TTB.

## **NBGA February Meeting in Washington, DC**

Phoenix Park Hotel  
520 North Capitol St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
855-371-6824

Group block closes on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>  
Book here: <https://reservations.travelclick.com/75979?groupID=3577747>

## NBGA June Meeting to be Held Jointly with AMBA in St. Louis

Tuesday, June 13th-Thursday, June 15th  
More info to follow in the coming months

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