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People. Policy. Profitability.

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Our Top Customers: How Soybeans and Animal Agriculture are Linked

SOY HORIZONS
Oklahoma's Pam Snelson
Juggles Many Roles

SOY CHAMPION
U.S. Representative
Mike Pompeo
from Kansas

SUSTAINABILITY
Ohio Brothers Banding
to Protect Water in the Basin

ASA STRATEGIC DIRECTION
New ASA Strategic Plan Enhances
Policy and Trade Advocacy


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The American Soybean Association (ASA) represents all U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international issues of importance to the soybean industry. ASA's advocacy, education and leadership development efforts are made possible through voluntary membership in ASA by farmers in states where soybeans are grown.



If you believe, belong.

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OUR TOP CUSTOMERS:

How Soybeans and Animal Agriculture Are Linked

16

CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 6 Soy Horizons** Oklahoma's Pam Snelson juggles responsibilities on the family farm while promoting U.S. agriculture.
- 9 ASA's New Strategic Plan** Changes enhance focus on policy and trade advocacy.
- 12 Soy Champion** ASA recognizes U.S. Rep. Mike Pompeo (KS) for his leadership on a bill to establish a voluntary national framework for labeling GMOs in the consumer marketplace.
- 14 Commodity Classic** Photos from the annual convention and trade show in New Orleans, La.
- 16 Our Top Customers: How Soybeans and Animal Agriculture are Linked** A look at the many ways soybeans and animal agriculture impact each other.



COLUMNS

- 15 Issue Update** The status of swine PEDv, biosecurity and what it all means for soybeans.
- 25 Sustainability** Ohio's Stickel brothers take measures to protect water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin.
- 26 Soy Forward** Delaware Governor Jack Markell looks at the close bond between the state's poultry and soybean industries, and how that relationship boosts the Delaware economy.



DEPARTMENTS

- 4 Soy News** A review of soy-related news from across the nation and around the world.
- 10 ASA in Action** ASA board discusses GMO labeling, trade, and more at meeting in Washington, D.C.
- 21 Industry Perspective** Leaders in the meat industry talk about the mutual benefits of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.
- 22 Soy Checkoff** News update on projects funded through the United Soybean Board.
- 24 Soy World** A close-up look at ASA international marketing activities.



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SOY news

High Oleic Soy Passes Hungry College Student Taste Test

For Alpha Zeta (AZ), Penn State's honorary ag fraternity, lunch isn't just a time to fuel up for the next class—it's a chance to show support for the future of agriculture. The Alpha Zeta kitchen serves up college favorites such as French fries, chicken fingers and other fried foods—with a twist. The food is cooked in the oil from high oleic soybeans, varieties that are currently grown in nine states.

The soybean industry has set a goal of 18 million planted acres of high oleic soybeans by 2023 in order to assure food companies of a consistent supply of high oleic soybean oil. One of Alpha Zeta's members is Dylan Beam, whose father, Bill, grows high oleic soybeans in Elverson, Pa. Beam said he's satisfied with their performance. "Last year, we planted a 20 acre field in high oleic soybeans to test the water and make sure that they would perform, and every aspect lived up to what was expected. This year, we are growing 300 acres of them, and next year it might be even more."

Michael Rush, a member of the AZ food prep team feels high oleic soybean oil has been a positive change for the house's kitchen. "I think that the quality of the food has improved. It is less greasy and in general just tastes better. The high oleic oil is lighter and doesn't cling to the food like our old oil did."

Source: *United Soybean Board*



CONSUMING SOY Early in Life Protects Against Breast Cancer

The American Cancer Society estimates that 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed this year—but consuming soy during childhood and adolescence is one way to reduce the risk.

A recent commentary published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* concluded there's growing evidence that links childhood and adolescent lifestyle and environmental exposures with subsequent risk of cancers arising in adulthood. Population studies conducted over the past 15 years support the claim. The studies, which were conducted in both Shanghai and the United States, show that adult women of Asian ethnicity who reported consuming about one serving of soy foods daily during their teenage years were anywhere from 28 percent to 60 percent less likely to have breast cancer in comparison to those women who consumed little soy when young.

At the most recent meeting of the Soy Nutrition Institute in September, Dr. Coral Lamartiniere discussed evidence in support of the early soy intake hypothesis. Lamartiniere's group recently conducted a study, which found that in young girls, blood levels of proteins associated with protection against cancer were increased in those excreting large amounts of genistein, indicating they were consuming soy foods.

Source: *U.S. Soybean Export Council*

BY THE NUMBERS



ANNUAL U.S. SOYBEAN MEAL USE

12,900,000 METRIC TONS
(THE MEAL FROM 601 MILLION BUSHELS)

6,900,000 MT
(317 M BUSHELS)

3,300,000 MT
(152 M BUSHELS)

2,300,000 MT
(106 M BUSHELS)

Source: USB Marketview Database, 2010

9,770

The total number of attendees at Commodity Classic 2016 in New Orleans. (ASA)

253,300

The square footage of booth space on the trade show floor at Commodity Classic 2016. (ASA)

42

percent

The percentage of agricultural exports that countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) currently account for. (USDA)

2.07

million

The number of farms in the United States as of 2015. (USDA)

912

million

The number acres of farmland in the U.S. as of 2015. (USDA)

11 ounces

The amount of protein in one serving of soy nuts. (USB)

Credit: United Soybean Board



Juggling Roles, Doing More with Less

Photo courtesy of Pam Snelson

By Candace Krebs

Pam Snelson brings several unique perspectives to her role as an American Soybean Association (ASA) director, not the least of which is that she's the sole woman on the 46-member board.

She's familiar with both livestock and crops, since she and her family run a diversified farm engaged in both. She also comes from a nonfarm background, which gives her a personal appreciation of how little consumers know about the agriculture industry they rely on for food, fiber and fuel.

In 1984, Snelson was the rare woman working in the international accounting department at Phillips Petroleum and traveling the world, when she met and married Steve Snelson, a farmer near her hometown of Bartlesville, Okla.

"Coming from an urban background, I had a rather limited idea of what farming actually entailed," she said. "Over time I came to realize how precise farming applications had to be and how technology and agriculture are so inter-related. Our industry

“The grain and livestock industries are totally interdependent on each other. Both have common goals of providing safe, affordable food...” – Pam Snelson

has come a long way in dispelling the ‘uneducated farmer in overalls’ misconception that was the norm in prior years. Many consumers are now aware that farming takes education and a high skill level, but we need to continuously reinforce that message.”

Snelson Farms consists of Pam, Steve and their two sons, Steven and Kevin, as well as Steve’s father, his uncle and several seasonal employees. Soybeans are the primary cash crop. The beans are grown in a dryland rotation with wheat and sometimes sorghum on several thousand acres. They also run 120 predominately Angus cows, overwintering them on their own hay supplemented with a feed mix that includes soybean meal and dried distillers grains.

“Our growth has been slow, but steady, to accommodate the need we anticipated as our two sons returned from Oklahoma State University with their degrees in hand, ready to join the farm full-time,” she said. “Much has been done along the way to update our farm with the newest available technology to become more productive and cost-efficient.”

The type of agriculture most prominent in the area is stocker cattle operations.

“We may go that way. It’s labor intensive, but with our sons both back, we might have enough help to do it now,” Snelson said. “Still, I don’t see soybeans changing from being our major crop. They’ve been really good to us over the years.”



Pam attends the ASA Voting Delegates session while at Commodity Classic in New Orleans in March. Snelson said as a member of the ASA Board of Directors she wants to help bring about positive change for agriculture through favorable legislation. *Photo courtesy of Pam Snelson*

Launched into leadership

Looking back, Snelson considers her participation in the two-year Oklahoma Ag Leadership Program, which she completed in 1998, as the springboard that inspired her to learn more about all aspects of agriculture. Since then, she has taken on a wide variety of training opportunities and organizational leadership roles. She has participated in several soybean leadership development programs over the years, including the ASA DuPont Young Leader program in 1999 and the ASA Syngenta Leadership At Its Best program in 2001. She’s been even more active in the cattle industry. She is a graduate of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Masters of Beef Advocacy

program and serves as president of her local county cattlemen, which includes filling a seat on the board of the state cattlemen’s organization.

“Locally, we meet nine times a year and do a number of outreach projects to educate the public on beef at events like the county fair,” she said.

As a wife and mother, Snelson naturally gravitated to a role promoting the health, nutrition and safety of U.S. produced food products, she said.

She’s addressed countless individuals and groups of hundreds on the importance of beef as a high quality protein, also managing to sneak in the occasional plug for miso or tofu, healthy food products made from soy.

“I want to talk to the public about the health benefits of putting more soy in their diet, similar to what I’ve done to promote beef on the cattle side of it,” Snelson said.

Being in an area that produces both grain and meat has made her especially aware of how interconnected the two industries are.

“The grain and livestock industries are totally interdependent on each other,” she said. “Both have common goals of providing safe, affordable food and need to stand as one voice and support each other.”

As a new member of the ASA board, Snelson is looking forward to attending the U.S. Soy Global Trade Exchange in Indianapolis this summer. She admits she is curious to see how many women will attend.

(continued on page 8)

(continued from page 7)

"Somewhere around 30 percent of farmers here in America are women, so women are very involved in our domestic farm industry. I'm curious to see if that holds true from an international perspective," she said.

With her college degree in business administration and background in accounting, Snelson is also very interested in market development and the economic benefits of expanding international trade.

"I do think finding new markets is going to be our best bet," she said.

She and Steve have personal experience in that area. They've experimented with producing food grade soybeans for a Japanese company, and although flooding on the Mississippi River created a headache for delivery problems that year, it's something she says they might explore again.

Doing more with less

Another goal Snelson has as a member of the ASA board is to collect ideas on how to build membership and participation in her home state.

"In northeastern Oklahoma, some of our acres have moved to corn, but we are also dealing with urban sprawl, to the point that there really aren't that many growers left around here," she said. "Because we're such a small soybean state, we don't have many people who can work phone banks or educational booths or that kind of stuff."

Doing more with less is a consistent theme, not only for the Oklahoma Soybean Association (OSA), but for all of agriculture, she added.

"As a farmer, you need to get more out of your land. It's especially hard



Pam Snelson came from an urban background, but now farms with her family and has taken on the role of promoting agriculture and the health, nutrition, and safety of U.S. produced food products. Pam Snelson's family, pictured left to right: son Steven, Pam, husband Steve and son Kevin. Photo courtesy of Pam Snelson

for the smaller farms to stay viable," Snelson said. "That's why as an industry we came up with genetically modified crops: to be more productive on fewer acres."

Labor is another thing in short supply in rural areas. Snelson said she and her husband are blessed that their two sons have chosen to come back to the farm. Steven has a degree in soil science, and his wife Paula, who has an ag economics degree, works at Phillips Petroleum. Kevin has a master's degree in philosophy.

The two boys have very different personalities, but each brings something important to the operation, Snelson said. Steven focuses his energies on plant selection, soil nutrition and other aspects of agronomy in addition to maintaining equipment, especially the newer models outfitted with GPS devices and auto guidance. Kevin works primarily with the cattle but also devotes some of his time to exploring

new alternative crops that might fit the farm's rotational system.

The continuing challenges facing agriculture, many of which are poorly understood by the general public, are the main reason Snelson and her husband chose to be active in agricultural associations like ASA. Their top priorities right now are defending the federal crop insurance program and the current farm bill from additional spending cuts and achieving compromise legislation to prevent an inconsistent patchwork of GMO (genetically modified organisms) labeling laws from being imposed across the country.

"Our legislators need to hear from us both at the state and national levels," she said. "We joined OSA and ASA to try and be part of the unified voice that speaks out on behalf of our industry. I accepted the challenge of joining the ASA board to actively participate in bringing about positive change for the future through favorable legislation." ■

ASA Strategic Direction

New ASA Strategic Plan Enhances Policy and Trade Advocacy

The American Soybean Association (ASA) has a new strategic plan to guide the Association from 2016 through 2020. The plan provides strategic and structural changes that place enhanced emphasis on ASA's advocacy work and efforts on policy and trade to benefit U.S. soybean farmers.

ASA's strategic plan includes highly focused mission and vision statements, and forward-thinking structural changes that support goals in the areas of policy advocacy, governance and financial stewardship.

"As an association, the future is strong for ASA. We have committed ourselves to a new strategic plan to take us through 2020," said ASA President Richard Wilkins, a

soybean farmer from Greenwood, Del. "Through a series of significant changes, the new structure will enable ASA to focus more of our time and energy on the policy issues that drive profitability for soybean farmers all across the country. The plan also enables states to set, meet and drive their own membership goals in the innovative ways that best fit their needs. All of this will foster better cooperation between the proud organizations at the state and national levels, and at the end of the day, will mean a stronger and healthier industry."

The ASA Board of Directors approved the new strategic plan at its annual winter meeting in St. Louis, Mo. The plan is the product of nearly two

years of discussions by an ASA task force comprised of farmer leaders and state and national soybean staff, led by former ASA president Steve Wellman, a farmer from Syracuse, Neb.

ASA Chairman Wade Cowan, a farmer from Brownfield, Texas said, "We are a proud organization with a long history of driving profitability for our farmer members, and this plan will help ensure that we progress in that role over the next five years. In 2020, ASA will celebrate 100 years of championing the issues of soybean farmers, and there is no better way to honor that legacy than by making the strategic changes necessary to ensure our organization is strong and agile for years to come." ■

ASA Mission

To advocate for U.S. soy farmers on policy and trade.

ASA Vision

To be a nimble, responsive, and highly effective agriculture policy organization.

Policy Advocacy A major focus is on increasing ASA's policy effectiveness through enhanced policy leadership and communications. ASA strategies focus on key legislative and regulatory issues, increasing financial and staff resources to support policy work, expanding advocacy responsibilities for the ASA Board, enhancing policy communications, and growing the SoyPAC.

Another goal in the area of advocacy is to enhance ASA's leadership and influence on international trade, and increase the knowledge of soybean farmers on trade issues and opportunities. ASA's strategies for this goal target efforts involving market development, trade agreements, market access, strategic partnerships, leveraging resources, and biotech acceptance.

Governance A goal for this area is to enhance board policy focus, agility, efficiency and diversity. To accomplish this, ASA's strategies realign the focus of the full Board of Directors on specific advocacy efforts, provide for a nine-member Governing Committee, streamline board meetings,

refine the voting delegate structure, and elevate the role of diversity on the ASA board.

Also in the area of governance, a major goal is to define and strengthen the partnership between ASA and the state affiliates. ASA strategies for this goal focus heavily on providing flexibility to state soybean affiliates through a change in ASA's revenue structure. ASA membership becomes complementary with any state membership and a new investment structure for affiliates determines board representation.

Financial Stewardship In this area, the goal is to enhance ASA's financial security to help move the Association to the next level of strength as a major policy organization. To support this goal, a new structure of affiliate investment levels provides more opportunities for state soybean associations to support the enhanced national focus on policy and trade efforts that benefit soybean farmers. Also, priority is placed on opportunities for refocusing and realigning some programs and dollars to enhance support for policy and trade initiatives.

ASA in Action

Soy Growers Talk Biotech, TPP at Spring Board Meeting in Washington

The American Soybean Association (ASA) Board of Directors met in Washington, D.C. in March to discuss issues impacting the soybean industry during its annual spring meeting. Atop the list of discussion items for the spring meeting and the accompanying congressional visits by each of the 26 ASA state and regional affiliates, was legislation from Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts, which would establish a national framework for the labeling of foods containing biotechnology.



Kentucky growers meet with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) (*center*) during March Hill visits. Farmer-leaders spoke with Sen. Paul about the importance of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and GMO labeling. *Photo credit: Rae Wagoner*

Also on the agenda were the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), relations with Cuba, biodiesel, transportation and infrastructure, appropriations and aquaculture, among many others. The meeting represented the first under ASA's new Advocacy Team-based structure. The new format, created and implemented as a part of the association's new strategic plan, enables ASA to be more tactical and focused in its approach to issues by replacing the old system of large, general committees focused on trade issues, public affairs and membership, with smaller and more tailored advocacy teams dedicated to farm programs, biodiesel, transportation and the other issues on which ASA works. ■

ASAAP Meeting Focuses on New Breeding Technologies and Data Co-Ops

Members of the ASA Action Partnership (ASAAP) met in Washington, D.C. in March for discussion focused on preserving and protecting the interests of the soybean industry. Additionally, members participated in presentations on new breeding technologies and the future of ag data.

ASAAP is a collaborative effort of all soybean industry sectors with a stake in the growth and profitability of the industry. The forum provides the opportunity for ASA's state affiliates, state and national checkoff organizations, industry partners and national grower leaders to engage in critical industry-focused dialogue. The D.C. meeting is one of two annual meetings of the group. The next annual meeting will be held Aug. 23-25, 2016. ■

(*below*) ASAAP members hear from the Regulatory Outlook for Biotech and New Breeding Techniques panel, which includes Michael Gregoire, associate administrator, APHIS; Clint Nesbitt, director of regulatory affairs, food and agriculture, BIO; and Robert Guenther, senior vice president, public policy, United Fresh. *Photo Credit: Chris Luelf*



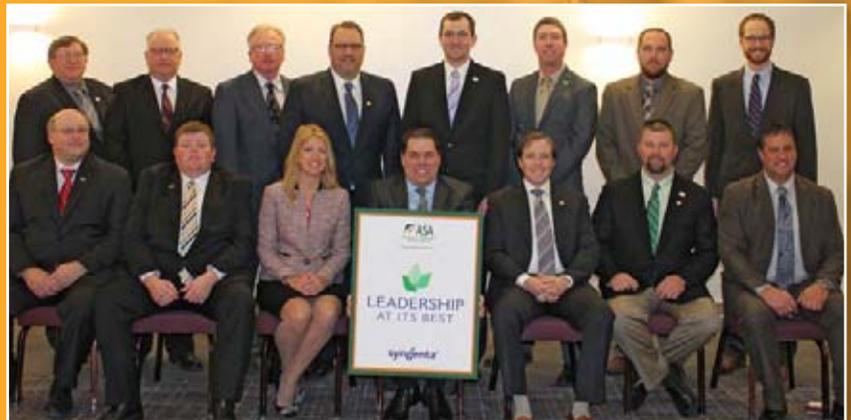


During the ASA Voting Delegates session in New Orleans, Minnesota delegates Bob Worth (left) and Joel Schreurs (right) discuss ASA resolutions. *Photo Credit: Stephen Dolan*



ASA DuPont Young Leaders Greg Gussiaas of North Dakota (left) and Ethon Smith of Iowa (right) discuss issues during their leadership and marketing training. The DYL class of 2015-16 completed their training in New Orleans, La. in March.

Farmers from 15 states graduated from the 2015-16 ASA Leadership At Its Best program in Washington, D.C. this spring. The program is sponsored by Syngenta and develops leadership, communication and advocacy skills in farmers. Front row: (left to right) Christopher Hill, Caleb Ragland, Elaine Gillis, Joe Ericson, Adam Cloninger, Shane Greving and Brian McKenzie. Back row: (left to right) ASA President Richard Wilkins, Bill Shipley, Robert Alpers, John Krutzfeldt, Hunter Grills, Kerrick Wilson, Cory Atkins and Ryan Findlay, Industry Affairs Lead with Syngenta. Not pictured: Brad Kremer and Cliff Barron. *Photo Credit: Bridget Fehrenbach*



ASA Director Monte Peterson, of Valley City, N.D., (left) asks a question during a session at the 16th annual Soybean Leadership College in Orlando, Fla. in January 2016. SLC provides current and future agricultural industry leaders with training to effectively promote the soybean industry, communicate key agricultural messages and work to expand U.S. soybean market opportunities domestically and internationally.



A marker was unveiled on Skidaway Island in Georgia in January, commemorating the introduction of soybeans to North America in spring 1765. *Pictured left to right: Richard Wilkins, ASA president; Walter Godwin, president of the Georgia/Florida Soybean Association; Elyse Butler, coordinator of the Historical Marker Program for the Georgia Historical Society and Greg Mims, chairman of the Georgia Soybean Commodity Commission. Photo courtesy of Roger Boerma*



SoyChampion

U.S. Representative Mike Pompeo

By Patrick Delaney

Among the many truths highlighted by the recent fights in Washington over food and agricultural policy is the need for better communication between farmers and their urban and suburban consumer counterparts. It is clear that just as consumers need to take the time to understand the process behind how their food is produced, those farmers producing that food have an obligation to do a better job of explaining in common terms what they do and why they do it. This exchange of information can take place anywhere, but more and more, it's taking place in suburban communities across the country.

Enter Mike Pompeo, a three-term congressman from Kansas' Fourth District. Appropriately enough,

Pompeo represents the urban and suburban communities of Wichita, Kansas' largest city, surrounded by the state's powerhouse production areas for livestock, wheat, soy, corn and sorghum; and hails originally from suburban Orange County, nestled between California's dairy and specialty crop-rich regions and the nation's second-largest city of Los Angeles. With this background, Pompeo is uniquely suited to both represent and improve the interaction between urban and rural interests, a relationship increasingly stressed by the continued flight of Americans from rural areas to more populated ones.

Nowhere is Pompeo's leadership in the urban-rural dialogue more apparent than on the issue of biotechnology and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Together with Congressional Black Caucus Chairman G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina, Pompeo introduced landmark legislation, establishing a voluntary national framework for the labeling of GMOs in the consumer marketplace.

Pompeo's bill, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, passed with an astounding 275 votes, including a significant number of the congressman's colleagues representing urban and suburban districts.

“Congressman Pompeo displays an acute understanding of the difficult conversations our industry is involved in right now.” – ASA President Richard Wilkins



"Specifically with regard to his championship of the GMO labeling effort, Congressman Pompeo displays an acute understanding of the difficult conversations our industry is involved in right now. Farmers can no longer afford to think about their operations in a vacuum. Rather, we have to take into consideration how our business comes across to the consumer, what he or she understands about it, and how that comprehension impacts that consumer's decisions at the grocery store," said Richard Wilkins, American Soybean Association president and a farmer on the Delmarva Peninsula, nestled between Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia.

"What is so groundbreaking about Congressman Pompeo's leadership on the GMO effort is that it has pushed the tandem issues of science in agriculture and consumer scientific literacy to the forefront with a framework for providing consumers with more information at the retail level."

"Congressman Pompeo has seized on an extremely important issue for Kansas soybean farmers and Kansas consumers alike," said Kansas Soybean Association President Raylen Phelon, from Melvern. "His leadership on this issue reflects the priorities of his uniquely combined urban and rural district, and we are very pleased with the progress he's been able to accomplish for both."

"While working to pass the GMO bill Mike stood firm, even in the face of threats, and never wavered when taking on the hard work necessary to do what was right for Kansas farmers and consumers across America," said Liberty, Kan., farmer Rich Felts, president of the Kansas Farm Bureau.



"Nowhere is Pompeo's leadership in the urban-rural dialogue more apparent than on the issue of biotechnology and genetically modified organisms (GMOs)."

"No matter the issue, we can always count on Mike for his friendship and support for farmers and Kansas agriculture."

"I'm proud that the leader of this effort is from Kansas," added Mick Rausch, who raises corn, sorghum, soybeans, alfalfa and wheat, as well as dairy cattle, just 20 minutes from Wichita in Garden Plain.

"Congressman Pompeo's bill, which he worked tirelessly to get passed by the House, will provide one labeling standard for the country, not a mix of different laws state by state or region by region. I hate to think of how I would have to separate my crops after harvest if they have to be sold at different locations because of different label restrictions."

Rausch appreciates Pompeo's practical approach on other farm issues, as well.

"Mike has also been a tireless worker in his fight to help soybean growers and farmers across Kansas, and specifically, his work in corralling the EPA's undue regulations of farmers is incredibly important to farmers in our state and across the country," said Rausch. "New farming

practices such as no till, variable rate fertilization and planting allow the soybean grower to use valuable resources precisely and accurately when and at the right time the plant needs it. I appreciate his willingness to fight to allow me to raise crops with these new methods and without burdensome, unnecessary regulations from the federal government."

Another prominent voice on farm issues, both in Kansas and nationally, agrees.

"Congressman Pompeo is a strong advocate of farmers – whether it be for agriculture biotechnology or against regulatory red tape on the farm," said Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman and longtime Sunflower State lawmaker Pat Roberts. "I'm proud he is a part of the Kansas congressional delegation, and Kansas soybean farmers should be proud to have Mike on their side."

The farmer leaders of the American Soybean Association agree wholeheartedly and are proud to recognize Congressman Mike Pompeo as a Soy Champion for 2016. ■



New Orleans 2016

During an "Issue Spotlight" session in the ASA booth, ASA Washington Representative Bev Paul (*left*) and ASA Governing Committee Member Kevin Hoyer (*right*) discuss regulatory issues, including air quality and pollinator health, and water quality and the EPA's controversial Waters of the U.S. rule.



ASA President Richard Wilkins (*center*) talks with emcee Mark Mayfield (*left*) during the General Session presidents' roundtable.



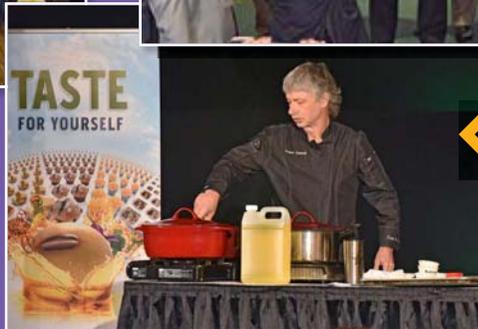
ASA Director Sam Butler, who serves as Commodity Classic co-chair, cuts the ribbon to open the trade show floor in New Orleans. This year the show set significant records in attendance and trade show size with a total of 9,770 attendees, 433 participating companies and 253,300 net square feet of booth space.



During the 11th annual ASA Soy Social and Auction, spotter John Buck (*right*) calls out a bid for ASA Director Brooks Hurst (in blue shirt) and his wife Amy (*center*). The auction raises money for SoyPAC, which supports lawmakers who champion soybean farmer policies that protect and increase the market value and opportunities for soybean growers.



Chef Jacques Leonardi cooks some authentic Creole treats using high oleic oil made from soybeans during a demonstration on the Ag Connect mainstage.



All photos by Stephen Dolan

2016 Commodity Classic in New Orleans

Issue Update

Biosecurity Protecting the Future of Pork from PEDv

| By **Kelsey Ruthman**

Demand for soybean meal on the rise with swine virus under control

The outlook was bleak for the pork industry when porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) was first confirmed in the United States in May 2013. With a mortality rate of almost 100 percent in pre-weaned pigs, the potential outcome would have been devastating if PEDv could not be controlled. Compounding the potential devastation was the degree to which the soybean industry and pork industry are connected, with hogs consuming approximately a quarter of the total soybean meal produced in the U.S.

"It was a wake-up call to the entire animal ag industry," said Michael Beard, a hog farmer and soybean grower from Indiana. "Pork producers were facing unmatched financial losses from the spread of PEDv."

PEDv can survive on multiple types of organisms, and as a result, can easily contaminate other common materials, including clothing, trucks and feed. Additionally, in cold weather conditions, infected materials can continue to be contaminated for extensive periods.

Stopping the spread

"Biosecurity is a valuable and cost-effective way to control the spread of PEDv, among other diseases," Beard said.

Following collaboration across several industries, biosecurity



recommendations and protocols were put into place to avoid cross contamination. Having dedicated on- and off-farm boots, following a plan to contain contaminated supplies and thoroughly disinfecting all equipment are just a few examples of biosecurity measures that hog farmers practice to limit the spread of PEDv.

"Managing the spread from multiple sources to the farm through biosecurity has been extremely effective," Beard said. "A lot of money was spent washing vehicles over the winter, but it was an incredibly valuable investment that saved countless animals."

The future looks bright

The spread and impact of PEDv has decreased this past winter.

"The impact has been smaller, and PEDv seems to be under control," Beard said.

The pork industry and its partners have fully embraced biosecurity to manage this devastating virus. And success for pork producers means success for soybean farmers.

Animal agriculture is U.S. soy's No. 1 end user. In the 2013-14

marketing year, the worst time for PEDv, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that animal ag consumed more than 29.5 million tons of soybean meal, or the meal from about 1.2 billion bushels of U.S. soybeans. The meal from approximately 360 million bushels of those soybeans went to hogs.

Hog farmers are cautiously optimistic that PEDv is in the rearview mirror. Meanwhile, thanks to biosecurity, feed treatments and vaccines to help boost sow immunity, the U.S. hog population is back on the rise.

This is good news for soybean farmers.

"We're going to hit a record level of demand for soybean meal in the U.S. in 2016," Beard said. "Even with PEDv, the market for soybean meal increased more than 9 percent last year."

USDA projects domestic soybean meal consumption will rise about another million tons for a record 33.3 million tons.

"The bottom line is that biosecurity works," Beard said. "The industries will continue to monitor PEDv, but I expect pork will remain a critical and viable end user of soybean meal." ■

OUR TOP CUSTOMERS:

How Soybeans and Animal Agriculture Are Linked

By Tamara Hinton

With roughly two percent of the population feeding the remainder, the need for farm sectors to work together on a variety of policy issues is critical for the survival and success of American agriculture.

“When you’re that small, you have to stick together,” said John Heisdorffer, a soybean grower and contract hog feeder from Iowa. “If you don’t, you’re going to get run over.”



Sticking together is what soybean growers and poultry and livestock producers have been doing for a number of years on a variety of issues. And, for good reason: their livelihoods are strongly intertwined. Just consider that the livestock industry is the largest consumer of soy meal as roughly 98 percent of it goes to feed pigs, chickens and cows. Moreover, many soybean growers are also livestock producers as diversification on the farm helps reduce risk in a down economy.

"We know we need soybean growers," said Dave Warner, the communications director for the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), which is a trade association representing 43 state pork producer organizations. "Otherwise, we don't have a pork industry. It's the same way on the other side."

This sentiment applies within the political and policy realm, too, where activist groups and farm policy critics can gin up so-called problems where none exist to be addressed in Washington or on the state level. There are a number of policy areas where the American Soybean Association (ASA) and its state counterparts have teamed up with all or parts of the animal agriculture industry to advance shared goals and protect American agriculture.

Davie Stephens, a soybean grower and poultry producer from Kentucky, describes one regional example from a few years ago. Growers in his state saw a need to band together when they felt like the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), which

has not been a friend to farmers, was pushing an activist agenda and misrepresenting producers in the process. As a result, the Kentucky Soybean Association, along with a host of others, founded the Kentucky Livestock Coalition with the mission of protecting and promoting the state's livestock industry.

"When an issue comes up, we're all on the same page and it's a collaborative effort," Stephens said. "The way we want to move is with one solid voice."



Davie Stephens, a Kentucky soybean farmer and poultry producer, said it's important for farmers to speak with "one solid voice" to protect the industry's integrity and make their concerns heard. Photo courtesy of the Kentucky Soybean Association

Indeed, building coalitions and speaking with one solid voice is key to helping lawmakers understand what is at stake for America's farmers and ranchers when it comes to environmental regulations, free trade agreements and the importance of a farm bill.

EPA's Waters of the U.S. Rule (WOTUS)

If there is one issue that has secured the ire of nearly everyone in the agricultural community, it's the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Waters of the United States rule, otherwise known as WOTUS. The EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) issued the rule two years ago in response to alleged uncertainty over the jurisdiction of U.S. waterways.

Although the Clean Water Act (CWA) created a federal and state partnership to preserve water quality in the U.S., there have been disputes regarding statutory authority with the EPA and the Corps pushing for greater control. In recent years, a series of Supreme Court cases have ruled to limit their regulatory reach, but the effect has created ambiguity regarding the defined universe of jurisdictional waters. Although the EPA claims the WOTUS rule is only for clarification purposes, the language makes it simple for the federal government to assert that anything that is water is jurisdictional. The burden to prove otherwise would be on the landowner.

"It is bothersome to think about how it will be enforced from Washington to boots on the ground because you can have different interpretations," Stephens said. "We don't know if a dry ditch in the middle of a soybean field is subject to the EPA jurisdiction and requires a Water Act permit just to plant soybeans."

(continued on page 18)

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For this reason and others, ASA has opposed the rule from the outset because of its impact on farmers and ranchers. In a Nov. 14, 2014 letter to the EPA, then-ASA president Ray Gaesser wrote, "We believe that this rule creates new legal jeopardy for individual farmers, causes uncertainty where none existed and produces substantial problems for agriculture that will not achieve benefits to our nation's waters."

ASA was joined by a host of other groups pushing back.

"We've been all along urging the EPA to withdraw the rule," Warner said. "What the agency has come up with is not clear at all. Beyond the direct impact on farmers, this law could be used by activist groups to create a whole lot of mischief."

While the president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), Philip Ellis stated, "The WOTUS regulation is one of the worst onerous land grabs undertaken by any regulator."

Legislative attempts in Congress have fallen short of stopping the implementation of the rule, but farmers and ranchers received a reprieve last fall when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Court issued a nationwide stay with a final ruling expected in due course.

"Farmers are first and foremost wanting to improve the environment," Stephens said. "That is evident through different efforts that are being implemented on the farm right now. Another regulation isn't going to help us."

Trade

In contrast, maintaining strong export markets and creating new marketing access opportunities for American goods is hugely important and helpful



There are numerous policy areas where ASA joins forces with the animal agriculture industry to advance shared goals and protect American agriculture. John Heisdorffer, a soybean grower and contract hog feeder from Iowa, said one example of this is the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which would strengthen and expand markets for all U.S. farmers and ranchers. *Photo by Joe Murphy*

for America's farmers and ranchers, especially for the soybean and animal agriculture industries.

This is why ASA has been a proponent of free trade agreements as a way to expand market access by eliminating tariffs and other trade barriers for soy and meat. In fact, only weeks ago members of ASA were visiting legislators during their annual meetings in Washington, D.C. to encourage Congress to pass the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement this year.

TPP is a trade agreement between the United States and 11 other countries that includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. In February, the U.S. along with the other negotiating parties signed the agreement, but right now it awaits action in Congress, which must pass legislation implementing the provisions of it.

"TPP is a no-brainer," ASA President Richard Wilkins stated in a release earlier this year, calling on Congress to consider the agreement. "It means

increased demand at home and abroad, which drives exports, which support jobs and economic activity all across the country."

The countries included in the agreement are some of the top export markets for soybeans, pork, beef and poultry and collectively represent 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product. A recent analysis by the American Farm Bureau Federation predicts net farm income would increase by \$4.4 billion with U.S. ratification of TPP.

"We're going to sell more soybeans," Heisdorffer said. "We're going to sell more meat. Everything that's involved with agriculture has a possibility to expand."

Although soybean growers would benefit from the elimination or reduction of tariffs as a part of the agreement, they would also gain from the expanded market access for U.S. protein, especially in Japan, which is a top export market for pork and beef. The greater demand for animal protein imports would boost the demand for animal feed like soy meal.

With the presidential election

dominating the conversation in Washington and dictating, in many respects, the congressional agenda, it remains to be seen if consideration and passage is possible this year. One thing is for certain: ASA will continue to push for the agreement, because failure to do so puts the U.S. at a distinct competitive disadvantage.

"We are absolutely committed to the full-court press that we'll need to move it across the finish line this year," Wilkins said. "We know that the election makes everything harder, but this is important enough that we're ready to do whatever it takes."

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)

Meanwhile, one thorny trade issue – mandatory country of origin labeling (COOL) – was finally resolved late last year when its repeal was included in the omnibus spending bill that Congress approved and the president signed into law.

COOL is an issue that perfectly demonstrates the interconnectedness between soybean growers and animal agriculture as certain implications of the law – those geared toward the livestock industry – would have negatively impacted soybean growers from nearly every angle.

Created as a part of the 2002 Farm Bill and amended in the 2008 Farm Bill, COOL was designed to identify the source of certain foods. It went into full force in March of 2009, only to be challenged in the World Trade Organization (WTO) less than a year later by Canada and Mexico, which charged that the U.S. law was discriminatory against imported livestock. The WTO ruled in favor of Canada and Mexico setting off a long and tortured process where a U.S. appeal was rejected, along

with a 2013 revision to the original COOL language to comply with international trade obligations. In each case, the WTO upheld earlier findings of discrimination and authorized Canada and Mexico to retaliate – should they choose – by imposing tariffs on U.S. goods going to those countries.

The ASA supported repeal of the COOL law based on these potential retaliatory tariffs on U.S. soy exports, and on adverse impacts to the livestock industry, which as stated previously is the largest consumer of domestically produced soybean meal.

"COOL would have had a primary and secondary impact on soybean growers," explained Heisdorffer.

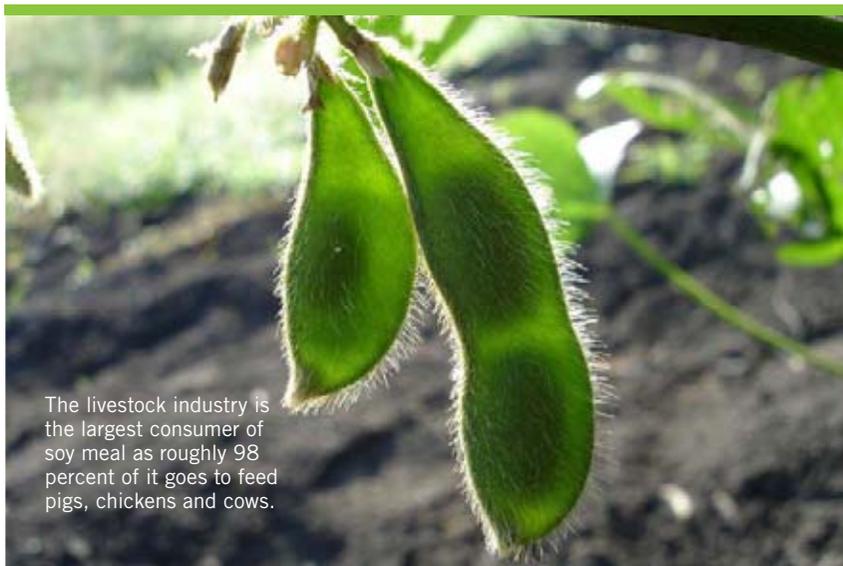
"Let's be clear, these two countries are critically valuable trading partners," Gaesser said in a June 10, 2015 statement that praised the U.S. House of Representatives for voting to repeal COOL with 300 votes. "Mexico is the United States' top export customer for U.S. meat products, and Canada is our third largest customer. In 2014 the United States exported nearly \$7 billion worth of U.S. pork, poultry, and beef to these markets –

all fed on diets of U.S. soybean meal."

Although the House had acted, the Senate was at an impasse on the issue with some Senators pushing to replace COOL with a voluntary program.

With fears of trade retaliation growing by December, NPPC along with ASA, state soybean associations, NCBA, the National Chicken Council and more than 200 other groups sent a letter to the Senate urging full repeal. In the Dec. 7, 2015 letter they wrote, "the damage that the U.S. would suffer in lost trade and jobs resulting from such retaliation is a price too high to experiment with any action short of full repeal of the offending provisions in the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law...It's too late for the COOL law to be tweaked."

Ultimately, lawmakers included the repeal provision in the FY2016 omnibus federal spending bill that passed both bodies of Congress and was signed into law. It was a victory for livestock producers and American soybean growers. It was also a strong reminder that there is strength in numbers when it comes to pushing policy solutions through Capitol Hill.



The livestock industry is the largest consumer of soy meal as roughly 98 percent of it goes to feed pigs, chickens and cows.

(continued on page 20)

Building Ag Alliances to Advocate for Soy Growers

The American Soybean Association (ASA) along with its state and regional affiliates have a history of creating strong alliances and partnering with other stakeholders in the promotion of policy that has a direct impact on the profitability of soybean growers.

For example, ASA joined more 250 farm, food and business organizations to create the Reform COOL Coalition in order to press Congress to repeal the mandatory country of origin labeling (COOL) law and avoid more than a \$1 billion in retaliation tariffs on American products from Canada and Mexico, and prevent damage to relationships with two valuable trading partners. Ultimately, the coalition prevailed in its request and Congress passed the repeal late last year.

Working directly with lawmakers on Capitol Hill, as well as partnering with the U.S. Coalition for TPP, ASA is also pushing Congressional action on another trade matter: the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement. Some policymakers have called this the most ambitious trade agreement yet as it will break down market barriers for U.S. exporters in countries representing roughly 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product. Negotiations on TPP have concluded with all 12 participating countries (Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam) signing the agreement. It is now up to each participating nation to implement it. If Congress fails to act, the U.S. will risk losing preferential market access in the Asia-Pacific region compared to competitor nations. An American Farm Bureau Federation analysis predicts that TPP will add \$5.3 billion to net U.S. agricultural exports by reducing and eliminating existing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.



"We need to work together on a lot of issues even if it's not directly affecting your particular industry," added Warner.

'We are all farmers'

Another provision that ASA worked to include in that year-end tax and spending package that Congress passed was an extension of the biodiesel tax credit through 2016.

"The extension of the biodiesel tax credit is integral to the continued growth and expansion of the biodiesel industry in the U.S.," Wilkins said as Congress was considering the package.

Soybean oil is the primary feedstock used to produce biodiesel – a renewable clean-burning diesel replacement used in existing diesel engines. Although a relatively young industry, it has grown tremendously over the last decade increasing its production from 112 million gallons in 2005 to 2.1 billion gallons in 2015.

The growth of the industry can also be beneficial for poultry and livestock farmers. Biodiesel creates a demand for soybeans, growing the supply of soybean meal, which helps lower the cost of animal feed and creates an additional market for animal fats, which are also used for biodiesel production. Some estimate that biodiesel has lowered soybean meal prices by at least \$20 per ton over the last decade.

"The relationship between pork producers, livestock farmers and soybean growers is important," said Warner. "We need to stay close with the people providing our feed and we need to work together on issues whether it's free trade agreements or environmental regulations or other policy matters."

Indeed, recognizing that one part of American agriculture relies upon the success of another is a powerful message to remember, especially as Congress soon gears up for another farm bill reauthorization.

"We are all farmers," added Stephens. "We're all in this together." ▣

Industry Perspective

TPP: Wanted ASAP

| By **Candace Krebs**

The country's largest meat companies are firmly united in their support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), based on its potential to expand meat exports in the critically important Pacific Rim region.

Carlos Ayala, vice president of international sales for Perdue Foods, said the agreement would help expand markets for chicken, which he called "the ultimate global product."

"We basically turn soybeans and corn into chicken and then we cut up the chicken and sell the different cuts to those markets that like them best," Ayala explained. "For example, Japanese consumers tend to prefer leg meat, while American consumers prefer breast meat. Our export markets allow us to grow more chickens, and get the best value for the various parts, thus allowing the American consumer to get more (and more affordable) breast meat than they otherwise could. At the same time, our valued Japanese customers get a disproportionate amount of the legs, which they like best."

Up until now, he said, American agricultural exporters were at a disadvantage in Asian markets, due to high tariffs and a lack of transparency in resolving sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues.

"The Trans-Pacific Partnership goes a long way towards eliminating these barriers," he said. "While any trade deal will have some winners and losers, it's clear that U.S. Trade

Representative Michael Froman and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack both did a phenomenal job of fighting for U.S. agricultural exports. And we very much appreciate them being open to feedback from the U.S. poultry industry, given the importance of this export channel to America's poultry farmers. As a result of their efforts, we're expecting poultry exports to increase significantly."

The agreement will also likely pave the way for increased exports of organic chicken, an important niche for Perdue.

"As the world's largest producer of organic chicken, we were pleased to see the TPP's Annex will be governing the process for reaching equivalency on organic standards. We are expecting organic chicken exports to increase significantly in the coming years, as this trade deal is implemented," Ayala concluded.

Tyson Foods also emphasized the importance of sales to the Asian Pacific region in testimony presented to Congress by senior vice president of pork margin management, Shane Miller.

"Each year, our international sales increase in value to our company, reflecting the reality that the future growth in protein demand lays outside the U.S.," Miller said.

Tyson already exports frozen poultry to Vietnam and Japan, but those ties would strengthen if the TPP agreement is enacted. The company also sees tremendous potential to expand pork and beef trade.



Carlos Ayala, vice president of international sales, Perdue Foods



Shane Miller, senior vice president of pork margin management, Tyson Foods.

In a National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) letter of support, which Tyson Foods co-signed, NPPC explained that as a result of trade agreements implemented since 1989, U.S. ag exports have nearly quadrupled in value to a record \$152.5 billion in fiscal year 2014. During that period, earnings from U.S. agricultural exports as a share of cash receipts to farmers grew from 22 percent to over 35 percent.

While there are myriad trade deals under negotiation in the Asian Pacific — still the fastest growing economic region in the world — TPP is considered the most important.

Smithfield Foods called TPP "a landmark trade agreement," and said the agreement would generate more than 110,000 new U.S. jobs, 10,000 of them in the pork industry alone. ■

Animal Ag Continues to Feed National Economy

Importance of growing U.S. animal ag sector highlighted in soy-checkoff-funded study



What's Animal Ag Worth to You?

To see the economic benefits animal ag provides your state, view the full report at www.UnitedSoybean.org/AnimalEconomics.

Increased Biodiesel Production Benefits Animal Ag

Biodiesel production has significantly benefitted the soybean industry and the U.S. economy – but one of biodiesel's most significant contributions is not often highlighted.

Animal ag farmers benefit from biodiesel, too. That's because soybean meal prices fall as more biodiesel is produced, requiring poultry and livestock farmers to pay less for their feed.

Producing biodiesel raises the demand for soybean oil, which can only be obtained by simultaneously creating more soybean meal.

"Demand for biodiesel creates demand for soybean oil, which, in turn, causes more crush and lowers the cost of soybean meal," explains Lewis Bainbridge, USB secretary and Ethan, South Dakota soybean farmer. "That lowers the price of rations for our poultry and livestock customers.

"Every gallon of biodiesel sold supports soybean farmers, processors and animal ag at once."

The U.S. animal ag sector is not only putting food on Americans' tables, but also money in their pockets, according to a new soy-checkoff-funded study.

The study, titled Economic Analysis of Animal Agriculture, found during 2014 alone, U.S. animal agriculture's support of the national economy included:

- \$440.7 billion in economic output
- 2.3 million jobs
- \$76.7 billion in earnings
- \$19.6 billion in income taxes

Those figures all increased from 2013.

The report concluded that U.S. soybean farmers shouldn't let their support for the animal ag industry weaken. Poultry and livestock farmers face many pressures, which also threaten the profitability of all soybean farmers.

"Whether it's synthetic amino acids or dried distillers grains, there is a lot of competition in the animal feed marketplace," said Mike Beard, a soy checkoff farmer-leader who grows soybeans and raises hogs on his farm in Frankfort, Indiana. "That's why it's

as important as ever for U.S. soybean farmers to meet the needs of our end users by growing the highest quality of soybean meal possible."

During 2014, U.S. animal agriculture consumed an estimated 27.9 million tons of soybean meal, or the meal from about 1.2 billion bushels of U.S. soybeans. This soybean meal was fed primarily to:

- Broilers: 464 million bushels
- Hogs: 327 million bushels
- Dairy cows: 112 million bushels

The analysis also shows animal ag, U.S. soy's top end user, increased the U.S. gross national product by \$123 billion in economic output, improved household earnings by over \$21 billion and added 645,629 jobs from 2004-2014.

"The fact that our animal ag sector is growing is very beneficial for U.S. soybean farmers," Beard added.

"With 97 percent of soybean meal going to animal ag, the strength of poultry and livestock production are incredibly important to the U.S. soybean industry." □



Get a Head Start on Weed Management by Starting With Clean Fields

With planting season coming soon, farmers may want to start addressing the weeds that could already be lurking in their fields. The issue of herbicide-resistant weeds poses a major threat to soybean yields throughout the United States.

The soy checkoff collaborates with other farmer organizations, herbicide companies and land-grant universities on Take Action, a unified strategy against herbicide-resistant weeds. Visit www.TakeActionOnWeeds.com for free tools that can help you manage herbicide-resistant weeds.

Below, University of Tennessee weed scientist Larry Steckel, Ph.D., advises farmers to start the season with clean fields. "By having a plan up front for weed control and spraying for weeds in a timely manner, farmers can save money and have much more consistent weed control," he said.

Q: Why is it so important for farmers to begin their planting season with clean fields?

A: The bottom line is farmers have to make sure they are ahead of weeds. If weeds have already emerged before the crop starts coming up, those weeds are going to have a huge advantage. Weeds compete for the same nutrients as soybeans – nitrogen, light and water – and typically weeds get first dibs. We have documented Palmer amaranth going from a small seed to 8 inches tall in 13 days. Soybeans would be lucky to be a couple of inches tall at that point – there is really no contest. So farmers have to start out clean with clean fields; if they don't, weeds can easily outgrow their crop.

Q: What are the best weed-management practices for farmers to use to achieve a clean field before planting?

A: Here in Tennessee, we try to start applying the first burndown applications the first part of February, when weeds like horseweed and marehail are still relatively small and easier to control. Typically, you can get by with 8 ounces of dicamba or 24 to 32 ounces of 2-4D. Once you get closer to planting season, you have to use greater amounts or you have to start applying other methods to get any kind of consistent control.

Q: What weed-management tips do you have for after planting?

A: The key to resistant pigweed species is overlapping residuals. After applying the residual with the first burndown application, about 14 to 20 days out, we are applying another residual and trying to activate them. Ideally, both residuals activate and start doing their job fighting weeds. The key is keeping the weeds from coming up in the first place and that's where overlapping the residuals comes into play. ■

I WILL
USE MULTIPLE HERBICIDE
SITES OF ACTION.

Now is the time to take action against herbicide-resistant weeds. Visit www.TakeActionOnWeeds.com/request to get your free Take Action Kit and learn how you can preserve herbicide technology.



Take ACTION
HERBICIDE-RESISTANCE
MANAGEMENT
Brought to you by the soy checkoff

SoyWORLD

USDA FAS programs have supported WISHH's success working with Alimentos S.A. The Guatemalan-based company purchases U.S. soy to manufacture multiple foods it sells throughout Central America.



WISHH, USDA Build International Markets with Institutional Feeding Success

The American Soybean Association's World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (ASA/WISHH) program is creating commercial markets for United States soy protein in Central American and West African institutional feeding programs, like schools. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) programs are an important part of this successful equation.

WISHH's work with Alimentos S.A. has contributed to the Guatemalan-based company's ongoing use and purchases of U.S. soy for multiple foods it sells in school feeding programs throughout Central America. The government of the Cote d'Ivoire started buying U.S. soy protein from Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) Company for the country's national school feeding program.

"USDA's Cochran Fellowship Program training, Market Access as well as Quality Samples Programs were key to WISHH's results," said WISHH Chairman Lucas Heinen, a soybean grower from Kansas. "WISHH was able to work closely with U.S. businesses as well as build strong relationships with the developing country supply chain partners and government officials and staff who oversee school feeding."

Importantly, state soybean checkoff funds leverage WISHH's USDA-funded activities. For example, farmer resources support WISHH's ongoing presence in countries where WISHH works with the local partners and government officials to recognize the value soy protein has because it is so nutritious, cost effective and easily integrated into foods that are already popular in the local communities. USDA's Cochran program supported bringing the key developing country partners to the United States for training. They learned about soy product development and nutritional benefits, visited U.S. school feeding programs, and more.

USDA's Quality Samples Program (QSP) allowed WISHH to buy and ship U.S. soy protein products to West Africa where WISHH's on-the-ground team assisted in school feeding trials. USDA Market Access Program funds also helped WISHH supplement the arrival of QSP consignments in Africa by providing technical assistance to the industry, sponsoring trade teams to the U.S. and instituting information campaigns to support the introduction of various products in specific markets.

In two WISHH videos, ADM and Alimentos described how WISHH's multiple joint activities with them have helped open access and increased awareness of the benefits of soy protein for schools. ADM's Business Manager of Texture Protein Brit Walker describes the "true team effort" involved and the growth of the market.

Alimentos Nutrition Consultant Odette Murales shared how soy-based menus have reduced chronic malnutrition by 4.8 percent as well as the variety of ways WISHH and USDA training has benefited the company.

According to the United Nations, almost all countries have a school meals initiative. Worldwide, approximately 368 million children receive food at school every day.

USDA leads the federal government's McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program to support education, child development and food security in low-income, food-deficit countries around the globe. Soy is often used in these programs.

WISHH, with its partners at USDA and in the U.S. soy industry, has promoted U.S. soy in similar programs in other countries resulting in increased U.S. soy exports. ■

Sustainability

Banding to Protect the Basin

By **Barb Baylor Anderson**

Ohio Farmers Mindful of Water Quality

The Stickel brothers have always been mindful of the value and importance of preserving water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin. Together, Andy and his brother Brian represent the third generation to farm the northwest Ohio family's fields that lie 20 miles south of Toledo. And they've learned banding fertilizer is one solution.

"The basin is always on our minds. Our nutrient use is constantly monitored to ensure proper application and effective use," said Andy Stickel, who added that agriculture is not the only industry contributing to water quality issues. "Agriculture is taking the brunt of regulations, so this is front and center with us. The Toledo suburbs are 10 minutes north of our farm and keep creeping closer, so we have to anticipate potential issues."

Andy and Brian's parents, Dale and Mary Elyse, are part of the diversified farm. The family raises corn, soybeans and wheat using primarily no-till and grows processing tomatoes. They also have a commercial cow-calf herd and finish about 400 head of cattle per year in a feedlot. A custom hay and straw business makes up the rest of the enterprise.

"We try to be good stewards. We minimize phosphorus and potassium applications and use nutrients on a field-by-field prescription basis," Stickel said. "We soil test every two to three years with an agronomist's help and do variable rate applications based on soil tests and yield history."

The Stickels band-apply fertilizer in corn and soybeans. They have primarily heavy clay soils and use stabilizers, especially with phosphorus applications. Corn is planted in 30-inch rows between the fertilizer bands and soybeans are planted in 15-inch rows right next to the bands.

"Banding helps our bottom line and our efficiency," Stickel said. "We are testing cover crops to improve soil health and water quality, too. We fly rye seed over our corn. The following year we plant soybeans, followed by wheat and a summer cover crop."



Andy and Brian Stickel band-apply fertilizer in corn and soybeans to help their efficiency and protect water quality. They are testing cover crops and looking into composting as a future option for sustainability. *Photo Courtesy of Ohio Soybean Association*

The family is stepping up sustainability efforts in the livestock arena. New state legislation regulates fertilizer and manure applications in the basin, but exemptions include injection, incorporation within 24 hours and when applied on a growing crop, including cover crops. Stickel can now haul manure for cover crop use at different times of the year.

For the future, the Stickels are evaluating composting as another option. "We want to keep everything in balance and maintain soil health for maximum water-holding capacity," he said.

Stickel recommends other farmers take a holistic approach to protect water quality. "Fresh water is a major asset. There are no right or wrong answers to protect it. Be aware of your actions, and tackle sustainability from environmental and economic perspectives," he said. ■

SoyForward

Poultry, Soybeans Add Up to Jobs for Delaware

By Gov. Jack A. Markell

Few places have a clearer view of the value of a strong soybean growing industry than Delaware. We are a small state, but no farmers in the country work harder, thanks in large part to our soybean growers. Delaware ranks first in the nation in the value of agricultural production per acre – a mighty feat when you consider we have only three counties and a population smaller than some cities.

About a third of our farmland is planted in soybeans each year, or about 165,000 acres. Our soybean yields have been increasing substantially thanks to irrigation practices and improved genetics. Last year we grew 6.9 million bushels, with our record average yield topping 48 bushels per acre in 2014. The last 15 years have been phenomenal ones, with nine of those years setting yields in the top 10.

Unlike other states, we are able to use almost all of those bushels right here at home, as feed for our groundbreaking poultry industry. Delaware is home to more than 650 family farms that raise broiler chickens on contract for five processing companies. Our state has only three counties, but two of them are ranked in the top 60 counties for broiler chicken production – and Sussex County is No. 1 in the nation. It's an incredible industry that began as an accident in 1923, when Cecile Steele ordered 50 chicks for her laying flock and got 500 by mistake.

The soybeans and corn that our farmers grow goes directly into feed for those chickens, which strengthens and supports all of our farmers. As consumer demand for chicken has been rising, thanks to its efficiency as a valuable source of protein to feed our families, demand for grain also rises, and our farmers thrive. This cycle of prosperity helps illustrate how closely our agricultural sectors are connected.

Our department of agriculture is proud to support the work of the Delaware Soybean Board, and we are honored to have ASA President Richard Wilkins hail from our state. Delaware will also soon be home to the headquarters of the DowDuPont agribusiness spinoff. That new business is well-poised to become a leader in the agricultural field, and Delaware will support that growth and expansion however we can. In addition, we're pleased by the recent announcement that Perdue AgriBusiness will build its new headquarters in the southern part of our state.

All this comes down to jobs – jobs based on agriculture and connected to our family farms, linked inextricably to the work that you do every day. Farms and food businesses support about 30,000 jobs in our state, and result in an \$8 billion overall economic impact, according to a study by the University of Delaware. That is a powerful cornerstone of our economy, and an incredible legacy that farmers today leave for future generations.

Delaware has a top-quality workforce and a strong history of scientific and entrepreneurial achievement. When combined with our long and distinguished agricultural heritage and our family farmers who lead the way every day, we all benefit from a powerful force for economic growth, helping move Delaware – and the nation – forward. ■



Jack Markell

Delaware Governor Jack A. Markell is in his second term. He previously served as Delaware State Treasurer.

I am a soybean farmer,
trade advocate,
and ASA member.



David Ausberger, Jefferson, Iowa

We are soybean farmers,
animal ag supporters,
and ASA members.



Phyllis & Mark Legan, Coatesville, Ind.

I am a soybean farmer,
biodiesel proponent,
and ASA member.



Jerry Peery, Clinton, Ky.

Your story is our story. As an ASA member, you join tens of thousands of other soybean farmers to ensure someone is watching your back when policy and regulations are being debated and created in Washington, DC.

Representing your interests. Expanding your markets.
Protecting your future. Defending your freedom to operate.

You grow soybeans. At ASA, our job is to make sure you can keep doing it competitively and profitably. That takes vigilance and diligence on the policy front. That's what ASA does for you and all of America's soybean farmers.

You know how policy can have a profound impact on your profitability. It is time to belong to ASA.



If you believe, belong.



You can't always be here. But ASA can.

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The American Soybean Association is looking out for the best interests of U.S. soybean growers by doing important farm and trade policy work on Capitol Hill:

- ASA fights for biodiesel tax incentives
- ASA advocates legislation fair to soybean farmers
- ASA promotes trade agreements for soy exports

The law says your soybean checkoff can't do these things. But ASA can.

If you believe this work is important to your bottom line, make sure you belong to ASA and your state soybean association. Become a member today at soygrowers.com.



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