

2006 a
District Conduct of Meetings CDE
Abilities and Items of Business

Judge's Copy

Ability: Table a Motion
Business: Tour the local food processing plant.

Ability: To Refer to a Committee
Business: Purchase a new laptop computer for the FFA chapter.

1. The National FFA emblem consists of five symbols, please name all 5.

(Page 8, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"The cross section of the ear of corn, The rising sun, The plow, The eagle, The owl, and the words "Agricultural Education" and "FFA"."

2. What is the official salute of the FFA organization?

(Page 9, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"The Pledge of Allegiance – I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

3. What are the components of the FFA official dress?

(Page 11, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"Official dress for female members: black skirt, white-collared blouse with official FFA blue scarf, black dress shoes with a closed heel and toe, black nylon hosiery and an official FFA jacket zipped to the top. The skirt is to be at least knee length, hemmed evenly across the bottom, with a slit no longer than two inches above the knee, excluding the kick pleat. Black slacks may be appropriate for traveling and outdoor activities. Official dress for male members: black slacks, a white-collared shirt with official FFA tie, black dress shoes, black socks and an official FFA jacket zipped to the top."

4. What are the duties of the Secretary?

(Page 16, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"1. Prepare and post the agenda for each chapter meeting. 2. Prepare and present the minutes of each chapter meeting. 3. Place all committee reports in the designated area in the Secretary, Treasurer & Program of Activities Workbook or the computer software. 4. Be responsible for chapter correspondence. 5. Maintain member attendance and activity records and issue membership cards. 6. Have on hand for each meeting: a. Secretary, Treasurer & Program of Activities Workbook or the computer software. B. Copy of the POA including all standing committees. C. Official FFA Manual and the FFA Student Handbook. D. Copy of the chapter constitution and bylaws."

5. What is the purpose of Parliamentary Procedure at regular meetings?

(Page 25, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"To promote efficient meetings so that business can be transacted in an orderly manner."

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Abilities and Items of Business

Judge's Copy

Ability: To Amend a Motion
Business: To sponsor a scholarship for graduating seniors.

Ability: To Rise to a Point of Order
Business: To start an aquaculture nursery as a chapter project.

1. Name 4 of the 12 guidelines for the proper use of the FFA Jacket.

(Page 11, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"1. The jacket is to be worn only by members. 2. The jacket should be kept clean and neat. 3. The back of the jacket includes only a large official FFA emblem, the name of the state association and the name of the local chapter, region, district or area. The front of the jacket includes only a small official FFA emblem, the name of the individual, one office or honor and the year of that office or honor. 4. The jacket should be worn on official occasions with the zipper fastened to the top. 5. The jacket should be worn by members and officers on all official FFA occasions. 6. The jacket should only be worn to places that are appropriate for members to visit. 7. School letters and insignia of other organizations should not be attached to or worn on the jacket. 8. When the jacket becomes faded and worn, it should be discarded or the emblems and lettering removed. 9. The emblems and lettering should be removed if the jacket is given or sold to a non-member. 10. A member should act professionally when wearing the official FFA jacket. 11. Members should refrain from the use of tobacco and alcohol when underage and at all times when representing FFA. 12. All chapter degree, officer and award medals should be worn beneath the name on the right side of the jacket, with the exception of the State FFA Degree charm or American Degree key should be worn above the name or attached to a standard chain. No more than three medals should be worn on the jacket."

2. What does one tap of the gavel signify?

(Page 25, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"One tap follows the announcement of adjournment, the completion of a business item or is a message to the members to be seated following the opening ceremony."

3. Name 4 of the 7 general duties expected of all officers.

(Page 16, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"1. A genuine desire to be part of a leadership team. 2. A willingness to accept responsibility. 3. A sincere desire to work with all chapter members in meeting their leadership, personal and chapter goals. 4. A commitment to lead by example. 5. A knowledge and understanding of the chapter, state and national FFA constitutions, bylaws and programs. 6. A working knowledge of parliamentary procedure. 7. An ability to memorize official ceremonies."

4. According to the FFA Manual, what is the established order of business that should be followed at all chapter meetings?

(Page 24, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"Opening ceremony, Minutes of the previous meeting, Officer reports, Special features, Unfinished business, Committee reports, New business, Ceremonies, Closing ceremony, Entertainment/ recreation/ refreshments."

5. What are two things that a well-planned POA will do?

(Page 19, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)

"A well planned POA will: ensure that chapter activities meet the needs of the members, provide direction from year to year, lead to a workable budget, provide an experience in planning and serve as a reference point throughout the year."

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2006 a
District Parliamentary Procedure CDE
Abilities and Items of Business
Judge's Copy

Ability: To appeal the decision of the chair
Business: Organize a chapter fishing trip to Canada.

Ability: To refer to a committee
Business: Purchase a new computer for the classroom.

Ability: To take from the table
Business: Volunteer to staff the concession stand at home football games.

Ability: To receive a motion to reconsider
Business: Donate \$200 to the National FFA Seeds of Hope Campaign.

Ability: To adjourn
Business: Start an aquaculture nursery as a chapter project.

1. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member moved to refer a matter to a committee, and the motion to refer received no second?

(Page 16, 1994 Edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"If no one seconds the motion, the Chair states, 'The motion dies for a lack of a second' raps the gavel once and moves on to the next item of business."

2. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member made remarks on a motion before it was seconded?

(Page 15, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"Call the member out of order."

3. Why is no second required for a request to withdraw a motion?

(Page 59, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"The request to withdraw a motion must be acted upon immediately. No second is needed. It is not debatable, nor amendable."

4. Who is permitted to withdraw a motion?

(Page 60, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"The person who made the motion should then request permission to withdraw the motion."

5. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member offered an amendment to the motion to suspend only a certain rule?

(Page 61, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"Call the member out of order. The motion to suspend a rule, which requires a second, cannot be debated or amended."

2006 b
District Parliamentary Procedure CDE
Abilities and Items of Business
Judge's Copy

Ability: To change presiding officer
Business: Purchase a livestock trailer to transport chapter members' projects to the fair.

Ability: To suspend the rules
Business: Host a district FFA trap shoot.

Ability: To receive and dispose of a main motion
Business: Sponsor a scholarship for graduating seniors.

Ability: To lay a motion on the table
Business: Organize a tour of a local dairy farm.

Ability: To Adjourn
Business: Sponsor a breakfast for school faculty during National FFA Week.

1. As presiding officer, what would you do if a member who had voted on the losing side moved to reconsider?

(Page 64-65, 1994 Edition of Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)

"Call the member out of order. Only someone from the prevailing side may call to reconsider."

2. What are some valid reasons for the presiding officer to turn the chair over to another person?

(Page 70, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"...when the Chair wishes to discuss a motion, or when it could be embarrassing to preside, or when the Chair must leave in a hurry."

3. As presiding officer what would you do if a member offered an amendment to the motion to suspend only a certain rule?

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"Call the member out of order. 'The motion to suspend a rule, which requires a second cannot be debated or amended.'"

4. How does the motion to postpone definitely differ from the motion to table a main motion?

(Page 34-35, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"A motion to lay on the table sets aside an original main motion along with amendment being considered until it is taken from the table by a majority vote. The motion to postpone definitely puts off or defers action on a main motion, which is before the assembly. At the same time, it fixes a definite time for future consideration of a main motion."

5. As the presiding officer what do you do if two members rise and ask for recognition at the same time?

(Page 10, 1994 edition of "Mastering Parliamentary Procedure")

"When debate is lively and several members rise at one time to seek recognition, the Chair should recognize the member who was seen rising first. Thereafter, the Chair should recognize the other members from different areas of the meeting room to achieve balanced participation until that item of business is disposed."

2006 A
District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

Select one of the following topics

- a. How can scientific research enhance agricultural products?
- b. How may barriers to exporting beef to Japan affect American agriculture?
- c. Consumer advocates are challenging the FDA and the meat industry on the use of carbon monoxide as a “pigment fixative” in case-ready meat. Should food processing techniques be identified on food labels?

2006 B
District Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

Select one of the following topics

- a. What role can research institutions and universities play in enhancing agricultural products?
- b. How can trade barriers affect American agriculture?
- c. McDonalds recently announced that its French fries contain wheat and dairy products. How might concerns over food labeling affect American agriculture?

2006 A

District Creed Speaking Questions

1. In the fourth paragraph, you stated, “playing square with those whose happiness depends on me.” What do you mean by playing square?
2. You began the creed by saying, "I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds..." What is a faith born not of words but of deeds?
3. Scientists are constantly researching new techniques for processing and producing food. How does this research relate to the FFA creed?

2006 B

District Creed Speaking Questions

1. You began the creed by saying, "I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds." What is a faith born not of words but of deeds?
2. Terms like biotechnology, genetic engineering, or global positioning system were not common when the creed was written. Does the underlying meaning of the creed still hold true or does the creed need to be revised to reflect today's hi-tech agriculture?
3. Assume that you are urban student, who has never been on a farm, what meaning would the creed have to you?

2006 b
District Conduct of Meetings CDE
Abilities and Items of Business

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2006 B
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- b. How can trade barriers affect American agriculture?
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2006 B

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3. Assume that you are urban student, who has never been on a farm, what meaning would the creed have to you?

Sample Employment Application Form

PLEASE PRINT ALL
INFORMATION REQUESTED
EXCEPT SIGNATURE

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED FOR ILLEGAL DRUGS

PLEASE COMPLETE PAGES 1-4.

DATE _____

Name _____
Last First Middle Maiden

Present address _____
Number Street City State Zip

How long _____ Social Security No. _____ - _____ - _____

Telephone (____) _____

If under 18, please list age _____

Position applied for (1) _____
and salary desired (2) _____
(Be specific)

Days/hours available to work

No Pref _____ Thur _____
Mon _____ Fri _____
Tue _____ Sat _____
Wed _____ Sun _____

How many hours can you work weekly? _____ Can you work nights? _____

Employment desired ___ FULL-TIME ONLY ___ PART-TIME ONLY ___ FULL- OR PART-TIME

When available for work? _____

TYPE OF SCHOOL	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION (Complete mailing address)	NUMBER OF YEARS COMPLETED	MAJOR & DEGREE
High School				
College				
Bus. or Trade School				
Professional School				

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME? ___ No ___ Yes

If yes, explain number of conviction(s), nature of offense(s) leading to conviction(s), how recently such offense(s) was/were committed, sentence(s) imposed, and type(s) of rehabilitation. _____

PLEASE PRINT ALL
INFORMATION REQUESTED
EXCEPT SIGNATURE

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

DO YOU HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is your means of transportation to work? _____

Driver's license
number _____ State of issue _____ ☐ Operator ☐ Commercial (CDL) ☐ Chauffeur
Expiration date _____

Have you had any accidents during the past three years? How many? _____

Have you had any moving violations during the past three years? How Many? _____

OFFICE ONLY

Typing	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Word	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____ WPM	10-key	Processing	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____ WPM
Personal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> PC	Other	_____		
Computer	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Mac	Skills	_____		

Please list two references other than relatives or previous employers.

Name _____

Name _____

Position _____

Position _____

Company _____

Company _____

Address _____

Address _____

Telephone () _____

Telephone () _____

An application form sometimes makes it difficult for an individual to adequately summarize a complete background. Use the space below to summarize any additional information necessary to describe your full qualifications for the specific position for which you are applying.

PLEASE PRINT ALL
INFORMATION REQUESTED
EXCEPT SIGNATURE

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

MILITARY

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN THE ARMED FORCES? ___ Yes ___ No

ARE YOU NOW A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD? ___ Yes ___ No

Specialty _____ Date Entered _____ Discharge Date _____

Work Experience Please list your work experience for the **past five years** beginning with your most recent job held.
If you were self-employed, give firm name. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name of employer Address City, State, Zip Code Phone number	Name of last supervisor	Employment dates	Pay or salary
		From To	Start Final
	Your last job title		

Reason for leaving (be specific)

List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company.

Name of employer Address City, State, Zip Code Phone number	Name of last supervisor	Employment dates	Pay or salary
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List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company.

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	Your last job title		
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List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company.			

Name of employer Address City, State, Zip Code Phone number	Name of last supervisor	Employment dates	Pay or salary
		From To	Start Final
	Your last job title		
Reason for leaving (be specific)			
List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company.			

May we contact your present employer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Did you complete this application yourself ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, who did? _____



Iowa FFA Association
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146
515-281-4706

Parliamentary Procedure
Judge's Copy of Abilities
& Questions

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through Agricultural Education.

Parliamentary Procedure CDE

State 2006

Abilities and Items of Business

Ability	Item of Business
1. To Request to Withdraw a Motion	1. To purchase a new computer for the chapter
2. To Postpone Definitely	2. To build a chapter greenhouse
3. To Recess	3. Send 5 chapter members to Made for Excellence
4. To Refer to a Committee	4. To start a chapter scholarship for seniors
5. To call for the orders of the day	5. To host an FFA student exchange

Questions:

1. **As presiding officer, what would you do if a member who had voted on the losing side moved to reconsider?**

Call the member out of order. The motion to reconsider may be made only by a member who voted on the prevailing (victorious) side. (p. 65, Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)

2. **What is the advantage of the qualified motion to adjourn over the unqualified motion to adjourn for most business meetings?**

The qualified motion to adjourn is always a privileged motion, whether or not other business is on the floor when it is moved. It is never debatable or amendable. (p. 26, Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)

3. **Which class of parliamentary motion receives the highest rank?**

Privileged motions have the highest rank. (p. 13, Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)

4. **If a motion is laid on the table, how long do members have to wait before the motion can be taken from the table?**

At least one item of other business must be transacted or the urgent matter dealt with before a motion can be taken from the table. (p. 34, Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)

(Additionally, a motion once laid on the table must be taken from the table by the end of the next regular business meeting, at which time it automatically expires.)

5. **Do all organizations use Robert's Rules of Order?**

Not all organizations use Robert's Rules of Order as their standard. Other books used as parliamentary authorities include: Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure and Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure. Some organizations such as the United States Senate and House of Representatives, have written their own unique manual and rules. (p. 2-3, Mastering Parliamentary Procedure)



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Conduct of Meetings
Judge's Copy of Abilities
& Questions

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Conduct of Meetings CDE

State 2006

Abilities and Items of Business

Ability 1: Change the Presiding Officer
Business 1: Organize a chapter tour to the local ethanol plant.

Ability 2: To Amend a Motion
Business 2: Donate money to the National FFA Organization's "Seeds of Hope" program.

Questions:

1. According to the FFA Manual, what is the established order of business that should be followed at all chapter meetings?
(Page 24, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)
Opening Ceremony, Minutes of previous meeting, Officer reports, Special features, Unfinished business, Committee Reports, New Business, Closing Ceremony, Entertainment/recreation/refreshments.
2. What are the six symbols in the FFA Emblem?
(Page 8-9, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)
Cross section of the ear of corn, rising sun, the plow, the eagle, the owl, the words "Agricultural Education" and "FFA"
3. What are the duties of the President?
(Page 17, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)
Preside over meetings according to accepted rules of parliamentary procedure, appoint committees and serve on them as an ex-officio, non-voting member, coordinate the activities of the chapter and evaluate the progress of each division of the POA, represent the chapter in public relations and official functions, establish and maintain a chapter resource file.
4. What are the two things that a well-planned POA will provide?
(Page 19, 05-06 Official FFA Manual)
"A well planned POA will: ensure that chapter activities meet the needs of the members, provide direction from year to year, lead to a workable budget, provide an experience in planning and serve as a reference point throughout the year."
5. What are the essentials of a successful chapter?
(Page 15, 2005-2006 Official FFA Manual)
Integral Relationship, FFA knowledge, Diversity of membership, All members share responsibilities, capable officers, challenging program of activities, workable constitution and bylaws, Proper Equipment and records, well planned, regularly held meetings; adequate financing, and school and community support.



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Conduct of Meetings

Secretary's Abilities

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Conduct of Meetings CDE

State 2006

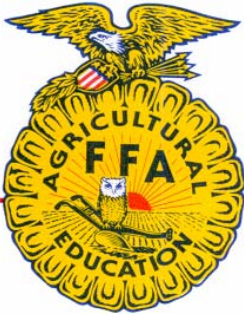
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Freshmen Creed Speaking Judge's Questions

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through Agricultural Education.

Freshmen Creed Speaking CDE Questions

Following the presentation of the creed, the judges are to ask each of the following three questions.

1. **In the final paragraph you said “American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our National life.” What do you mean by that statement?**
2. **What are some of the better things we now enjoy that have come to us from struggles of former years?**
3. **Can a student who has never lived on a farm or been involved with production agriculture take as much from the creed as someone who has been strictly related to production agriculture?**

2006 Iowa FFA Association

District Ag Broadcasting Script

Ethanol could be star player in hydrogen fuel cell technology

We're all aware of how easy it is to pull into a service station and fill the gas tank with an ethanol blend gasoline. But in the not too distant future that ethanol could be a means of adding hydrogen to a storage tank on our car to power the fuel cell that will propel the car, according to Dr. Sandy Thomas, president of H2Gen Innovations, Inc. and a speaker at the North Dakota Corn Growers annual convention in Fargo on Feb. 8.

Thomas, along with many others, predicts it's just a matter of time until the internal combustion engine becomes a thing of the past and fuel cell technology will take its place in powering automobiles and other vehicles.

In powering a car with hydrogen, the hydrogen fuel cell combines oxygen from the air and hydrogen using a chemical process that will generate electricity and water as a byproduct. The electricity is then used to run an electric motor, which powers the car's wheels and provides motion.

Thomas has the vision that in maybe 10 to 15 years the average motorist will pull into a local filling station and fill with hydrogen and drive off for another 300 to 400 miles before needing to refill the hydrogen tank. The hydrogen would come from a hydrogen generator module, which his firm now makes, that would take the hydrogen portion out of such things as natural gas or ethanol and compress the hydrogen and store it at the local filling station, where it would be dispensed to the motorist.

At the present time, Thomas is using natural gas for the hydrogen conversion process, but he claims ethanol is by far the most economical and efficient way of transporting hydrogen from the corn field to the consumers' car.

Weather Update --

Rest Of Today: partly sunny. High in the lower 40s. Southeast wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: partly cloudy. Low in the lower 20s. West wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday: partly sunny. High in the lower 40s. Southwest wind 5 to 15 mph.

Wednesday Night: partly cloudy. Low in the mid 20s. West wind 5 to 15 mph.

Thursday: partly sunny. High in the upper 30s. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Thursday Night And Friday: partly cloudy. Low in the mid 20s. High in the lower 40s.

Friday Night And Saturday: partly cloudy. Colder. Low around 15. High in the lower 30s.

Saturday Night: mostly clear. Low around 10.

Sunday: sunny. High in the upper 20s.

Sunday Night And Monday: mostly clear. Low around 11. High in the lower 30s.

2-21-2006 09:06 U.S. Midwest hogs trading about \$1 higher - trade
09:06 U.S. Midwest hogs trading about \$1 higher - trade

CHICAGO, Feb 21 (Reuters) - Cash hogs were trading \$1 per cwt or more higher on Tuesday amid good packer demand and a slight decline in hog marketings, cash dealers said.

The higher prices are being paid despite poor margins at packing plants. As a result, some dealers said plants may trim slaughter later in the week or on Saturday.

The frigid weather that blanketed much of the Midwest the past few days appears to be subsiding with highs forecast to be in the 40s Fahrenheit on Tuesday and higher later in the week.

The average pork plant margin on Tuesday was projected at a negative \$2.10 per head, versus a negative \$4.55 a week ago, according to livestock marketing advisory service HedgersEdge.com.

Iowa and southern Minnesota hogs were about \$1 higher at \$47.00 per cwt delivered to pork plants.

Illinois hogs were \$1.00 higher with top prices near \$48.00 delivered to plants.

Indiana hogs were \$1 higher at \$44.00 delivered to plants and \$43.00 at country points.

Ohio hog prices were \$1.00 higher at \$47.00 delivered to plants and \$43.00 at country points.

((Reporting by Bob Burgdorfer; editing by Jim Marshall;
Reuters messaging: bob.burgdorfer.reuters.com@reuters.net;
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RET LNFN<END>

[Related Stories]

02/21 3:12p CST U.S. state court says illegal workers can sue for lost wages
U.S. state court says illegal workers can sue for lost wages

By MARK JOHNSON=

Associated Press Writer=

ALBANY, New York (AP) _ Immigrants working illegally in New York state can sue for lost wages if they are hurt on the job, the state's highest court ruled Tuesday.

In two 5-2 decisions, the Court of Appeals said an award of past and future wages to an undocumented worker does not conflict with federal immigration law.

The court ruled that Gorgonio Balbuena, an undocumented alien from Mexico, was due lost wages after a construction site accident in which he suffered multiple skull fractures. His employer had had maintained he should have received hundreds of thousands of dollars (euros) in lost wages because it "condones past transgressions of immigration laws and encourages future violations."

The Court of Appeals said there was nothing in U.S. immigration law that prevented Balbuena from receiving lost wages since there was no proof he used fraudulent documents to get the job. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 "does not make it a crime to work without documentation," Judge Victoria Graffeo said in the decision.

Separately, the Court of Appeals said Polish immigrant Stanislaw Majlinger, who overstayed his 2000 travel visa but remained in this country after it expired, could also seek lost wages after he was injured in January 2001.

New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's office backed Balbuena and Majlinger, saying that barring lost wage claims would make it more financially attractive to hire illegal aliens, undercut federal policy and provide less of an incentive for companies to comply with state labor laws.

"New York has traditionally protected the rights of undocumented workers and this decision is following in that tradition," said Michael Altman, Balbuena's attorney.

On the Net:

Court of Appeals: <http://www.courts.state.ny.us/ctapps/>

CHICAGO (Dow Jones)-- Higher boxed beef quotes combined with oversold conditions on technical charts Tuesday to fuel a Chicago Mercantile Exchange live cattle futures rally.

The USDA reported prices for wholesale beef cuts at midday, with choice grade up \$2.73 per hundredweight at \$152.83 and select up \$1.46 to \$141.97.

February settled 60 points higher at 90.55 cents a pound. April ended up 77 points at 88.47 cents a pound. March feeders finished up 30 points at 107.62 cents.

Also, some floor brokers with large feedlot accounts on their books reported Nebraska cattle owners were passing beef packer bids of \$142 per hundredweight for slaughter-ready animals.

Cattle owners and bullish cattle pit traders say they believe beef packers have low inventories of market ready live cattle and will need to boost kill rates in the coming weeks.

Technically, most-active April futures traded in an inside day, with a group of fund-like accounts buying April and selling June to liquidated profitable long June, versus short April spread positions.

Tuesday marked the first time April has closed higher than its opening price in the last seven sessions.

Alaron and ABN Amro bought April. ADM bought February. One source said Merrill Lynch bought April. Refco's Pro Trading subsidiary bought June as Cadent and Oak Trading sold.

In early action, Rosenthal, JP Morgan, RJ O'Brien, O'Connor and Alaron bought April as Fimat sold. RJ O'Brien bought February.

Most feeder cattle contracts followed live cattle higher. But, the main feature was the movement of March positions into April prior to March attaining spot month status next week.

In spreads involving hundreds of positions, Rosenthal sold March and bought April as RJ O'Brien did the opposite, said floor sources.

Oak Trading sold April and May. Refco also sold May.

	High	Low	Settle	Change
Live Cattle				
FEB	90.600	89.950	90.550	UP 0.600
APR	88.500	87.850	88.475	UP 0.775
Feeder Cattle				
MAR	107.850	107.150	107.625	UP 0.300
APR	108.150	107.400	107.850	UP 0.200

-By Jim Cote, Dow Jones Newswires; 312-715-6284; jim.cote@dowjones.com

(END) Dow Jones Newswires

02-21-06 1512ET

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2-21-2006 15:00 US stocks end lower on chip sell-off, rate worry

15:00 US stocks end lower on chip sell-off, rate worry

(Updates to 4 p.m.)

NEW YORK, Feb 21 (Reuters) - U.S. stocks fell on Tuesday as a sell-off in semiconductor shares weighed on the technology sector and signs of strong economic growth revived concerns that U.S. interest rates may rise further, threatening corporate profit growth.

A jump of more than \$1 a barrel in U.S. crude oil futures prices also pulled stocks lower. Higher energy costs usually bite into corporate earnings and curb consumer spending.

Based on latest available data, the Dow Jones industrial average <.DJI> was down 46.99 points, or 0.42 percent, to end unofficially at 11,068.33. The Standard & Poor's 500 Index <.SPX> was down 4.23 points, or 0.33 percent, at 1,283.01. The Nasdaq Composite Index <.IXIC> was down 19.87 points, or 0.87 percent, at 2,262.49.

((Reporting by Ellis Mnyandu

Editing by Jan Paschal

Reuters Messaging:

rm://ellis.mnyandu.reuters.com@reuters.net

	Ticker ...	Description	Last	Change	High Price	Low Price
1	LCG6	LIVE CATTLE Feb 2006	90.55s	0.60	90.60	89.95
2	LCJ6	LIVE CATTLE Apr 2006	88.48s	0.78	88.50	87.85
3	LCM6	LIVE CATTLE Jun 2006	83.45s	0.43	83.50	82.85
4	LCQ6	LIVE CATTLE Aug 2006	82.98s	0.28	83.10	82.50
5						
6	FCH6	FEEDER CATTLE Mar 2006	107.63s	0.30	107.85	107.15
7	FCJ6	FEEDER CATTLE Apr 2006	107.85s	0.20	108.15	107.40
8	FCK6	FEEDER CATTLE May 2006	108.50s	-0.03	108.80	108.20
9	FCQ6	FEEDER CATTLE Aug 2006	109.50s	0.00	109.60	108.95
10						
11	LHJ6	LEAN HOGS Apr 2006	63.25s	0.08	63.75	62.85
12	LHK6	LEAN HOGS May 2006	68.33s	0.13	68.50	67.75
13	LHM6	LEAN HOGS Jun 2006	70.72s	0.08	71.00	70.10
14	LHN6	LEAN HOGS Jul 2006	68.33s	-0.15	68.80	67.95
15						
16	PBH6	PORK BELLIES - FROZEN Mar 2006	86.35s	3.00	86.35	84.50
17	PBK6	PORK BELLIES - FROZEN May 2006	87.33s	3.00	87.33	85.40
18						
19						
20	INDU	DOW JONES 30 INDUSTRIALS	11069.06	-46.26	11140.77	11050.81
21	COMPX	NASDAQ COMBINED COMP	2262.49	-19.87	2284.82	2256.75
22	INX	S&P 500 INDEX	1283.03	-4.21	1291.92	1281.33

	Ticker Sym...	Description	Last	Change	High Price	Low Price	Contract High
1	CH6	CORN Mar 2006	226' 0s	-0' 4	226' 4	224' 4	276' 0
2	CK6	CORN May 2006	237' 0s	-0' 2	237' 2	235' 0	276' 0
3	CN6	CORN Jul 2006	246' 0s	-0' 2	246' 2	244' 4	279' 0
4	CU6	CORN Sep 2006	252' 0s	-0' 2	252' 4	251' 0	266' 0
5							
6	SH6	SOYBEANS Mar 2006	587' 4s	-13' 6	598' 0	582' 0	760' 0
7	SK6	SOYBEANS May 2006	601' 0s	-13' 4	611' 0	595' 0	741' 0
8	SN6	SOYBEANS Jul 2006	610' 2s	-13' 6	621' 0	604' 4	736' 0
9	SX6	SOYBEANS Nov 2006	620' 4s	-9' 0	628' 0	615' 4	660' 0
10							
11	SMH6	SOYBEAN MEAL Mar 2006	180.20s	-5.10	183.40	178.50	237.0
12	SMK6	SOYBEAN MEAL May 2006	182.20s	-5.00	185.40	180.60	230.5
13							
14	BOH6	SOYBEAN OIL Mar 2006	23.05s	-0.28	23.23	22.85	26.45
15	BOK6	SOYBEAN OIL May 2006	23.49s	-0.22	23.62	23.25	26.35
16							
17	WH6	WHEAT Mar 2006	372' 4s	4' 4	377' 0	368' 0	393' 0
18	WK6	WHEAT May 2006	384' 0s	4' 4	388' 0	379' 0	384' 0
19							
20	OH6	OATS Mar 2006	187' 0s	-5' 0	190' 0	186' 0	206' 0
21	OK6	OATS May 2006	190' 2s	-1' 2	192' 4	189' 4	200' 6

Beginning farmers have several options for success

Hardships for beginning farmers are inevitable but there are strategies for making their dreams a reality. Mike Duffy, an Iowa State University ag economist, said it is difficult to start farming. Some of the factors causing bumps in the road for farmers are rising land prices and more highly concentrated livestock operations, he said.

To own livestock and buy facilities meeting regulations, costs must increase. The start-up costs to compete with large operations are often too high for beginning farmers, Duffy said. However, livestock operations can be good for beginning farmers who choose to invest, he said. Producers can spread out costs and labor input throughout the year, which is easier for beginning farmers, Duffy said.

"If you just have corn and soybeans, inputs are very lumpy in the spring and fall," he said. The outlook for beginning farmers is sometimes hard to follow, he noted. Duffy recently read a career Web site that ranked farming number one on the list of "dead-end jobs." At the same time, he read an article about a young Minnesota farmer who decided he was no longer going to act like "the victim" and he would do what was needed to pursue his dream of farming and not complain.

1. Beginning farmers can tighten their margins by specializing in many acres or numbers of livestock, thus making them competitive with many modern farmers. But, this can be difficult because many farmers have this mentality, he said.
2. Duffy also recommends beginning farmers widen their margins by trying new techniques on fewer acres, such as improved animal genetics or close attention to marketing opportunities.
3. Or, produce value-added commodities.
4. Supplement the operation with off-farm income by making use of other talents.
5. Beginners could keep a full-time job until they build enough income to start farming.

2-21-2006 15:10 US Cash Crudes-Grades stronger on Nigeria worries

15:10 US Cash Crudes-Grades stronger on Nigeria worries

NEW YORK, Feb 21 (Reuters) - Domestic crude differentials rose on Tuesday, with sweets higher on fresh supply disruptions in Nigeria and sour s bouncing from a stretch of heavy losses, dealers said.

"The news from Nigeria has the market higher," said one Texas-based trader.

Light Louisiana Sweet was traded several times at \$1.10 over the benchmark West Texas Intermediate at Cushing <WTC->, up about 40 cents from Friday, players said.

Heavy Louisiana Sweet was talked up 75 cents to \$0.15/\$0.35 over the benchmark, while West Texas Intermediate Midland was talked 30 cents higher at \$0.05/\$0.15 over, dealers said.

Militants in Nigeria forced shut a fifth of the OPEC member's crude supply over the weekend, and vowed that attacks against the oil industry would continue. [nL21753436]. Nigeria supplies light, sweet crudes.

The sour s, meanwhile, mostly firmed, after a stretch of heavy losses caused by an influx of Canadian grades and heavy U.S. refinery maintenance shutdowns.

Main sour grade West Texas Sour rose roughly \$2 to book at least once at -\$8.00 to the benchmark. WTS had been running below \$10 -- a record low, according to Credit Suisse.

Deepwater sour Poseidon was heard traded twice at -\$9.75 to the benchmark, up roughly 75 cents from Friday, dealers said.

Other sour grades were heard generally stronger, though no trades were heard.

The March crude contract on the New York Mercantile Exchange expired at the end of business on Tuesday at \$61.10 a barrel, which will lead to the the usual three-day window of trade in the cash crude market against the expired month.

See [O/N] for the NYMEX report. See [EIA/S] for the Reuters forecast for U.S. oil inventories ahead of this week's EIA report.

((Reporting by Richard Valdmanis; editing by Walter Bagley;
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RET FN<END>

[Related Stories]

2-20-2006 Cash Mkt Prices, Hogs IOWA & S MINNESOTA HOG/IA
 Cash Mkt Prices, Hogs IOWA & S MINNESOTA HOG/IA
 14:35 Iowa/Minnesota daily direct hogs - Afternoon
 IOWA/MINNESOTA DAILY DIRECT AFTERNOON HOG REPORT BASED ON STATE OF ORIGIN
 PLANT DELIVERED PURCHASE DATA FOR Monday, February 20, 2006 (As of 1:30 PM)

CURRENT VOLUME BY PURCHASE TYPE
 LIVE AND CARCASS BASIS

	Estimated Today	Actual Today	Actual Week Ago	Actual Year Ago
Producer Sold:				
Negotiated	9,624	7,614	9,490	9,063
Other Market Formula	4,819	4,180	11,157	10,092
Swine or Pork Market Formula	41,455	25,521	44,856	45,190
Other Purchase Arrangement	56,841	50,619	56,034	12,738
Packer Sold (All Purchase Types):	0	0	0	0

 NEGOTIATED PURCHASE (Including Packer Sold)

Barrows & Gilts (carcass basis): 12,015

Compared to Prior Day's closing weighted average (LM_HG204), .62 higher.

Base Price Range \$51.00 - \$64.26, Weighted Average \$61.74

Base Market Hog 185 lb Carcass Basis
 (0.9-1.1 inch back-fat, 6 square inch loin/2.0 depth)

 IOWA/MINNESOTA DAILY DIRECT NEGOTIATED HOG PURCHASES MATRIX
 185 lb Carcass Basis
 (Defined by Muscle and Fat)

LOIN AREA/DEPTH (INCHES)

BACK-FAT	4.0/1.4	5.0/1.7	6.0/2.0	7.0/2.3	8.0/2.7
0.4	53.50 68.26	55.00 67.26	56.50 67.26	57.50 67.26	57.50 67.26
0.5	51.00 68.26	53.50 68.26	56.50 68.26	57.50 67.26	57.50 67.26
0.6	51.00 68.26	53.50 68.26	55.00 68.26	56.50 68.26	57.50 67.26
0.7	51.00 66.26	51.00 67.01	53.50 68.26	56.50 68.26	57.50 68.26
0.8	49.00 65.76	51.00 66.26	53.50 67.01	55.00 67.01	57.50 68.26
0.9	49.00 63.63	51.00 64.26	51.00 65.76	53.50 66.26	56.50 67.01
1.0	48.00 62.26	49.00 63.63	51.00 63.63	53.50 64.26	55.00 66.26
1.1	47.00 60.26	49.00 61.26	51.00 62.26	51.00 63.63	55.00 64.26
1.2	47.00 58.63	48.00 58.90	49.00 60.26	51.00 61.38	53.50 63.24
1.4	43.50 57.04	47.00 57.66	47.73 58.90	47.73 60.14	47.73 61.38

 CARCASS WEIGHT DIFFERENTIALS

145#	-23.00 -8.16	175#	-2.93 0.00	205#	0.00 0.00
155#	-23.00 -5.00	185#	-1.17 0.00	215#	-3.00 1.17
165#	-8.63 -0.67	195#	-0.59 0.00	225#	-5.26 0.00

 MEASUREMENTS BASED ON SLAUGHTER DATA SUBMITTED

5 Day Rolling Average Market Hog: 202.52 lb carcass, 0.74 inch back-fat,
 6.96 square inch loin/2.32 inch loin depth, FFLI: 51.46%

Price Range \$56.50 - \$68.26

 SWINE OR PORK MARKET FORMULA PURCHASE (Including Packer Sold)

Barrows & Gilts (carcass basis): 23,255

Base Price Range \$52.22 - \$64.14, Weighted Average \$58.11

 NEGOTIATED PURCHASE (Including Packer Sold)

02/18 4:16p CST Northern Iowa Beats Upstart Bison in 2 OT
Northern Iowa Beats Upstart Bison in 2 OT

AP Photo IACN103
s0443-200602181507

By LUKE MEREDITH=

Associated Press Writer=

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa (AP) — Bucknell was an inbounds pass away from sealing one of its biggest wins of the season. Somehow, Donald Brown and the Bison threw it away.

Northern Iowa's Eric Crawford forced double-overtime with a fallaway 8-footer with .8 seconds left, and Eric Coleman followed with six of his team-high 15 points in the second overtime to lift the Panthers to a 65-61 victory over No. 24 Bucknell.

"It was a great game. The kids left it all out there," Bucknell coach Pat Flannery said. "It was the kind of game where you thought you had it, and it got away."

Bucknell, ranked in the Top 25 for the first time, appeared to have game won with 2.8 seconds left in the first OT. Up 56-54 and with possession, Bucknell tried to end the game by throwing an inbounds pass across half court.

But Brown's inbounds pass landed beyond midcourt and bounced out of bounds with no time running off the clock.

Coleman then gave Northern Iowa the lift it needed to pull off the unlikely win. Ben Jacobson added 14 points for the Panthers (22-6), who won for the seventh straight time at home against a Top 25 opponent.

The loss snapped a 12-game winning streak for Bucknell (21-4) — it's longest in 85 years.

"It was just the kind of thing where we didn't read it well," Flannery said of the inbounds play. "That was a miscommunication, and they happen in the game."

Panthers guard Brooks McKowen made a heads-up play by not touching the ball until after it went out of bounds, giving Northern Iowa possession under its own basket.

"There were 8,442 people here tonight, and there might have only been one that would not have grabbed that ball. And that was Brooks McKowen," said Northern Iowa coach Greg McDermott. "Do not overlook how heady and how important that play was. It gave us a chance to win."

Thanks in large part to Coleman, that's what the Panthers did. He hit three baskets to help put Northern Iowa ahead 63-59. Charles Lee brought Bucknell within 63-61 on a layup with 16 seconds left, but John Little iced the game at the free throw line.

Ben Jacobson added 14 points for Northern Iowa and Crawford finished with 12.

"Our defense gave us a chance," McDermott said. "I'm really proud of my team. They didn't quit."

Northern Iowa forced overtime by rallying from a nine-point deficit in the final 5:20 of regulation. Kevin Bettencourt looked like he had put the game away for Bucknell by hitting a 3-pointer that put the Bison up by four with 46 seconds left, but Grant Stout hit a pair off free throws to bring Northern Iowa within two.

Crawford then got a steal, and Coleman followed Jacobson's miss with a putback to tie the game at 51 with 6.7 seconds left.

Crawford was playing in just his third game since missing the previous eight with a broken foot. He the senior said he isn't close to 100 percent, but he has been determined to get back on the floor and close out his career on a high note.

"My injury, at first, I thought it might be season-ending," said Crawford. "Just to be on the court is special for me, and to be put in a situation to get a shot like that and make it is something special."

Northern Iowa held the Bison scoreless for four minutes down the stretch, and John Little capped an 8-0 run with a 3-pointer that brought the Panthers within 48-47 with 1:20 left.

Lee scored 15 points and Bettencourt added 11 for the Bison, which had won 12 straight for the first time since 1921.

CHICAGO (Dow Jones)--Corn futures on the Chicago Board of Trade ended fractionally lower Tuesday, consolidating from Friday's gains with concerns over the impact of the spread of bird flu on global feed demand weighing on prices.

CBOT March corn finished 1/2 cent lower at \$2.26, and May ended 1/4 cent lower at \$2.37 per bushel.

The market was on the defensive throughout the day, as prices scaled back Friday's gains, with the absence of aggressive speculative buying, bird flu worries and spillover weakness from soybeans keeping the edge off prices, analysts said.

The market was caught between soybean weakness and wheat strength, with prices quietly hovering in narrow ranges most of the day. Futures were unable to generate any strong downside momentum, as good underlying export and domestic demand kept prices underpinned.

New-crop-month futures finished near unchanged, with good buying from JP Morgan in the December future helping promote strength in deferred-month contracts. This was a consistent tone through most of the day, with the bulk of the session's volume seen in the spreads. As the session drew to a close, corn managed to climb to the day's highs as commission house buying and late advances in wheat forced locals to cover short positions down the stretch, traders said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said corn inspected for export in the week ended Feb. 16 totaled 44.582 million bushels. The export figure was up 47.1% from last week's 30.298 million. Analysts expected corn inspections in a range of 31 million to 36 million bushels.

Tests confirmed another 22 cases of bird flu on the northern German island of Ruegen, a lab reported Tuesday. Croatia reported a new case of H5N1 in wild fowl Tuesday - the country's second outbreak of the deadly strain of bird flu since October.

Meanwhile, international health experts Tuesday expressed concern over the unprecedented spread of bird flu from Asia to Europe and Africa, but said the spotlight is on Indonesia because it is the country with the most human cases.

In pit trades, JP Morgan bought 1,300 March and 1,000 December, Fimat and Rand Financial each bought 300 May, O'Connor bought 300 March, Rosenthal bought 500 March and USA Trading bought 700 March. Sellers were scattered among various firms, with Rand Financial a seller of 300 May, Tenco selling 500 May and USA Trading selling 300 March.

In spreads, the March/May spread was active again with Fimat spreading 1,500, and ABN Amro, Citigroup and Tenco each spreading 1,000 lots.

Ethanol futures ended higher, with the March future settling 2 cents higher at \$2.49 per gallon.

Oat futures lower, with the rolling and liquidation of March positions a featured attraction. CBOT March oat futures settled 5 cents lower at \$1.87 and May oats ended 1 1/4 cent lower at \$1.90 1/4 per bushel.

-By Andrew Johnson Jr., Dow Jones Newswires, (312) 347-4604;
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(END) Dow Jones Newswires

02-21-06 1533ET

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[Related Stories]

2-21-2006 13:54 CME hogs close mostly higher, bellies up sharply
13:54 CME hogs close mostly higher, bellies up sharply

CHICAGO, Feb 21 (Reuters) - Chicago Mercantile Exchange
lean hogs futures closed higher on Tuesday despite forecasts
that cash prices may slip later in the week, traders said.

Cash hog markets have been strong early this week and that
supported futures much of the day. Gains were trimmed later in
the session by the talk that prices will slip as hogs backed up
from last week's cold come to market.

Pork bellies closed sharply higher to limit up in reaction
to higher cash prices.

CME April hogs <LHJ6> closed up 0.075 cent at 63.250 cents
per lb and June <LHM6> closed up 0.075 at 70.725.

CME February pork bellies <PBG6> were up 2.950 cents at
86.050 cents per lb and March <PBH6> up the 3.00-cent limit at
86.350. At the close about five limit bids remained in the
March and 40 in the May.

Gains in hogs were also trimmed by concerns that the bird
flu overseas will hurt U.S. poultry exports. That may cause
some poultry destined for export to remain in the U.S, which
will compete with other meats and swell domestic supplies.

"It backs up poultry and puts more protein into the U.S.
and I would view it as a negative to the pork," said Don Roose,
president with U.S. Commodities Inc.

Roose noted that pork exports will likely increase as
demand for other meats grows. But that may not be enough to
offset heavy competition from poultry.

"While our exports are strong, our biggest usage is
domestically - if you have a problem domestically you have a
big problem," Roose said.

Packer margins are in the red and that may slow demand for
hogs later unless pork product values continue to rise.

USDA on Monday reported the Pork Composite Cutout Value was
up 79 cents at \$63.66 per cwt, the highest since Jan. 4.

The average pork packer cutout margin for Tuesday was a
negative \$2.10 per cwt, down from a negative \$1.30 on Friday
and a negative \$4.55 a week ago, according to HedgersEdge.com.

In hogs, locals were noted buying April, while Cadent and
Fimat sold it, traders said.

Recent gains in cash pork belly prices and strong
technicals pushed March to a six-week high. March traded over
the 100-day moving average.

The cash belly market has been strong partly due a cutback
in the kill rate. Cash prices started to recover about two
weeks ago and have moved to best levels since mid January, they
said.

Analysts estimates for Tuesday's monthly USDA Cold Storage
report ranged from 59.9 million to 68 million lbs in storage at
the end of January. This compares with 47.9 million in storage
at the end of December and 63.4 million last year.

((Reporting by Jerry Bieszk, editing by Christian Wiessner;
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RET LNFN<END>
[Related Stories]

BOSTON (AP) _ The family of American journalist Jill Carroll issued another public appeal for her release Tuesday, a week before a deadline set by her Iraqi kidnappers for their demands to be met or they will kill her.

``She and thousands of other journalists try to bring truth to the world every day, and it is especially important in Iraq right now,`` Carroll's father, Jim, said in a one-minute audio message released by the media group Reporters Without Borders.

The message, accompanied by an appeal from Jill Carroll's sister, Katie, also asks for the release of two Iraqi journalists who were abducted earlier this month.

Jill Carroll was reporting from Iraq for the Christian Science Monitor when she was kidnapped Jan. 7. A group calling itself the Revenge Brigades has demanded the release of all Iraqi women held in U.S. military and Iraqi jails.

The appeals are the latest asking for Carroll's release. Last week, Iraq's state television started broadcasting ads including footage of her mother and a major Sunni Arab politician describing the 28-year-old freelancer as a friend of Iraq. Reporters Without Borders is also planning a weeklong campaign for the release of Carroll and Rim Zeid and Marwan Khazaal, who work for the Iraqi TV station Al-Sumariya.

Carroll's kidnappers set the Feb. 26 deadline earlier this month, according to the owner of a Kuwaiti TV station that aired the latest videotape of her on Feb. 10. In that tape, she appealed for her supporters to do whatever it takes to win her release ``as quickly as possible.``

Two previous tapes showing Carroll were aired by Al-Jazeera TV on Jan. 17 and 30. The first included a threat to kill Carroll within 72 hours unless all Iraqi women were released from custody.

Carroll grew up in Michigan and worked as a reporting assistant for The Wall Street Journal before moving to Jordan and launching her freelance career in 2002, learning Arabic along the way.

``I'm proud of her and I hope that young journalists around the world are inspired by her passion,`` Carroll's sister said in her audio message.

Thirty-seven journalists and media assistants have been kidnapped in Iraq since fighting began there in March 2003, according to Reporters Without Borders.

On the Net:

Reporters Without Borders: <http://www.rsf.org>

(PROFILE

(COUNTRY:Iraq; ISOCOUNTRY3:IRQ; UNTOP:142; UN2ND:145; APGROUP:MiddleEast; APGROUP:Asia;)

(COUNTRY:Jordan; ISOCOUNTRY3:JOR; UNTOP:142; UN2ND:145; APGROUP:MiddleEast; APGROUP:Asia;)

(COUNTRY:Kuwait; ISOCOUNTRY3:KWT; UNTOP:142; UN2ND:145; APGROUP:MiddleEast; APGROUP:Asia;)

(COUNTRY:United States; ISOCOUNTRY3:USA; UNTOP:021; APGROUP:NorthAmerica;)

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[Related Stories]

Standoff in Iraq

The insurgency in Iraq has no military capability either to drive the United States military from Iraq or to stop the American training of Iraqi police and security forces — or, for that matter, to derail the formation of a new government. The United States air base at Balad is one of the busiest airports in the world. Camp Victory near Baghdad is impenetrable to serious attack. And even forward smaller bases at Kirkuk, Mosul, and Ramadi are entirely secure. Instead, the terrorists count on three alternate strategies: First, through the use of improvised explosive devices (IED), assassinations, and suicide bombings, they hope to make the Iraqi hinterlands and suburbs appear so unstable and violent that the weary American public says “enough of these people” and calls home its troops before the country is stabilized. In such a quest, the terrorists have an invaluable ally in the global media, whose “if it bleeds, it leads” brand of journalism always favors the severed head in the street over the completion of yet another Iraqi school.

Second, the al Qaedaists think they can attack enough Shiites and government forces to prompt a civil war. And indeed, in the world that we see on television, there is no such thing as a secular Iraq, an Iraqi who defines himself as an Iraqi, or a child born to a Shiite and Sunni. No, the country, we are told, is simply three factions that will be torn apart by targeted violence. Sunnis blow up holy places; Shiites retaliate; and both sides can then blame the Americans.

Third, barring options one and two, the enemy wishes to pay off criminals and thugs to create enough daily mayhem, theft, and crime to stop contractors from restoring infrastructure and thus delude the Iraqi public into believing that the peace would return if only the Americans just left. One of the great lapses in world journalism is investigating what happened to the 100,000 criminals let out by Saddam Hussein on the eve of the war. Thus the terrorists have succeeded in making all the daily mayhem of a major city appear to be political violence — even though much of the problem is the theft, rape, and murder committed by criminals who have had a holiday since Saddam freed them.

Volcanoes and Global Cooling

Volcanic eruptions are thought to be responsible for the global cooling that has been observed for a few years after a major eruption. The amount and global extent of the cooling depend on the force of the eruption and, possibly, its latitude. When large masses of gases from the eruption reach the stratosphere, they can produce a large, widespread cooling effect. As a prime example, the effects of Mount Pinatubo, which erupted in June 1991, may have lasted a few years, serving to offset temporarily the predicted greenhouse effect.

As volcanoes erupt, they blast huge clouds into the atmosphere. These clouds are made up of particles and gases, including sulfur dioxide. Millions of tons of sulfur dioxide gas can reach the stratosphere from a major volcano. There, the sulfur dioxide converts to tiny persistent sulfuric acid (sulfate) particles, referred to as aerosols. These sulfate particles reflect energy coming from the sun, thereby preventing the sun's rays from heating the Earth.

Higher costs fueled by gas, fertilizer

Mike Duffy and Darnell Smith, Iowa State University Extension economists, recently released their estimated costs of production for Iowa farmers for this spring and the numbers show increases for corn and soybean production, fueled in part by higher gas and fertilizer costs.

"It's not a scientific survey or a suggestion of what a specific farmer should see but just an estimate," Duffy says of the publication. "It's a tool."

But, he says this year's estimate shows about a 12 percent increase in variable costs and about a 7 percent bump in fixed costs, such as land. And, it continues the trend of gradual cost hikes coming almost every year. For example, over the past seven years the estimated cost of corn on corn has risen from an estimated \$347.36 per acre to \$476.61/acre. Last year's estimate was \$446.39/acre. The figures are available for different crops in different farming systems and by both acre and by bushel. For corn following beans this year's estimate is \$438.95/acre or \$2.83/bu. with a yield of 155 bu./acre. That compares to last year's numbers of \$414.10/acre or \$2.76/bu. at 150 bu./acre.

For soybeans, the estimate this year is for \$323.41/acre or \$7.19/bu. at 45 bu./acre. That compares to last year's estimate of \$300.34/acre or \$6.67/bu. at 45 bu./acre.

Among the changes this year that pushed prices higher were an increase in diesel fuel prices from \$1.65 to \$2.20 per gallon and in nitrogen fertilizer from 30 cents to 35 cents per pound. Drying with LP jumped from \$1.15 to \$1.40. Land costs jumped by \$5/acre.

On the plus side, yield estimates were bumped up by five bu./acre for corn.

Duffy says there were some changes made in the way this year's numbers were calculated. One is that the economists used ISU's new nitrogen recommendations so the amount of N included in the figures changed because the rate was lower. They still used an estimate for nitrogen comprised of half anhydrous and half urea or liquid N but the increased price of anhydrous has changed. A few years ago, the price for anhydrous was perhaps 14 cents vs. 28 cents for urea or liquid. Today, it is closer to 32 cents for anhydrous and 38 cents for liquid N.

TONIGHT...MOSTLY CLEAR IN THE EVENING THEN BECOMING PARTLY CLOUDY.

LOWS AROUND 10 ABOVE NORTHWEST TO THE MID 20S SOUTH.

SATURDAY...PARTLY CLOUDY IN THE MORNING THEN CLEARING. HIGHS IN THE LOWER 20S NORTH TO UPPER 30S SOUTH.

SATURDAY NIGHT...MOSTLY CLEAR IN THE EVENING THEN BECOMING PARTLY CLOUDY. LOWS IN THE SINGLE DIGITS NORTHEAST TO UPPER TEENS SOUTHWEST.

SUNDAY...PARTLY CLOUDY. HIGHS NEAR 30 NORTHEAST TO THE MID 40S SOUTHWEST.

MONDAY...PARTLY CLOUDY. LOWS 15 TO 25. HIGHS AROUND 30 NORTHEAST TO NEAR 50 SOUTHWEST.

TUESDAY...MOSTLY CLEAR...BECOMING MOSTLY CLOUDY LATE NORTH. LOWS IN THE TEENS NORTH TO UPPER 20S SOUTH. HIGHS IN THE MID 30S NORTHEAST TO MID 50S SOUTHWEST.

WEDNESDAY...MOSTLY CLOUDY. CHANCE OF RAIN OR SNOW. LOWS IN THE 20S TO LOWER 30S SOUTH. HIGHS IN THE MID 30S NORTH TO LOWER 50S SOUTH.

Grain Markets

Closing cash grain bids offered to producers as of 2:30 p.m.

Dollars per bushel, delivered to Interior Iowa Country Elevators.

US 2 Yellow Corn generally 4 to 6 cents higher for a state average of 1.91

US 1 Yellow Soybeans generally 5 to 8 cents higher for a state average of 5.32

Iowa Regions	#2 Yellow Corn		#1 Yellow Soybeans	
	Range	Avg	Range	Avg
Northwest	1.87 – 1.94	1.92	5.30 – 5.40	5.34
North Central	1.76 – 1.92	1.88	5.11 – 5.37	5.29
Northeast	1.81 – 2.08	1.90	5.12 – 5.31	5.23
Southwest	1.80 – 1.94	1.86	5.30 – 5.43	5.37
South Central	1.88 – 2.04	1.94	5.27 – 5.47	5.32
Southeast	1.88 – 2.07	1.98	5.26 – 5.46	5.37

Corn Basis to STATE AVERAGE PRICE for the CBOT MAR contract is $-\$.37$

Soybean basis to STATE AVERAGE PRICE for the CBOT MAR contract is $-\$.45$

CME Feeder Cattle Futures Pit-Traded prices as of 02/24/06 04:00 pm (cst)

MTH/ STRIKE	OPEN	--- SESSION ---		LAST	SETT	PT CHGE	EST VOL	SETT	--- PRIOR DAY ---	
		HIGH	LOW						VOL	INT
MAR06	106.950	106.975	105.950	106.250B	106.200	-750	1404	106.950	1734	7739
APR06	107.500	107.700	106.600	106.750B	106.725	-925	1685	107.650	1724	13807
MAY06	108.200	108.300	107.200	107.500B	107.450	-800	961	108.250	1496	7572
AUG06	109.250	109.250	108.200	108.600	108.475	-850	506	109.325	337	4739
SEP06	108.100	108.100	107.250	108.000B	108.000	-300	22	108.300	35	540
OCT06	107.600	107.600	106.750	106.900	106.900	-500	26	107.400	20	485
NOV06	106.950	106.950	106.250	106.650B	106.650	-500	7	107.150	7	199
JAN07	104.750	104.800	104.650A	104.800	104.800	-450	2	105.250	6	
TOTAL			EST. VOL			VOL		OPEN INT.		
TOTAL			4613			5353		35087		

CME Lean Hog Futures Pit-Traded prices as of 02/24/06 04:00 pm (cst)

MTH/ STRIKE	OPEN	--- SESSION ---		LAST	SETT	PT CHGE	EST VOL	SETT	--- PRIOR DAY ---	
		HIGH	LOW						VOL	INT
APR06	61.950	62.000	61.000	61.450	61.425	-525	9736	61.950	8507	84854
MAY06	67.900	67.900	66.950	67.350	67.375	-525	225	67.900	250	4513
JUN06	70.100	70.225	69.350	69.750	69.825	-475	3780	70.300	5102	35680
JLY06	68.450	68.550	67.650A	68.150A	68.175	-300	1388	68.475	2037	11833
AUG06	65.950	66.100B	65.300	66.000	66.000	-100	491	66.100	710	6995
OCT06	56.500	56.900B	56.425	56.600	56.575	-250	140	56.825	155	3121
DEC06	54.250	54.600	54.150	54.200	54.175	-175	94	54.350	132	2174
FEB07	56.700	56.700	56.400	56.675B	56.675	-25	15	56.700	22	277
APR07	----	----	57.750A	57.750A	57.750	-150		57.900	12	
TOTAL			EST. VOL			VOL		OPEN INT.		
TOTAL			15869			16915		149459		

02/21 3:08p CST Study: Helmets reduce head injury risk on ski slopes
Study: Helmets reduce head injury risk on ski slopes
Eds: SUBS lead graf to recast.
AP Photos OLYSJ110, OLYP135
By CARLA K. JOHNSON=
Associated Press Writer=

CHICAGO (AP) _ Helmets greatly reduce the risk of head injuries among skiers and snowboarders, Norwegian researchers found, dispelling fears that protective headgear would only make people more reckless on the slopes.

Researchers hope their study, along with helmet-clad Olympic athletes like Shaun ``The Flying Tomato`` White, will lead to greater use of headgear.

``Do as the Olympians do,`` said study co-author Dr. Roald Bahr of the Norwegian School of Sports Sciences in Oslo. ``Wear a helmet, even if you're not an elite skier or snowboarder _ especially if you're not.``

Some critics argue helmets may lead to accidents by giving daredevil skiers a false sense of security or cause more neck injuries because of the weight of the headgear.

The study found that while risk takers were more likely to wear helmets, helmet wearers overall were 60 percent less likely to suffer head injuries. It also found a lower risk of neck injuries with helmet wear, but that finding was not statistically significant, meaning it could have been due to chance.

The study looked at data on more than 6,000 skiers and snowboarders at eight Norwegian ski resorts during the 2002 winter season. It appears in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

With about 39 fatalities a year, skiing and snowboarding are safer than bicycling or swimming, which have higher death rates, according to the National Ski Areas Association, a trade group.

Helmet use is increasing, the group said, with one-third of skiers and snowboarders surveyed last season wearing helmets, compared with 28 percent the year before.

Over the past five years, almost 40 percent of skiers and snowboarders who died in ski accidents wore helmets, said Jasper Healy, professor emeritus at Rochester Institute of Technology, who does similar research but was not involved in the new study.

``I do wear a helmet,`` Healy said. ``But if you hit a tree, don't think a helmet will make the difference in being alive or being dead. It won't.``

Dr. Pietro Tonino, chief of sports medicine at Loyola University Health System, said the study will lead parents to buy helmets for their children. But he predicted the Olympics will persuade young people to wear them.

``You can still be cool even when you're wearing a helmet,`` Tonino said

On the Net:

JAMA: <http://jama.ama-assn.org>

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[Related Stories]

2-21-2006 15:06 Three charged in conspiracy against US troops

15:06 Three charged in conspiracy against US troops

(adds Gonzales quotes, details 5-8, 10)

By Deborah Charles

WASHINGTON, Feb 21 (Reuters) - A federal grand jury in Ohio indicted three men with plotting to kill people overseas, including U.S. troops in Iraq, and one was charged with threatening President George W. Bush, court documents showed on Tuesday.

The indictment said the three men -- Mohammad Zaki Amawi, 26, Marwan Othman el-Hindi, 42, and Wassim Mazloum, 24 -- were part of a conspiracy that began in November 2004.

"It was part of the conspiracy that one or more conspirators would recruit others to train for violent jihad against the United States and its allies in Iraq, and elsewhere, and would propose potential training sites for use in providing ongoing firearms, hand-to-hand combat, explosives and other paramilitary training to prospective recruits," the indictment said.

The men were arrested over the weekend and indicted in the U.S. District Court in Ohio.

"These defendants have been living in the United States where they have been engaging in weapons training and seeking to provide help in order to kill people abroad, including our troops," U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said.

He told a news conference the men face a possible sentence of life in prison if convicted.

Gonzales would not give any details when asked how far the men had gotten in carrying out possible attacks or whether they had actually obtained any explosive devices.

According to the indictment, Amawi is a citizen of Jordan and the United States, Mazloum is a legal U.S. resident and el-Hindi is a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Jordan. All three had lived in the Toledo, Ohio, area.

'THE TRAINER'

They worked with a U.S. citizen identified in the indictment only as "the Trainer." The indictment said the Trainer, who was not charged in the case, had a U.S. military background and was recruited by el-Hindi in 2002 to help provide security and bodyguard training.

U.S. Attorney Greg White said information about the three men came from the community. He said the Trainer was one source of the information.

As part of the conspiracy, the men researched and solicited potential funding sources for jihad training, the indictment said.

The men were also accused of gathering and viewing training materials, some from Web sites, for use in training sessions.

Amawi was charged with downloading a video, "Martyrdom Operation Vest Preparation," on how to make a suicide bomb vest. He was also charged with two counts of making verbal threats against President George W. Bush.

The indictment said the men used code words to communicate with co-conspirators in the Middle East. It said they tried to find and provide various resources and materials requested by the co-conspirators for use in fighting against the U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and elsewhere.

The resources included money, training, explosives, communications equipment, computers or personnel.

(additional reporting by Michael Conlon in Chicago)

((SECURITY-OHIO; editing by Patricia Zengerle; Reuters Messaging: deborah.charles.reuters.com@reuters.net; 202 898 8396))

CHICAGO (Dow Jones)--Chicago Board of Trade soybean and soy product futures ended lower Tuesday on technical sales as Friday's gains were deemed "overdone," on forecasts for rains in Argentina's soy belt this week and on worries about the spread of deadly bird flu in Europe, brokers said.

CBOT May soybeans ended down 13 1/2 cents at \$6.01 a bushel, above its key 100-day moving average of \$5.98 1/2.

CBOT May soymeal ended down \$5.00 at \$182.20 a ton, and May soyoil closed down 22 points at 23.49 cents a pound.

Rolling of nearby CBOT March soybean and soyoil contracts was noted ahead of the Feb. 28 first notice day for the CBOT March delivery cycle.

There were 1,903 soybean contracts registered with the exchange for delivery purposes as of Friday. There were 5,379 soyoil registrations and 34 soymeal registrations.

CBOT registrations are updated daily at 4 p.m. CST.

In Tuesday's soybean pit trades, commercials were net sellers and commodity funds sold at least 3,500 contracts. Bunge Grain sold 600 July, FC Stone sold 500 May, Calyon Financial sold 1,100 May, Man Financial bought 700 May and Tenco Inc. bought 500 May, brokers said.

In spread trade, Man Financial, R.J. O'Brien, SA Trading and ABN Amro each spread 300 March/May, they said.

In soybean options trade, ADM bought 2,500 May \$5.80 calls, 2,500 May \$5.60 calls and 1,000 May \$6.00 calls, brokers said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported Tuesday weekly U.S. soybean export inspections totaled 27.359 million bushels. The tally was at the low end of traders' estimates and lagged last week's 34.240 million; however, the figure included 16.556 million bushels destined for China.

Midday spot U.S. soybean barge basis bids ticked up 7 cents Tuesday, cash sources said.

CBOT South American soybean futures ended lower Tuesday. The CBOT May futures settled down 14 cents at \$6.16 per bushel.

Weather forecasts in Argentina called for much-needed thunderstorms beginning Wednesday after hot, dry conditions early this week, Meteorlogix weather service said early Tuesday.

In Brazil, forecasts called for scattered showers and little stressful heat, according to Meteorlogix weather service.

Brazilian agriculture market consulting firm AgRural said on Monday that Brazil's 2005-06 soy harvest should total 56.2 million metric tons, 2.3% less than its January estimate and 3.2% less than their first crop estimate in August.

Regional dry weather problems in soy producing states like Parana, Mato Grosso do Sul and Bahia were the principal reason for the reduction, an analyst said.

SOY PRODUCTS

CBOT soymeal futures ended lower Tuesday on speculative sales and concerns about diminished consumption as the deadly bird flu virus spread into Europe. The nearby five contracts ended down \$4.10 to \$5.10 per ton.

In soymeal trades, commodity funds sold at least 2,600 lots while commercials traded both sides lightly, brokers said.

R.J. O'Brien sold 1,000 May and bought 300 March, Iowa Grain sold 600 May and Man Financial sold a net 400 May.

In spread trade, Man Financial and Iowa Grain each spread 300 March/May, brokers said.

CBOT May oil share ended at 39.20%, and the May crush was at 58 1/4 cents.

Soyoil futures closed as speculative sales and losses in neighboring soybeans outweighed commercial buying, brokers said. The nearby five CBOT soyoil contracts closed Tuesday down 0.19 to 0.28 cent per pound.

In Tuesday's soyoil trades, commercials bought at least 2,500 lots while funds sold about 1,800 lots, brokers said.

ADM bought 600 May, JP Morgan bought 400 May, Fimat bought 500 May, O'Connor and Co. sold 500 May, R.J. O'Brien sold 400 May and Term Commodities sold 300 May and 300 July, they noted.

In spread trade, R.J. O'Brien spread 1,000 March/May, Man Financial spread 400 March/May and Citigroup spread 400 May/March, brokers said.