

ASA Looks Out for Best Interest of Soybean Growers

ASA Meets With Ag Lending Groups

American Soybean Association (ASA) Washington, D.C. staff and representatives of other farm and commodity groups met recently with staff from the American Bankers Association, Independent Community Bankers of America and the Farm Credit Council to discuss the current ag credit situation.

While agriculture enjoys its strongest asset position in history, concerns were shared that the costs of production continue to accelerate. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service projects 2008 net cash income to set a new record of \$96.6 billion.

Participants discussed possible legislation that may be considered, including additional funding for USDA's guaranteed loan programs and support for a proposed USDA Commodity Guarantee Program, which would establish a temporary loan guarantee program for qualified financial institutions lending to bona fide grain and cotton hedgers in order to support farmers' ability to forward contract. ASA supports this proposal.

Soybean Growers Represented on Sustainable Ag Committee

American Soybean Association (ASA) Board member Ron Moore was recently named Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee that is spearheading the development of a national standard for sustainable agriculture. The Standards Committee Officers were elected by members of the Standards Committee and appointed by Leonardo Academy, the neutral, third-party American National Standards Institute-accredited organization facilitating the development process for the sustainable agriculture standard.

Moore stressed the importance of a sustainability standard in meeting the challenge to feed as many as 9.5 billion people by 2050.

"The farmers that I represent are the environmental stewards of millions of acres of land, so it is an advantage for all stakeholders to have farmer input and leadership on this committee," Moore said. "All sectors of agriculture must work together on a workable sustainability standard that is socially responsible, environmentally sound and economically viable today – and in the future – for the production of low cost, high quality food, feed, fiber and fuel."

ASA Pushes to Ensure Sound Science for RFS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to issue a Proposed Rule on the new Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). To be eligible for the new RFS, biodiesel is required to meet a 50 percent greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction relative to petroleum diesel.

When calculating the lifecycle GHG emissions, the statute directs EPA to consider direct and indirect emissions (such as indirect land use) of all stages of the fuel and feedstock production. However, EPA has indicated that it intends to go further than the statute and include international indirect land use in the GHG calculation. Using these unsubstantiated factors in a proposed rule could have significant impact on the competitiveness of soy biodiesel.

American Soybean Association (ASA) Washington, D.C. staff met with the White House Office of Management & Budget and EPA staff in an effort to ensure that the Proposed Rule utilizes only sound science and established methodology. There are currently no generally accepted methods for determining indirect land use change.

What do ASA Members Say?

"The most important thing ASA does is advocate for U.S. soybean producers. ASA is our voice in Washington, D.C."

Steve Wellman, Syracuse, Nebraska

"As an ASA member, I can be sure that someone is watching out for my best interests as a soybean grower. And being part of a grassroots organization with thousands of members means we have a strong voice. More members will make our voice have even more impact on more decision makers."

Rob Joslin, Sidney, Ohio

"Some producers think that paying the soybean checkoff is enough. But checkoff funds cannot be used for policy work. ASA is the only organization that speaks just for soybean growers in Washington, D.C."

Jacob Parker, Columbia, North Carolina

Join ASA at www.SoyGrowers.com.