

AMERICAN soybean

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People. Policy. Profitability.

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION



Supporting Ag Trade with MAP and FMD

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Busting Myths and
Correcting the Record

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The American Soybean Association (ASA) represents all U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international policy issues important to the soybean industry. ASA has 26 affiliated state associations representing 30 soybean producing states and more than 300,000 soybean farmers.



CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 10 MAP and FMD Programs** Federal spending programs that support ag trade activity abroad drive profit at home.
- 20 Soy Futures** Three veterans talk about how farm bill programs have helped them start and build their farm operations.
- 22 Farm Bill Myths** Busting myths and correcting the record on the farm bill.

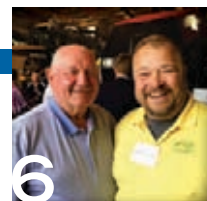


COLUMNS

- 14 IssueU pdate** Republican leaders turn their attention to comprehensive tax reform.
- 25 Sustainability** A cover crop tool that helps direct decision making.
- 26 Soy Forward** Massachusetts Congressman Jim McGovern talks about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 Soy News** A review of soy-related news from across the nation and around the world.
- 6 ASA in Action** Farm bill, trade, tax reform, biotechnology, advocacy and more from ASA.
- 9 Soy Shots** Photos submitted by farmers across America.
- 16 Policy At-a-Glance** Find out what ASA is asking for on the Hill.
- 18 Industry Perspective** The research title in the farm bill provides building blocks for the entire ag industry.
- 24 Soy World** A close-up look at ASA international marketing activities.



SOYnews

FDA Approves Bunge Soybean Oil Heart Health Claim

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a petition from Bunge North America for a qualified health claim linking soybean oil consumption to reduced risk of heart disease. Soybean oil is America's most commonly used ingredient and top dietary source of polyunsaturated fats.

Heart health is the leading health concern among U.S. consumers when grocery shopping, according to industry analyst the Hartman Group. Fifty-five percent seek to reduce saturated fat in their diets, and almost 40 percent want to incorporate healthier polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. Bunge independently filed a petition with the FDA that included a summary of recent major clinical studies showing the potential benefits of soybean oil to heart health based on its demonstrated positive effect on cholesterol levels and its high concentration of polyunsaturated Omega-6 and Omega-3 fatty acids versus other oils and fats. Companies can now communicate that soybean oil may reduce heart disease risk and lower LDL-cholesterol when replacing saturated fat and not increasing calories.

The U.S. is the world's leading soybean producer, accounting for 33 percent of global production. Bunge is a leading soybean oil producer globally and works closely with soybean farmers in the U.S. and other regions to turn their harvests into oils that are foundational in so many foods people eat every day. For more information (including the full text of the claim), visit, www.bungecreativesolutions.com/hearthealth.

Source: Bunge North America



Breakthrough Research Could Save Farmers Millions

Through a collaborative project, Purdue University and Dow AgroSciences researchers have discovered a novel soybean gene that provides resistance to a devastating and costly fungal disease.

The team of Dow AgroSciences and Purdue researchers screened a wide variety of soybean genetic material using a number of approaches. The research team pinpointed a gene called Rps11 that confers strong resistance to multiple types of *Phytophthora sojae*, a soil-borne pathogen that causes U.S. soybean farmers to lose approximately \$250 million per year due to soybean stem and root rot.

With this discovery, molecular markers can be developed to rapidly incorporate the resistance gene through traditional breeding techniques into elite soybean varieties to help protect farmers' soybean yields against stem and root rot. Dow AgroSciences intends to make the technology broadly available to soybean farmers.

Purdue's Jianxin Ma, professor of agronomy, said that as more Rps resistance genes are identified, they might be stacked to enhance the strength and endurance of soybean resistance to the pathogen.

BY THE NUMBERS



Chinese Buyers Sign Contracts for More Than \$5 Billion of U.S. Soy



(From left to right): Wang Yunchao, general manager of COFCO Oils and Fats, shakes hands with Aaron Christie, of CHS Europe SARL, after signing purchase agreements for U.S. soybeans in Des Moines. Photo courtesy of Joseph L. Murphy/Iowa Soybean Association

A trade delegation from China made significant purchasing agreements this summer, signing contracts for 460 million bushels of U.S. soy worth more than \$5 billion at a U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC)-hosted event in Des Moines, Iowa. This amount is over \$1 billion more than contracts signed at similar events last year and is a near-record amount.

The delegation represents Chinese buyers from more than 11 companies, who were hosted by USSEC with support from the United Soybean Board (USB), American Soybean Association (ASA), and Iowa Soybean Association (ISA). The trade delegation was led by Bian Zhenhu, president of the China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Foodstuffs, Native Produce and Animal By-products (CFNA).

With the world's largest swineherd and a growing middle class eating more meat and consuming more protein, China remains U.S. soy's number one customer. The country buys more than 60 percent of all soybeans exported worldwide. China's preference for U.S. soy can be attributed in large part to the U.S. Soy Advantage, including exceptional composition, a consistent supply and a sustainable product.

"We buy U.S. soybeans because they are sustainable and backed by reliable support," said Chinese delegation member Jeffrey Zu, who participated in the signing ceremony.

Source: USSEC

1933

The year Congress authorized the first farm bill, known as the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. (American Soybean Association)

97 percent

The percentage of soybean meal consumed by animal agriculture. (United Soybean Board)

90 percent

The percentage of U.S. farms that are considered small. (U.S. Department of Agriculture)

650,000

The total number of high oleic soybean acres planted by U.S. soybean farmers in 2017. (United Soybean Board)

60 percent

The rough percentage of U.S. soy that is exported to other countries. (U.S. Soybean Export Council)

Find more statistics about soybean production in the online version of the *2017 SoyStats: A Reference Guide To Important Soybean Facts and Figures*. Visit SoyStats.com.

ASA in Action

ASA Directors, Staff Discuss Trade, Tax Reform and More

The American Soybean Association's (ASA) board of directors and other leaders in the soybean industry met in Washington for ASA's annual July meeting and Issues Forum, discussing issues including trade, infrastructure, tax reform and other issues of importance to the industry, like the upcoming farm bill negotiations. The board meeting was sponsored by WinField United.

During the Issues Forum, sponsored by Bunge and Monsanto, attendees heard from Ray Starling, special assistant to President Donald Trump for agriculture, trade and food assistance. He spoke about the plans and mindset for the White House as it moves in the coming months to tackle issues facing the soybean industry and agriculture as a whole. Starling, who sits on the National Economic Council, specifically noted the president's efforts to move the needle on trade agreements with partners in North America and the Asia-Pacific regions.

Representatives from the Washington Council Ernst & Young and K-Coe Isom discussed the likelihood and ramifications of a comprehensive tax reform package and what potential that may hold for soybean farmers, especially on the issues of on-farm accounting and expensing, as well as the biodiesel tax incentive. Soy Transportation Coalition Executive Director Mike Steenhoek also led a panel discussion on rural transportation infrastructure with Farm Credit and the American Association of Port Authorities, focusing primarily on the benefits and liabilities presented by the proposal on infrastructure spending advanced by Trump.

ASA directors met with more than 100 lawmakers from across soybean country, as well as administration officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and the Departments of Commerce and the Treasury. Several board members had the opportunity to attend USDA's National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) Lock Up and hear firsthand the latest estimates on crops, livestock and economic indicators for the ag industry. NASS Crops Branch Chief Lance Honig provided the briefing. Capping a successful day was ASA's annual congressional reception in the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

During the board meeting, ASA's board advocacy teams met to examine issues more in-depth, and one of the most important discussions occurred on the subject of dicamba and reports in Mid-Southern states of potential herbicide damage. Farmers and industry partners engaged in a productive discussion to establish a path forward on addressing what is a serious issue for many growers across soybean country. ▣



South Dakota soy growers visit legislators on Capitol Hill during ASA's annual July board meeting. Soy growers and lawmakers, including U.S. Sens. Mike Rounds, John Thune and Rep. Kristi Noem, discussed important issues such as trade, Farm Bill, tax reform and biodiesel. *Photo courtesy of South Dakota Soybean Association*

Soy Growers Talk Farm Bill, Crop Insurance with U.S. Ag Secretary

Soy growers had the opportunity to discuss important issues with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue over the summer. Both past and present American Soybean Association (ASA) members met with Perdue during his five state "Back to Our Roots" RV tour, which included stops in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana.

During his first stop in Wisconsin, ASA Director Brad Kremer and former ASA board member Kevin Hoyer participated in a round table discussion with the secretary, where they talked trade, the farm bill and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"I talked to him about how important the farm bill is to my generation of farmers and the generation coming up behind me," Kremer said. "We don't need to lose that generation of farmers."

Perdue asked Kremer to follow up with his office so they could discuss more ways to get young people and veterans interested in farming. During their visit,



ASA Director Rob Shaffer (*right*) speaks with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue (*left*) about regulations, crop insurance and the farm bill during Perdue's stop in Illinois. *Photo courtesy of Rob Shaffer*

Kremer also expressed concerns about potential tariffs from China.

During his meeting with Perdue, Hoyer presented soy grower positions on rural development and infrastructure and market access and foreign trade support. ASA Director Rob Shaffer spoke with the Secretary during his stop in Illinois.

"We talked about crop protection, regulations and the red-tape farmers

have to cut through and how USDA can help improve these processes, while still keeping the environment and workers safe," Shaffer said.

Shaffer also expressed to Perdue the importance of the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) funding, the farm bill and crop insurance as a safety net. The soybean farmers said their time with Perdue was productive and overall positive.

"He's a farmer and he understands ag," Shaffer said of Perdue.

Kremer agreed. "We've got a guy who's a real farmer advocating in D.C.," he said.

Several other soy growers had the chance to speak with Perdue during the tour. ASA Treasurer Bill Gordon and Director George Goblisch met Perdue on his stop in Minnesota. ASA Director Kendell Culp saw him in Indiana and ASA Chairman Richard Wilkins spoke with him at the Delaware State Fair. ■



Steve Censky (*standing to the right of the podium*) was sworn in as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture on Oct. 10. Censky departed ASA after 23 years, of which he was CEO for 21 years. ASA President Ron Moore said, "We can't thank Steve enough for the legacy he leaves here at ASA. We are a more effective and representative advocate for soybean farmers because of him." *Photo credit: Patrick Delaney*



Soybean farmer Kevin Scott (*seated center*) testified on the importance of risk management programs within the nation's farm legislation at a hearing before the Senate Agriculture Committee in Washington in July. Scott, who serves on the Board of Directors of ASA and as an at-large member of the ASA Governing Committee, detailed for the Committee the ways programs within the commodities and crop insurance titles of the farm bill work together and may be improved moving forward to help producers in a time of economic uncertainty on the farm. *Photo courtesy of the Senate Ag Committee*



During a listening session at the Farm Progress Show, ASA President Ron Moore (*standing at microphone on left*) tells the House Agriculture Committee that we can't come to the table focused on cuts if the goal is a strong and workable farm bill. *Photo credit: Rob Shaffer*



Select members of the 2017 Class of the ASA DuPont Young Leader program participated in the third phase of training in Washington, D.C. in July. The training included participation in ASA's Board of Directors Meeting and Issues Forum, as well as Hill visits with their state delegations. Young Leaders also met with key DuPont staff. *Photo courtesy of Brett Neibling*



Ag Voices of the Future students learn more about the regulatory process during a presentation by Sheryl Kunickis, director, Office of Pest Management Policy at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The inaugural Ag Voices of the Future program is sponsored by Valent U.S.A. and ASA and provides an opportunity for young people to improve their understanding of major policy issues that impact soybean farmers, the importance of advocacy, and careers that can shape agricultural policy. *Photo credit: Lisa Helfert*



ASA President Ron Moore (*seated on right*), Vice President John Heisdorffer (*standing second from left*) and Chairman Richard Wilkins (*standing on right*) join leaders of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), Illinois Soybean Association and Illinois Corn Growers Association, for an intimate conversation with Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue (*seated on left*) during the Farm Progress Show. *Photo courtesy of Mark Albertson / Illinois Soybean Association*

The 2017 Advocacy Communications Team (ACT) members tour the Bayer Bee Care Center in North Carolina during their training. ACT is a network of soybean farmers with a passion for interacting with consumers and media. Through social media and traditional communications channels, ACT members are helping more Americans discover the good work and promise of modern agriculture. Bayer Crop Science sponsors the program. *Photo credit: Jessica Wharton*



ASA and National Corn Growers Association Leadership At Its Best participants meet at Syngenta's Seedcare Institute in Stanton, Minn. for Part I of the program, sponsored by Syngenta. Leadership At Its Best recognizes up-and-coming soybean farmer-leaders and provides them with extensive training to further develop their leadership skills and provide additional education on communications, strategic planning, forecasting, media training and overall effective leadership practices. *Photo credit: Michelle Hummel*

Soy SHOTS

South Dakota Soybean Association, along with ASA Director Dave Poppens (in yellow shirt), hosts a group of Filipino soybean buyers and livestock producers on South Dakota farms in late August. The group explored farm equipment, learned U.S. farm practices and explored the soybean fields. The Philippines is the second largest customer for U.S. soybean meal.

Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Soybean Association



Submit Your Soy Shots at:

membership@soy.org



Kate Danner, of Roseville, Ill., (right) snaps a photo with her husband Jason (left) during harvest. Jason is usually busy at work laying tile, but got the day off to help Kate with harvest. *Photo courtesy of Kate Danner*



C. Brooks Hurst (left) and his younger brother Dallas (right) prep equipment for harvest 2016 on their farm in Missouri. *Photo courtesy of the Missouri Soybean Association*



Illinois Soybean Association Soy Ambassador Matt Pence harvests soybeans on his farm in Milford, Ill. *Photo courtesy of Matt Pence*

Bret Davis (center) hosts U.S. soybean buyers from China on his farm in Delaware, Ohio in early September. *Photo courtesy of Bret Davis*





MAP AND FMD: Activity Abroad Drives Profit at Home

| By **Patrick Delaney** and **Jessica Wharton**

Agricultural exports remain one of the brightest lights in the U.S. economy, expected to run a \$23 billion surplus in 2017, creating a strong multiplier effect that is especially pronounced in rural communities. In 2014, \$150 billion in total U.S. agricultural exports produced an additional \$190 billion in economic activity for a total of \$340 billion in economic output. Agricultural exports also supported 1.1 million full-time U.S. jobs, including 800,000 off-farm jobs in assembly, processing and distribution.

While trade is a no-brainer for those within agriculture, and soybean farmers across the country understand the role of trade in building demand, the federal programs that support it can be difficult to understand. But in a Washington increasingly focused on deficit reduction, communicating the benefits of federal spending programs that support agricultural trade, specifically the Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development program (FMD) authorized in the Farm Bill, is essential.

What's the difference?

Often used in combination, there is a difference between the MAP and FMD programs. Through MAP, USDA partners with organizations like the American Soybean Association to share the costs of overseas marketing and promotional activities. MAP-funded programs in consumer advertising, public relations, point-of-sale demonstrations, trade fairs and exhibits, market research and technical assistance help to build export markets for U.S. farm products.

Within the FMD program, USDA partners with commodity or trade associations called “cooperators” to promote U.S. commodities overseas, helping to create and expand long-term export markets for U.S. farm products. FMD funds activities like market research and analysis, and market development activities based on that analysis. ASA is the designated cooperator for soy, leveraging MAP and FMD funding through the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) and the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH).

Both MAP and FMD are structured to share cost with the private sector, which adds \$468.7 million annually to the funding provided by the government, and the success of this partnership for soy has been especially clear. Each dollar invested in international marketing returns \$34.80 in export revenue and \$10.10 in farm profits. A 2016 USSEC study showed international marketing activities increased soybean exports each year by an average of 993,600 metric tons (MT); meal by 808,600 MT; and oil by 149,600 MT.

Driving soy success worldwide

USSEC is a prime example of the ways the private sector leverages MAP and FMD funding to expand opportunities for farmers.

In the area of sustainability, USSEC used MAP funding to create the Sustainable U.S. Soy logo and accompanying materials to promote the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) abroad. The SSAP is a benchmarking system that helps industry to ensure U.S. soy is produced following a strong set of



To demonstrate U.S. soybean farmers' sustainability, the U.S. soy family, consisting of the United Soybean Board, the American Soybean Association, the U.S. Soybean Export Council, and the state soybean boards, developed the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP). The protocol is a certified, aggregate approach to the sustainability performance of U.S. soybean production. The data used is regularly compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other sources that collect it from U.S. soybean farmers through existing government programs. Currently, 98 percent of U.S. soybeans are certified sustainable, according to the SSAP.

conservation regulations and best management practices. In the 2016 marketing year, the U.S. exported 6 million metric tons (MMT) of SSAP-verified sustainable soy, with increases projected for 2017.

USSEC is also leveraging MAP dollars to expand soybean oil exports to Colombia. In FY2016, U.S. soybean oil exports to Colombia grew by 115 percent, from 25,400 MT to 54,600 MT, and the nation now represents the third highest importer of U.S. soybean oil in the world, with U.S. imports expected to increase.

Japan has been the longest-running success story for soy and the FMD program. ASA became the first USDA-funded FMD Cooperator in 1956 with the opening of an office in Tokyo. At that time, Japan was importing only small quantities of U.S. soy, but over the years the soy family has worked to expand demand in fields like livestock feed, soybean oil processing, and soyfoods. Today, Japan is our number three market, buying \$1.3 billion in U.S. soy in the most recent marketing year.

In Mexico, USSEC provides technical assistance and education and nutrition seminars, which have helped Mexican buyers to gain an appreciation of the benefits of soy for human consumption. Mexico's retailers now sell millions of liters of soy-fruit beverages, among other products, aiding in the growth of soy exports from virtually zero in the late 1970s to \$2.5 billion in 2016.

In China, USSEC continues to work with MAP and FMD funding to expand demand for U.S. beans, even in a market projected to consume 83 MMT of foreign soy in 2017. USSEC focuses on communicating the superior quality and protein profile of U.S. soy over its foreign competitors. Last year, USSEC organized nearly 50 educational opportunities to provide intensive technical training to over 7,000 participants. One such opportunity brought Chinese soybean buyers to ports, elevators, and third-party inspection companies in the U.S., resulting in 17 contracts accounting for more than 3.5 MMT of U.S. beans, valued at more than \$10 billion.

(continued on page 12)

Success for other commodities

Other crops and commodities have seen success with MAP and FMD too. One cooperator with a unique perspective on the matter is the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC), now led by former Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

“As secretary from 2008 to 2016, I witnessed export growth across much of U.S. agriculture. Dairy alone saw export volume grow from the equivalent of around 4.5 percent of the U.S. milk supply to as high as 15.5 percent,” said Vilsack, now USDEC president and CEO. “Undeniably the MAP and FMD programs have served as an engine for export growth.”

Vilsack also underscored the benefits of MAP and FMD in building capacity, infrastructure and human capital at cooperators like USDEC. “These funds have allowed USDEC to build and expand U.S. dairy’s international presence through a network of representative offices in key export markets,” he said. “Our overseas teams of marketing professionals, business analysts and regulatory specialists have helped us to address potential regulatory issues that could disrupt trade, target research investments to identify market opportunities and foster relationships with overseas buyers and end-users.”

U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) successfully leveraged the programs to respond to emerging issues and expand its footprint overseas.

“Programs like MAP and FMD enabled U.S. Wheat Associates to build a critical reserve of trust and goodwill with our overseas buyers, end users and influential government officials as well as key U.S. government agencies and officials,” said USW President Vince Peterson.

Peterson cited wheat’s success in averting a crisis in the important Japanese market as a prime example of the value of MAP and FMD. “We have had an office in Tokyo for more than 60 years, so when the discovery of rogue genetically modified wheat threatened a potentially devastating market disruption, we were able to work closely with all the stakeholders to quickly find acceptable approaches that kept our historically largest market open,” he said.

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) used MAP and FMD to recover lost market share following an outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the early 2000s.

“Even with the market access gains achieved in the Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement, U.S. beef faced the extremely difficult challenge of overcoming negative publicity and consumer pushback,” said Philip Seng, USMEF CEO. “MAP and FMD funding helped the U.S. industry regain the trust and confidence of Korean consumers, which was absolutely essential if the U.S. industry was going to capitalize on KORUS (U.S.–Korean Free Trade Agreement). Today, millions of South Koreans enjoy U.S. beef without hesitation, and in fact consume more U.S. beef per capita than any other international destination.”

A question of money

But is that helpful funding enough? Many say no. ASA asked in early 2017 for doubled funding in the Farm Bill for MAP to \$400 million annually and for FMD to \$69 million annually. ASA Vice President John Heisdorffer, who farms in Keota, Iowa, and also serves on the USSEC board, recognizes that doubled funding may be a heavy lift, especially considering that agriculture hasn’t seen the full



U.S. Wheat Associates technical consultants demonstrate the performance of U.S. wheat flour compared to noodles produced from standard flours. It is an essential type of activity in a highly competitive market, funded by MAP and FMD. Photo courtesy of U.S. Wheat Associates

amount currently authorized for MAP and FMD made available for use.

“MAP and FMD funding hasn’t increased since 2002, however the size of the foreign agricultural market has more than tripled,” said Heisdorffer. “At the same time, we haven’t actually received the full funding for the programs because of factors like appropriations, sequestration and administrative expenses, and inflation has further reduced the spending power of the funds allocated by almost 30 percent.”

To Heisdorffer’s point, just \$173.5 million of the \$200 million MAP appropriation and \$26.6 million of the FMD appropriation was allocated by Congress in FY2017, while sequestration further reduced funding for MAP by \$13.6 million and FMD by \$2.4 million the year prior.

Further threatening the FMD program is the sunseting of baseline funding for FMD at the end of the farm bill in late 2018, based on a previously unenforced law that automatically sunsets all mandatory programs funded at less than \$50 million annually at the end of their authorization.

Heisdorffer reminded farmers that the success of funding requests for MAP and FMD will depend on the ability of farmers to connect with lawmakers and share success stories like the ones from soy, dairy, beef and wheat. "As farmers, we have to get better about understanding what benefits and what returns these programs have provided to us," he said. "Lawmakers aren't going to double our funding out of thin air; we have to make our case as to why we need them."

Legislatively, the path ahead for increasing funding allocated to the MAP and FMD programs is not straightforward. While the MAP and FMD fight will likely play out in the farm bill, the standalone Cultivating Revitalization by Expanding American Agricultural Trade and Exports (CREAATE) Act would double funding for MAP to \$400 million and for FMD to \$69 million by FY2023. The bill was introduced in May in the House by Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-Wash.) and Chellie Pingree (D-Maine), and in the Senate in September by Sens. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Angus King (I-Maine) and Susan Collins (R-Maine).

"American farmers, ranchers, and fishermen in Maine and across our country rely on programs like MAP and FMD extensively to help them expand their customer base and market their products abroad," said Collins.

"MAP and FMD have a proven track record of helping American farm products reach foreign markets, opening up new opportunities and adding billions of dollars to our nation's agricultural industry," added King.

Closer to soybean country, Donnelly and Ernst recognize the promise and potential in connecting producers with more chances to succeed abroad.

"It is important that we give our farmers the opportunity to compete and trade in a global market. Programs like MAP and FMD have proven to be effective in opening foreign markets for Hoosier- and American-grown goods," said Donnelly.

"As American farmers and ranchers are struggling with historically low commodity prices, maintaining and strengthening U.S. trade relationships around the world is critical to the survival and profitability of the agricultural community," said Ernst. "With over half of the soybeans in Iowa exported, it's important that we ensure these programs have the ability to continue supporting our agricultural economy, as well as across the United States."

Still, despite the legislative efforts on the CREAATE Act, the target on all forms of spending from some in Washington presents a real and tangible threat to trade-focused spending programs like MAP and FMD, and with it, the progress that those programs sustain.

Currently, the soybean industry receives \$10 million to \$12 million annually in combined MAP and FMD funding. Those funds are then matched with \$26.5 million provided by the soybean checkoff. Data from Texas A&M show a loss of \$230

million in soybean exports and \$67 million in farmer profits each year if funding from FMD were eliminated.

"It becomes a matter of losing overseas demand, profits and economic activity at home," said Heisdorffer. "But worse is the long-term loss of the manpower and infrastructure that our industry has established in those markets over the last 60-plus years. These programs help to sustain foreign offices at USSEC and at other export promotion organizations. They know intimately the markets in which they operate, and if we lose that infrastructure, we can't reclaim it overnight."

USMEF's Seng agreed. "Without MAP and FMD funding," he said, "USMEF simply could not maintain a consistent, effective presence in our key international markets, or have the experienced, professional staff we need to gather market intelligence and effectively manage promotional activities."

Mike Miller, a wheat farmer from Ritzville, Wash., and chairman of U.S. Wheat, put a finer point on it. "Severe cuts to MAP and FMD would definitely force U.S. Wheat Associates to close many of its offices and eliminate jobs. Most important, though, cuts would silence the farmer's trusted voice in so many of our markets." ■



Issue Update

Republican Leaders Focus on Tax Reform

| By Tom Hance

Congress and the White House are turning their attention and focus on enactment of comprehensive tax reform in 2017. The House and Senate have now each passed budget resolutions that include reconciliation instructions for tax reform. Reconciliation is a procedural mechanism that is not subject to filibuster if certain prescriptive criteria are met and enables a tax reform measure to pass the Senate with 51 votes instead of a 60 vote filibuster-proof threshold.

The House and Senate still need to reach agreement on a final budget resolution. The House will either pass the Senate version or a Conference Committee will be held to negotiate the differences between the two. If they go through a Conference Committee process to finalize the budget resolution, that will further delay tax reform efforts.

Once a budget resolution has been finalized, the House Ways & Means Committee has indicated it will hold a committee mark-up on tax reform as early as the week of October 23. The Committee will attempt to fend off amendments and keep their underlying bill intact. Their underlying bill has yet to be released in detail. The Senate Finance Committee has indicated it will likely not unveil their proposal or schedule a committee mark-up until the House version has passed the floor or at least out of committee.

The Republican leaders have agreed on a general tax reform framework, but have not yet released detailed legislative language and there are many issues still to be resolved. Republican leaders and rank and file members must still work through some contentious issues including whether tax reform should be deficit neutral, what deductions to allow (business interest, state and local taxes, etc.), can they afford to keep the provisions for full and immediate expensing, how to handle repatriation of foreign revenues, etc.

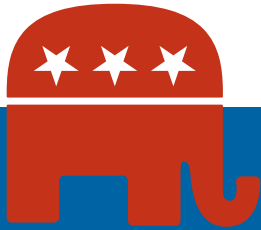
On September 27, Republican leaders unveiled a framework document that represents agreements they have reached on some of the broad issues. The overarching goals cited in the framework are to provide:

- Tax relief for middle-class families. The simplicity of “postcard” tax filing for the vast majority of Americans
- Tax relief for businesses, especially small businesses
- Ending incentives to ship jobs, capital and tax revenue overseas
- Broadening the tax base and providing greater fairness for all Americans by closing loopholes

Some of the contentious issues that remain to be addressed include:

- Whether to make the tax reform provisions deficit-neutral, which is challenging but would reduce opposition to the bill and allow it to be permanent law instead of a temporary law that would sunset in 10 years
- What level of business interest deductions to allow
- Whether immediate expensing options can be included or will that revenue offset be needed to pay for other priority provisions, such as lower rates
- Whether to allow deductions for state and local taxes paid
- How to repatriate or treat foreign revenues currently held overseas

The American Soybean Association (ASA) has been actively engaged along with other agricultural groups to communicate the tax policy priorities for farmers. ASA Washington staff has participated in numerous meetings with the White House, congressional staff, and our industry partners. ASA has indicated support for comprehensive tax reform that reflects the unique nature of farm operations. ▣



Aspects of the Republican Framework for Tax Reform

Individuals

- Committees have flexibility to add above 35% to maintain progressivity
- Increase income limits for child tax credit phase out
- \$500 tax credit for non-child dependents (elderly, older adult)
- Eliminate most itemized deductions
- Repeal death tax

2x DOUBLE the standard deduction

Eliminate marriage tax penalty in child tax credit



3 TAX BRACKETS

12%
25%
35%



INCREASE child tax credit

AMT

REPEAL individual Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT)

Businesses

20%
corporate and
25% pass through rates



- Eliminate corporate AMT
- Unspecified limit on interest deductibility
- Eliminate most other tax credits



Allow businesses to expense for at least 5 years

International Tax Policy

- Establish "territorial" tax system
- Mandatory repatriation of overseas earnings - 1 time tax, 2 rates: (cash, illiquid assets) payable over a number of years



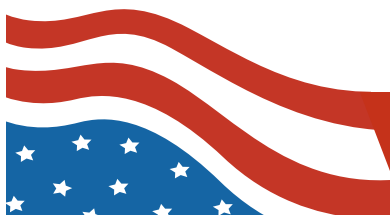
1x TAX

Policy At-a-Glance



ASA Priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill

- ASA is working closely with other farm organizations to support a farm bill that will strengthen the farm safety net in order to offset the significant reductions in crop prices and farm income since 2013.
- ASA opposes reducing premium subsidies or imposing means testing under the crop insurance program.
- ASA supports keeping the farm/rural and nutrition titles of the next farm bill intact.
- ASA supports reauthorizing Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), and giving producers a choice to sign up for either program on a crop-by-crop and farm-by-farm basis.
- ASA supports giving producers a choice between maintaining a farm's current crop acreage bases, reallocating bases to reflect more recent plantings, or updating bases to include all acres planted to program crops.
- ASA supports full funding of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) and other agricultural research programs.
- ASA supports maintaining the current policy of "decoupling" for both the ARC and PLC programs under which payments are based on recent average plantings on base acres rather than on current-year planting.
- ASA supports fixing the cotton program, including a new cottonseed program and decoupling generic (former cotton base) acres.
- ASA supports full funding of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and other programs that encourage conservation practices on working lands.
- ASA supports doubling funding for the Foreign Market Development (FMD) program and Market Access Program (MAP) over the life of the next farm bill.
- ASA supports authorizing and funding the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels, the Biobased Market Program and the Biodiesel Education Program.



Learn about other legislative and regulatory priorities of the American Soybean Association at SoyGrowers.com. Follow ASA's soybean blog called "Pod Policy" at asapodpolicy.wordpress.com.

Fighting a Top Yield Robber:

Top Tips for Controlling Sudden Death Syndrome

KEY TAKEAWAYS



1. SDS accounts for millions of bushels of soybean yield losses in the United States each year, although growers may not even realize this yield-robber has infected their fields.
2. While above-ground foliar symptoms are the most obvious signs of SDS, some of the most serious consequences of the disease occur in the below-ground phase that triggers root rot.
3. ILeVO® seed treatment from Bayer offers innovative, exclusive technology that manages both the above- and below-ground phases of SDS. On average, growers are seeing a 2 to 10 bushel-per-acre yield advantage when adding ILeVO to their current fungicide/insecticide seed treatment.

When Peter Bixel noticed bronzing on some of the leaves in his soybean fields near Kanawha, Iowa, he wasn't exactly sure what was going on. Upon closer inspection, the discoloration turned out to be Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS).

Often appearing as an isolated spot within a field, SDS can expand rapidly to infect other areas. SDS attacks soybean plants in two phases – initially as an infection in the roots below ground, often followed by distinct foliar symptoms above ground. Because the pathogen overwinters in the soil, it can spread with each new growing season.

SDS accounts for millions of bushels of soybean yield losses in the United States each year, even though growers may not even realize this yield robber has infected their field until the end of the season when foliar symptoms may appear. **“There's nothing you can spray to control SDS. By the time you see above-ground symptoms of SDS, it's too late,”** says Bixel, a soybean and corn producer in northern Iowa. “I've seen yield losses of 25 to 40 bushels per acre from SDS.”

Below-ground symptoms: Infection can occur within 72 hours of planting

While above-ground foliar symptoms are the most obvious signs of SDS, some of the most serious consequences of the disease occur below ground through the infection that triggers root rot. SDS can infect plants within 72 hours of planting, notes Daren Mueller, an Iowa State University (ISU) Extension field crop pathologist.

Brown to gray discolored areas develop in the vascular tissue of the lower stem and can typically be seen by cutting into the stem of fresh plants. With SDS, the pith within the stem remains white.

“Just because you can't see it doesn't mean SDS isn't there,” says Matt Keel, a MaxYield Cooperative seed solutions specialist. SDS starts by rotting the plant's root system throughout the growing season, limiting plants' water and nutrient uptake.



Above-ground symptoms: By the time you see it, it's too late

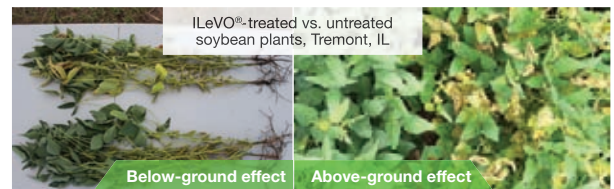
Early symptoms on leaves range from mosaic patterns to a yellowing appearance in the veins. These spots typically expand

between the veins to become brown lesions surrounded by chlorotic areas, and the leaves may be cupped or curled. Leaves detach from the petioles as the disease progresses. This reduces the plant's ability to photosynthesize and provide nutrients to promote pod fill, which results in aborted pods and reduced yields.

While SDS infection of the roots occurs early in the season, above-ground symptoms of SDS usually don't develop until late July or August or may never appear. “In some cases, SDS can rot the roots without showing any of the symptoms on the leaves,” says Mike McCarville, a Bayer SeedGrowth™ tech service representative.

Control above- and below-ground SDS symptoms with ILeVO®

While SDS symptoms may be more or less apparent some years than others, depending on weather conditions during the growing season, once the disease is in a field, it stays there. There is no cure for SDS, which must be monitored and managed consistently.



Combining resistant seed varieties with the right seed treatment is critical to helping seedlings get the best possible start and reducing the risk of SDS infection, especially as growers continue to plant in earlier, wetter conditions.

ILeVO seed treatment from Bayer offers innovative, exclusive technology that manages both the above- and below-ground phases of SDS. ILeVO controls the Fusarium pathogen that causes root rot at the initial infection site before symptoms become visible. This powerful seed treatment also complements current genetics, improving the yield potential of SDS-resistant varieties.

By offering protection from disease pressure throughout the growing season, ILeVO promotes the development of stronger root systems and healthier foliage, which contributes to stronger stands and higher yield potential. On average, growers are seeing a 2 to 10 bushel-per-acre yield advantage when adding ILeVO to their current fungicide/insecticide seed treatment.

Convenience and proven SDS protection that starts early in the growing season are big advantages of ILeVO, adds Bixel, who tried ILeVO in 240 of his soybean acres in 2016. The return on investment has encouraged Bixel to use ILeVO on all of his soybean acres going forward. “ILeVO is a great investment,” he says. “It's exciting that we finally have a proven solution like this to help control SDS.”

To learn more about ILeVO® for management of SDS, visit ILeVO.Bayer.com.

ILeVO  Science For A Better Life

Industry Perspective

Research Title in Farm Bill Provides Building Blocks for Entire Ag Industry

By **Jordan Bright**

Research is vital to providing growers with the tools they need to be successful and keeping the U.S. competitive. The research title of the farm bill authorizes programs that have existed for decades, like the funding that goes to universities and extensions. Tools provided through publicly funded research, extension and education are needed to help achieve safer, more nutritious, convenient, sustainable and affordable foods.

Regional seed companies rely on public sector and land grant agricultural research to ensure they are providing the best performing products for their growers.

Adam Spelhaug, agronomy and product manager at Peterson Farms Seeds, said local and practical research is needed to help farmers learn best practices and to help them do a better job in their business.

"The universities and their extension network conduct good third party research that applies to our customers," he said. "This agronomic research is local and replicates the conditions our farmers deal with. Iron Deficiency Chlorosis is a major problem in soybeans in our area and North Dakota State University does a nice job screening varieties for this problem."

Dr. Kevin Cavanaugh, director of research at Beck's Hybrids, said that one great aspect of public research is

that it is for the "good of the cause" and researchers at the university level and other public institutions are focused on helping everyone improve their products.

"This helps farmers, the industry, consumers and everyone else along the entire food chain," he said. "Many times the research and discoveries that happen in those institutions don't benefit the farmer initially, but that research provides building blocks in which tremendous breakthroughs result."

Beck's Hybrids markets in 11 states and works with university faculty in most of those states. They have a strong relationship to The Ohio State University, working with drainage and phosphorus leaching; Purdue University and University of Illinois with genetic research; the University of Tennessee with practical farm research studies, as well as Iowa State, Michigan State and others.

Cavanaugh said many of today's advanced plant breeding techniques are a result of land grant ag research, including new disease resistance genes such as a new gene for Phytophthora resistance in soybeans just discovered at Purdue University, or dicamba tolerance in soybeans at the University of Nebraska.

"Those discoveries help move the ball down the field to increase yields, have cheaper food, fiber, and fuel for the U.S.," he added.



Dr. Kevin Cavanaugh, director of research at Beck's Hybrids



Adam Spelhaug, agronomy and product manager at Peterson Farms Seeds

Cavanaugh said he thinks it's important to understand that funding the public sector is a very effective way to fund the entire agricultural industry.

"New technology that is discovered here, gets quickly adopted and provides benefit to everyone," he said. "To me, the farm bill is an effort to ensure food security and make sure Americans can enjoy the benefits of abundant food, fiber and fuel. By investing in research, you actually leverage your dollars and provide a multiple fold increase in results for each dollar spent. It's like the old adage, you can give a man a fish and he lives for a day, if you teach a man to fish he can live a lifetime." ■



ILeVO[®]



**Worry about equipment.
Worry about weather.**

**Don't worry about SDS
and nematodes.**

ILeVO[®] seed treatment from Bayer is the first and only seed treatment that offers effective protection against Sudden Death Syndrome and nematodes, including Soybean Cyst Nematode.

That means growers get early-season protection for stronger profit potential at harvest. So protect your soybeans with ILeVO, and you'll have less to worry about.

To learn more, contact your Bayer representative or visit ILeVO.Bayer.com

SoyFutures

From Convoys to Combines: Farm Bill Programs Help Veterans Find a New Way to Serve

By **Jessica Wharton**

Joshua Henderson's e-mail valediction reads 'Semper Fi'. Always faithful; the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps and many farmers' promise to their land, the rural life they've chosen and the families they provide for.

Henderson joined the Marine Corps the day he turned 18 and served a total of four combat rotations. Today, he is a farmer in the Mississippi Delta raising soybeans and wheat.



Jed Welder is a soy, corn, wheat and hay farmer in Michigan who has been farming for the last eight years, but before life on the farm with his wife and children he served as an Army Ranger for 14 years. As a veteran and a small farmer he has benefited from such programs as the Transition Incentive Program and Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

Jed Welder is a soy, corn, wheat and hay farmer in Michigan who has been farming for the last eight years, but before life on the farm with his wife and children he served as an Army Ranger for 14 years.

Two hours south of Welder, Michael Barone grows corn and soybeans, raises several head of beef cattle and operates a u-pick pumpkin operation. He previously served three years in the U.S. Army.

The rural countryside is filled with stories like Henderson's, Welder's and Barone's. While each brings a unique service history and perspective to farming, veterans returning to the farm are increasingly common stories.

In addition to newly-launched university programs and nonprofits which aim to help veterans begin a career in agriculture, the 2014 Farm Bill designated veterans for the first time as an individual class of beginning farmers, defined as someone who has served in the Armed Forces who has not operated a farm or ranch before or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years, a definition which encompasses most returning veterans.

This new classification gives returning servicemen and women access to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program priorities which include access to farmland, conservation stewardship and more.

Access to farmland and equipment

Veteran farmers have the same distinct needs as any other grower: land and capital.

"Obtaining land and capital as a new grower is vital," said Barone. "We used farm bill financing programs to buy 80 acres of land and if we were getting a conventional loan we wouldn't have been able to purchase the land we have and start our operation."

According to USDA, the 2014 Farm Bill made the Farm Service Agency Microloan program permanent and established a new intermediary lending program to allow USDA to work with the non-profit community lenders to provide microloans and financial training to small, beginning and veteran farmers.

Additionally, per USDA, microloans made to beginning and veteran farmers will be exempt from the term limits that otherwise apply on direct operating loans to allow these farmers to continue to take advantage of federal credit resources as they continue to grow their farms.

The first program in the 2014 Farm Bill that Henderson used was the microloan program to obtain a full year operating loan.

"The microloan program is essential and it's something I'd like to see valued and continued in the upcoming farm bill," Henderson noted, adding that the paperwork didn't deter him. "I was in the



Michael Barone grows corn and soybeans, raises several head of beef cattle and operates a u-pick pumpkin operation in Michigan. He previously served three years in the U.S. Army. He was able to use farm bill financial programs to start his operation.

Marine Corps ... if you want to do some paperwork, let's roll up our sleeves and get some paperwork done," he joked.

Also helping veterans access farmland, the Transition Incentive Program was established in 2008 and incentivizes retiring landowners to rent or sell their farmland to beginning, veteran or socially disadvantaged farmers.

Welder said this program allowed him to be more competitive with established and larger farms in his area saying, "I picked up two pieces of land specifically under this program. It's a great thing for small farmers like me who need access to land that we otherwise might not have."

Conservation stewardship

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) are both part of the National Resource Conservation Service and are voluntary conservation programs

that aim to benefit both agriculture producers and the environment.

Welder used the EQIP program to update diesel fueling pads on his operation, saying "I was using decade-old fueling pumps but being a veteran and a new farmer made the cost share while utilizing the EQIP program really worthwhile."

Outreach and training

Veterans bring with them a unique set of abilities that help them develop and lead their farms.

Henderson, Welder and Barone all attested that their time in the military helps serve them on their farms. Henderson likens driving his tractor on the road to convoy missions; Welder appreciates the opportunity to see a project through; and Barone works to understand and master as many diversified skills as possible.

The 2014 Farm Bill hopes to enhance these skills through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program which is dedicated to training the next generation of farmers with a stress on agriculture rehabilitation and vocational training programs.

Additionally, the 2014 Farm Bill created a new position at USDA, the Military Veteran Agricultural Liaison, which assists returning military veterans pursue a career in agriculture.

Looking ahead

Welder noted that he was drawn to farming when he returned from service because it afforded him and his wife the opportunity to watch their children grow and watch something come to fruition.

"Farming provides a wonderful beginning and end each year that you never find as a soldier. As a farmer, it's an incredible blessing to see both my crops and my children grow and I hope to be able to continue to do that," noted Welder.

As Washington readies itself for another farm bill, it's important to remember and keep top of mind the different groups of growers who will utilize it. Established farmers, yes; but new farmers too. And as veterans are trading in their combat boots for work boots, programs designed to ease the hassles and restrictions of starting a new farming operation are essential as these new growers strive to be always faithful to their land and calling. ■

Do you know someone who represents the diverse, changing face of agriculture that should be featured in Soy Futures? If so, send an email to jbright@soy.org.

Busting the Myths: Correcting the Record on the Farm Bill

By Patrick Delaney

“Farmers only farm for the government check.”
FALSE

Every farm bill cycle, agriculture hears the same reliable chorus of falsehoods. Conservative and liberal activist groups raise hundreds of thousands of dollars by trotting out the same arguments year after year. In turn, like-minded lawmakers parrot the messaging of these fringe groups in amendments and counterlegislation. The end result is hours of wasted time on the part of farm groups and our proponents on Capitol Hill in clarifying the abundance of misinformation that exists about the farm bill. To help farmers in correcting the record, American Soybean has compiled the most popular myths about the farm bill below, along with the facts to set the record straight.

MYTH: Under the farm bill, specifically Title I, taxpayer dollars go unchecked.

FACT: The Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs provide when farm revenue or prices fall below specific levels and producers need income support, in contrast to older programs that paid out regardless of need. The level of these payments and the eligibility of individual farmers based on their Adjusted Gross Income are capped. This is designed to reduce the incidence of payments to those farmers who don't need them. These terms are not unique to the 2014 bill, but were carried over from previous farm bills.

MYTH: Food stamps have no place in the farm bill, and we should take them out.

FACT: It is a mistake to assume that two separate farm and nutrition bills can pass in both the House and the Senate, and this tactic is used chiefly by those who would like to see one or both pieces fail. The farm bill has always represented simultaneous support for the producers and the consumers of food in our country, bringing urban, suburban and rural lawmakers together. Furthermore, each of the titles within the bill represents a valuable and critical aspect of the agricultural and food economy in the United States, from energy to nutrition to trade to conservation and so on. It is a mistake to assume that any one of these elements can be eliminated and still easily pass a bill.

MYTH: Farmers are already wealthy, and subsidies go to top producers.

FACT: Farm value is in the form of capital assets like infrastructure, equipment and land, not in cash liquidity. The volatile nature of the farm economy underscores that successful farmers one year can be equally unsuccessful the next, disproportionately more so than members of other industry segments. Even large producers require financing from their lenders in many years. Farm program support is usually based on the acreage and production, so corn and soybeans normally receive more support than smaller crops. However, with the addition of programs that reflect row crops, specialty crops and the wide variety of other commodities produced by American farmers, there is an opportunity for every farmer in the bill, more so than at any point in its history.

MYTH: The farm bill subsidizes a food system focused on the unhealthiest foods.

FACT: Farmers grow what consumers demand. While food fads come and go, the staples of the American diet—meat, milk, eggs, grains, flour, produce and others—remain relatively unchanged and broadly supported in the farm bill. The farm bill makes payments based on a producer's recent historical crop production, not on what is produced in the current year. So these programs respond to market demand, which reflects consumer preferences. As those consumer habits change, so do the demands on farm bill programs, which is one benefit to the five-year cycle of the bill.

“Food stamps have no place in the farm bill.” **FALSE**

“The farm program incentivizes unhealthy food that consumers don’t want.” **FALSE**

MYTH: Title I and crop insurance guarantee farmers make money each year, and support unsustainable practices.

FACT: No programs in the farm bill guarantee a profit. Crop insurance is something that producers have to pay money out of pocket to purchase, and like other insurance programs, it requires a loss before payments can be made. If there are no losses then there are no payments. Crop insurance, as well as programs under Title I, is tied to the federal conservation program. If producers are to participate in these insurance and commodity programs—and 95 percent do—they also have to comply with conservation requirements and responsible farming practices.

MYTH: Farm subsidies interfere too much with the free market.

FACT: Farm bill programs are designed to encourage free market innovation and limit federal interference with market forces. Title I programs like Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) are specifically designed to discourage planting decisions based on government payments, while programs under the Energy title encourage private-sector innovation in areas like biobased products and renewable energy, and programs like the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development program (FMD) in the Trade title have fund-matching requirements for cooperator groups like ASA.

“The farm bill encourages ‘Big Ag’ to continue polluting.” **FALSE**

MYTH: We don’t subsidize or provide offsets for insurance in sectors other than farming, so why do farmers get special treatment?

FACT: Every industry receives federal and state incentives in one form or another. Furthermore, farmers represent the earliest link in the food chain, providing every consumer in America with their most basic elemental need: food. In the interest of everything from economic productivity to national security, the U.S. government has an obligation to ensure that the ability of our country to feed itself is sustained.

MYTH: The farm bill is too expensive and ag should contribute its fair share to deficit reduction.

FACT: Agriculture was the only industry sector to volunteer cuts as part of budget reconciliation in 2014. We came to the table with \$24 billion in voluntary reductions, and since that time, the 2014 Farm Bill has projected to cost more than \$100 billion less than originally projected. We agree that all parties should do their fair share and it’s up to other sectors to contribute as we have.

MYTH: Farm programs should pay out based on what farmers are actually growing this year.

FACT: By paying out on a given year’s planted acreage, there is a significant risk of a prospective payment under the program influencing what farmers decide to plant. This can lead to distortions in the marketplace and can push farmers to plant for the program, not for market demand. The Olympic average used in calculating payments enables growers to gain an accurate picture of their plantings by excluding extraordinarily good and bad years. ■

SoyWORLD

Trailblazers for Trade Develop New Markets

19 Soybean Growers to Lead World Initiative for Soy in Human Health in 2017-18

American Soybean Association (ASA) President Ron Moore confirmed 19 fellow soybean growers from across the nation to lead the ASA's World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) Program Committee in 2017-18. The importance of their work in long-term market development was underscored this past summer, when the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced U.S. farmers are expected to produce a record-high soybean crop this year at 4.38 billion bushels.

"WISHH strives for long-term market development and is always looking over the hill to the next market for U.S. soy," Moore said.

WISHH officers are: Chairman Daryl Cates (IL); Vice Chair Levi Huffman (IN); Treasurer Stan Born (IL); and Secretary George Goblisch (MN).

New WISHH Committee Members include: Matt Gast (ND), representing the North Dakota Soybean Council, and Gerry Hayden (KY) representing ASA. They will serve alongside soybean growers from 11 other states. Other new faces to the WISHH Committee include David Lueck (MO), United Soybean Board Director and Michigan soybean grower David Williams, and U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) Chief Operations



WISHH Committee members for 2017-18 include (Front row, from left to right): Ryan Cahoon; Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare; Dawn Scheier; Secretary George Goblisch; Vice Chairman Levi Huffman; and Chairman Daryl Cates. (Back row, from left to right): David Williams; Marypat Corbett; Matt Gast; Gerry Hayden; David Lueck; Jim Wilson; Treasurer Stan Born; Kurt Maurath; Tim Bardole and Bill Wykes. Not shown: Thomas Kentner, Jeff Lynn, Steve Reinhard and Ed Beaman. *Photo courtesy of WISHH*

Officer Ed Beaman. All of these individuals will serve as ex-officio members of the committee. Returning WISHH Committee members include the officers, as well as Tim Bardole (IA); Ryan Cahoon (NC); Thomas Kentner (IL); Jeff Lynn (IL); Kurt Maurath (KS); Steve Reinhard (OH); Dawn Scheier (SD); Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare (IL); Jim Wilson (MI); and Bill Wykes (IL), representing ASA.

Moore thanked retiring WISHH Committee members Art Wosick (ND) and E.L. Reed (MO) as well as USSEC ex-officio member Marypat Corbett.

"The WISHH Program Committee's leadership is important to U.S. soybean growers, as well as the many companies and customers in developing countries that seek to use U.S. soy in livestock feeds and human foods," Moore said. "Cooperative

efforts between WISHH and these emerging economies increase opportunities for trade."

Cates added that WISHH leverages U.S. soybean farmer checkoff dollars six to one.

"And that's just the beginning," he said. "WISHH further multiplies Qualified State Soybean Board dollars through international private-sector partner investments. The right formula for trade grows markets for U.S. soy farmers, and at the same time, improves lives for people abroad. WISHH works with international companies and organizations that purchase U.S. soy. These buyers invest thousands of their own dollars to research and promote soy-based foods and feeds made with U.S. soy in emerging markets." ■

Sustainability

Cover Crop Tool Directs Decision Making

By Barb Baylor Anderson

The screenshot shows the 'Midwest Cover Crops Council - Cover Crop Decision Tool' interface. It features a navigation bar with tabs for 'Location Information', 'Cash Crop Information', 'Soil Information', and 'Attribute Information'. Below the navigation bar, there are several input fields: 'Location Information' with a dropdown for 'Select a state or province', 'Cash Crop' with a dropdown for 'None or Prevented Planting', 'Plant Date' and 'Harvest Date' text boxes, 'Drainage Information' with a dropdown for 'Select a drainage class' and a 'Flooding' dropdown set to 'No', and three 'Goal' dropdowns labeled 'Goal #1', 'Goal #2', and 'Goal #3', each with 'Select an attribute' as the default selection. A 'NEW UPDATE!' banner at the top left reads 'HOVER OVER COVER CROP. CLICK TO REVIEW THE INFORMATION SHEET.'

Farmers have as many questions as answers when it comes to cover crops. While this relative newcomer to conservation strategy is proving effective, it's not without its challenges.

"The primary questions I have gotten from farmers for the last 10 years are about which cover crops to plant and how to use those crops to solve specific field conservation issues," said Betsy Bower, certified crop adviser (CCA) with Ceres Solutions, Lafayette, Ind.

One of the tools Bower uses with farmers is the Midwest Cover Crops Council's (MCCC) Cover Crop Decision Tool. The web-based tool was developed, in part, through a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) made available through the 2014 Farm Bill Conservation Title. Several similar-type grants are in use nationwide to help farmers find new ways to manage environmental risk.

"The tool came about because we know cover crops can dramatically reduce nutrient losses to surface and ground water, provide nutrients for the next crop and enhance water infiltration, all of which improve resilience to extreme weather,"

said Anna Morrow, MCCC program manager. "Farmers, educators and crop advisers all can use the decision tool to tailor crop selection."

Morrow said knowledge was gathered from cover crop professionals across several states to come up with the practical decision support system. Data contained within the tool was derived from literature, research and on-farm trial information provided by Extension and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel, CCAs, seed suppliers and farmers.

The Cover Crops Decision Tool allows farmers to evaluate their options with county-level information; cover crop species and seeding rates adapted to local conditions, soils and management goals. Farmers begin by entering their state and county, and then customize selections based on cash crops grown, specific soil characteristics and up to three priorities for growing cover crops. For example, reasons might include using the cover crop as a nitrogen source or scavenger, as a soil builder, or erosion or weed fighter. Farmers also can input if they want to graze the cover crop, want quick growth or lasting

residue and more.

"I sit with farmers and help them walk through the various steps. We review all of the options for their fields and the key factors for decision-making," Bower said. "The tool allows us to dive down into the 'weeds' and narrow down to the right options quickly."

Bower encourages farmers to experiment with the tool, alone or with an adviser, to learn how to hone into just a few crop choices. She also advises farmers to input different scenarios by field, including planting and harvest dates and field characteristics, to manage troublesome situations.

"This is not a one-use tool. Farmers can work with it every season to change around what works and what doesn't. Cover crops remain a work in progress, and farmers should consider using this evaluation tool with others, such as the one from NRCS, to make decisions," she said.

For more information or to use the online evaluation tool, visit the website, mccc.msu.edu. ■

SoyForward

Together We Can Invest in Farmers and Feed Americans in Need

By **Congressman Jim McGovern**

This summer in Massachusetts, I led a two-day farm tour throughout my congressional district. Across the state, I heard from farmers who wanted to know my priorities for the upcoming Farm Bill. As America's principle agricultural policy tool, many didn't realize the important role the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) plays, not only in ending hunger, but also in helping farmers bring fresh, healthy food to rural, suburban and urban communities.

Farmers grow the food that hungry people eat. Yet millions of Americans are not able to afford the quality produce that comes from our farms. We have to address the root causes of food insecurity: but meanwhile, working families often go without fresh food or buy cheaper alternatives. This doesn't just hurt the health of our country—it hurts the ability of our farms and farmers to expand their reach and bring new products to new markets.

It's time to expand the conversation about food. Connecting farmers with consumers in cities is a great place to start. Programs like the Healthy Incentives Program—piloted in Massachusetts—allow those who are using SNAP to get extra money to buy targeted fruits and vegetables at farmer's markets. This not only helps end hunger, it helps farmers by expanding demand for their products. It also helps to lower healthcare costs nationwide by bringing healthy food to those who wouldn't otherwise buy it.

But hunger isn't just an urban problem—millions of Americans living in rural areas go to bed hungry, and it's important to note that SNAP helps all who can't afford to put food on their table, many of them right next door to abundant farms. It's important that we all work together to end hunger and raise awareness about the seriousness of food insecurity in America.

Any cuts to SNAP would not only hurt the hungry families it helps and the farmers who could help to feed them, it would also put the 2018 Farm Bill in jeopardy. We must all work together to protect this program and find new ways to connect this vital anti-hunger program with our local farmers and the wonderful produce they have to offer all of our communities.

Finally, in an era when too few are listening to each other in our political system, it's important that we work to understand how our rural and urban areas depend upon one another for success. Farms produce the food and fuel that power our bodies, homes and factories, and cities spur the innovation and research vital to our competitiveness. I think the nutrition programs like those in the farm bill are actually the perfect place to start the conversation and give us the opportunity to set aside differences and all work together to get ahead. This will be my focus for the farm bill and I hope you will join me by making your voices heard. Together we can strengthen these programs and continue to make the strong investments in farms that our country needs. ▣



Jim McGovern

Jim McGovern represents the 2nd Congressional District of Massachusetts in the U.S. House of Representatives.



Small bean. Big impact.

Behind the skyscrapers, the lake, the parks, there's a Chicago built on a humble commodity: the soybean. It moves through the city on thousands of trains. It's used by Chicago manufacturers in more products than most can imagine. And its many forms of food, feed and fuel can improve the neighborhoods that make the Chicago area what it is.

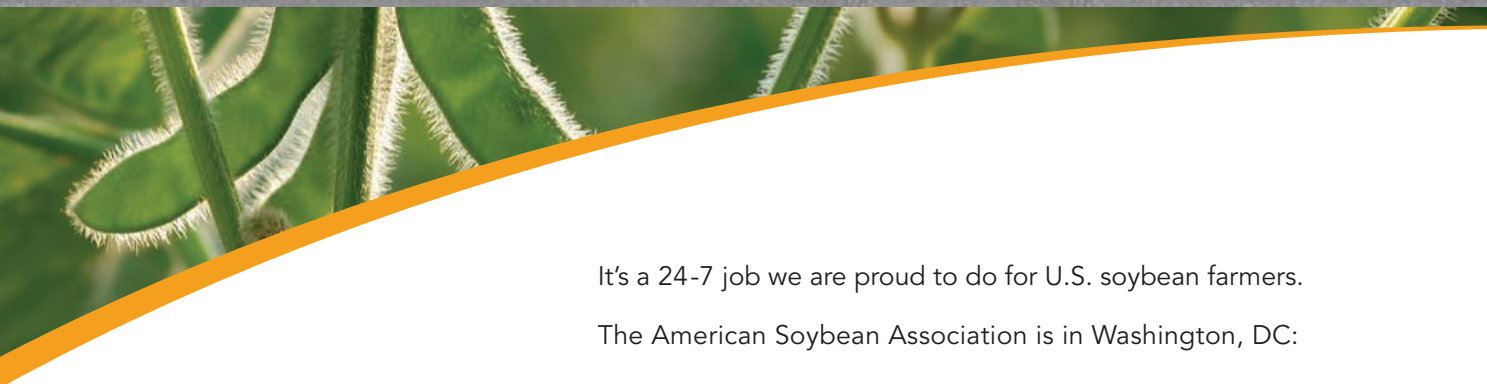
Through Soy in the City, we're highlighting a side of Chicago people don't know. We're making connections and sharing the story of soybeans and Illinois soybean farmers who are responsibly growing a small bean with a big impact.

To follow along with #SoyintheCity,
check out @ilsoybean on Instagram.





Policy makers take notice of ASA.



It's a 24-7 job we are proud to do for U.S. soybean farmers.

The American Soybean Association is in Washington, DC:

- Protecting soybean interests in the farm bill
- Fighting against burdensome EPA regulations
- Growing soybean trade opportunities

That's why ASA matters.

