



THE NORTH DAKOTA Soybean GROWER MAGAZINE

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INSIDE:
NDSGA Delivers Input on
Prevented Planting Coverage

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HELPING YOU DELIVER ON DEMAND

Whether it's improving soybean meal to outperform the competition or promoting the sustainability of U.S. soy, the soy checkoff has been working behind the scenes to help farmers satisfy their customers' needs. We're looking inside the bean, beyond the bushel and around the world to keep preference for U.S. soy strong. And for U.S. soybean farmers like you, the impact is invaluable.

See more ways the soy checkoff is maximizing profit opportunities for farmers at unitedsoybean.org



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n the cover

Each harvest season presents farmers with its own set of challenges and 2023 was no different. This year, the North Dakota farmers had a new opportunity to market their soybeans with the opening of the state's first large-scale soybean processing plant.

—Photo by Creative Treatment



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A Conversation About Townships

It seems to be a fair guess that few people appreciate the importance of transportation more than our North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) members and other producers who need to get inputs to the farm and field as well as the harvest to market. Therefore, the NDSGA board makes transportation a priority. Support is realized by working with funding and sometimes other policy in the North Dakota Legislative Assembly during the sessions and interims. We also do our best to get to know the legislators, key Department of Transportation personnel, and the local governments that build and maintain our road system. Close relationships with county and township governments also help to understand the situations that they face.

Having served on my township board in Traill County for 20 years, it was easier for me to understand township issues, both as a legislator and as an educator/lobbyist, than it was for many of the individuals who come from urban areas. We have to remember that there are many more citizens living in cities (and therefore more urban legislators) than outside the cities. The result is that many residents have never heard of township governments, leading to the need for education so that the plight of our township roads can be aided.

In North Dakota, we have an organization that is dedicated to townships' concerns. It is a pleasure to work with the North Dakota

Township Officers Association (NDTOA) as it does its level best to find adequate funding for township roads. One of the main reasons why I like to work with the NDTOA is because its executive secretary, Larry Syverson, is responsive, knowledgeable, patient and affable.

This column highlights Syverson and the organization.

What are your duties as a lead for the NDTOA?

As executive secretary, I record all the actions of the board of directors and of the annual meeting of the association. I organize the meetings, reserve meeting rooms, hotel rooms and meals for meetings. Also, I'm the full-time lobbyist for NDTOA, so I stay in Bismarck through the entire legislative session and attend many interim meetings. I am the liaison with the state agencies and represent North Dakota on the National Association of Towns and Townships board of directors. Other duties include being editor of the NDTOA newsletter, the "Grassroots Report," and administrator of ndtoa.com. I compile and edit the NDTOA Township Officers Handbook after each legislative session, and I'm one of the group of people that puts on workshops for township officers in 16 cities across the state in the non-legislative years.

What are some of the changes you have seen in how your organization operates?



Phil Murphy.

The largest change comes from the speed of communication. We used to depend exclusively on the mail for our communication. We still send out a printed newsletter, but it is also posted on our website and sent out by email. We also use that service to send out weekly updates during the legislative session as well as notices of funding opportunities and the deadlines for applications. We have also now modernized the website and made it mobile-friendly, so it is easier to access the information on phones. Another important change is a ramping up of contacts with the legislature. We hosted a legislative meet-and-greet event during the organizational session last December and held a Township Officer's Day at the capitol during the session, all so we can have more opportunity to tell the township story to the lawmakers. A consultant has been contracted to review the association and make recommendations to help refine our strategic plan. That consultant also serves as a contract lobbyist to assist in our legislative outreach efforts.

Has township operation changed much over the last 20 years or so?

One of the biggest changes for townships comes from modern cropping practices and increased production. A lot more volume is being hauled on roads that were never made for the loads. Also, we have more rural residents who are not producers, and they lack the equipment to dig themselves out after a snowstorm. It all adds up to more demand for road maintenance.

There will be more information about the NDTOA's role in a future column.



Larry Syverson (second from right) serves as executive secretary for the North Dakota Township Officers Association.

In This Together

Whether we live in a small town, in a larger city or on a farm, it's easy to forget how connected we are to one another. What happens in one part of the state can have influence far beyond the immediate area.

Farmers depend on farm equipment dealers, mechanics, input suppliers, grain elevators, local hardware stores and a host of others to provide us with the products and services we need to produce a crop each year. Even though we produce food for people around the world, we also rely on our local grocery stores for food items that we don't grow or raise. In return, our money helps to support businesses on Main Street, local schools and government programs that are designed to help us all live our best lives.

As farmers, we want nothing more than to see our local communities thrive. We enjoy being part of our local communities, and we appreciate the convenience of having the parts or supplies we need for our operations nearby, rather than hours away. The same goes for important services such as healthcare. We are all better served when care is available in rural areas.

When the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) advocates for a policy

that is good for North Dakota agriculture, we know that policy will likely have effects beyond our farm gate. That fact matters to us because we know that successful, sustainable farms will have a positive benefit not only for us as individual operations, but also for our local communities. We know that what we do will affect others, so we're committed to being good stewards of our land and water resources.

One of the biggest pieces of legislation that has far-reaching effects is the farm bill. This legislation has a number of sections, called titles, that affect farmers. The titles include conservation, commodities, crop insurance and more. However, this legislation goes far beyond production agriculture to support food programs which benefit people in both rural and urban areas.

The NDSGA and its national counterpart, the American Soybean Association, have been advocating for the passage of a new farm bill for well over a year. It is an important piece of legislation that affects people all over the country: in big cities, in small towns and on farms. The 2018 Farm Bill expired at the end of September, but a new 2023 Farm Bill has yet to be crafted. We will continue to push for common-sense legislation that supports our ability to farm sustainably while providing



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the important services which our friends and neighbors need.

We all know that agriculture is one of North Dakota's most important economic drivers. The NDSGA will do whatever it can to support agriculture because the industry delivers things that go far beyond our own farm gate.



Membership Application

To join the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association and the American Soybean Association, complete and return this application with payment.

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Farm/Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

County: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Occupation (Please check all that apply)

- Farmer Retired Agribusiness
 Finance Elevator Other

Do you raise: Cattle Hogs Poultry Dairy

Do you currently grow soybeans? Yes No

Soybean Acres: _____ Total Acres Farmed: _____

How did you hear about NDSGA? (Please circle one)

Recruited in person; Recruited by phone; Magazine;
Internet; Social Media; Mailing; Radio; Event; Other

3-Year Professional Membership: \$200 Retired Farmer: \$25

1-Year Professional Membership: \$75 1-Year Student: Free

Check enclosed (please make checks payable to NDSGA)

Credit Card: Visa / MasterCard / Discover / American Express

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ / _____ CVC: _____

Name on Card (Please print): _____

Signature: _____

Mail application with payment to: North Dakota Soybean Growers Association, 4852 Rocking Horse Circle South, Fargo, ND 58104

Peterson Leaves His Fingerprints on the Soy Industry



Valley City farmer Monte Peterson didn't set out to become a leader in the nation's soybean industry, but as fate would have it, his commitment to agriculture took him places that he likely never imagined.

Peterson's path started simply enough by attending the local Barnes County Extension meeting. It was there that he learned the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) was holding elections for a county representative. Other farmers encouraged him to run.

"They (the farmers) said, if we elect you, can you figure out what this checkoff is all about and whether it's doing any good," Peterson recalls. "In a weak moment, I said 'yeah, okay.' I had no idea that's what would happen when I went to the meeting that day."

Peterson admits that, at the time, he didn't know anything about the soybean council, the soybean checkoff or the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association

(NDSGA).

Fast forward almost two decades and Peterson has had more personal involvement with the soy industry on the state and national level than nearly any other farmer.

Global Reach

After being elected as the Barnes County soybean repre-

sentative, Peterson was selected to serve on the NDSC, which he did for seven years. As he learned more about the organization's role and the soy checkoff, he became more active.

"The more I learned by participating in these organizations, the more intrigued I got, the more I wanted to learn and the more I wanted to be a part of the decision-making process," Peterson says.

Peterson became chair of the NDSC during his tenure on the council and helped the organization maneuver through some times of transition.

Peterson termed off the NDSC board, and 18 months later, he was selected by the NDSGA to represent North Dakota on the American Soybean Association's (ASA) board.

Peterson states that, prior to serving on the ASA board of directors, he had never been to Washington, D.C. He now estimates that he's been to the nation's capital nearly two dozen times.

"Serving on the ASA was a great opportunity to gain an understanding of Capitol Hill, the workings of Congress and the importance of bills like the farm bill that are vital to agriculture," Peterson asserts.

While on the ASA board, Peterson was selected to represent the ASA as a director on the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), which works to build a global preference for U.S. soy products. He served on the USSEC for six years, including two years as the chair.

"Along with that role, I had the opportunity to visit with leaders from the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) as well as visiting various embassies. I can remember going to the Chinese embassy a few times and the Pakistan embassy while in D.C., making the trip over to two trading partners, and expressing our thanks and our continued interest in trading with them," Peterson recounts. "How many people get that kind of an opportunity? I just think that I'm quite privileged to have had that opportunity."

Worthington, Minnesota, farmer Bill Gordon served alongside Peterson while Gordon was the ASA president.

"Monte is a one-of-a-kind leader," Gordon says. "He was one of the most selfless, caring, dedicated leaders I ever worked with. He never stopped talking about how he could benefit North Dakota, the region and U.S. soy. When he was USSEC chairman, the man



For nearly two decades, Valley City farmer Monte Peterson had a hand in growing North Dakota's soybean industry.

was diligent, and he traveled away from his farm, and he was always promoting U.S. soy, trying to make a better market for everybody. If we had more farmers and leaders like Monte, the world would be a better place.”

Navigating Challenges

Peterson’s tenure on the USSEC came during some challenging times that included a trade war with China. Few industries were hit harder by that trade war than agriculture, and few states were more affected than North Dakota as soybean sales to China slowed to a trickle.

“We didn’t stop trying to market U.S. soy during the trade war,” Peterson maintains. “It became obvious that what we had been trying to do all along in diversifying markets was absolutely the most important strategy that we could have, and it reignited our efforts to expand into other markets. We got to see some of the fruits from that devotion in the case of countries like Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh.”

“We went through the China trade issues together, and nobody was impacted more than Monte,” contends USSEC CEO Jim Sutter. “He brought a great perspective and really a reminder about the need to be diversifying markets.”

In addition to navigating the trade war with China, Peterson



Whether he was in Washington D.C., at a conference overseas or in the seat of his combine, Peterson was dedicated to expanding opportunities for North Dakota soybeans.

was the USSEC chair during the COVID-19 pandemic, which presented myriad challenges for an organization which is tasked with building markets around the world.

“Normally, our chairs are very active, traveling around the world helping to represent U.S. soy,” Sutter explains. “Monte did such a great job representing U.S. soy on more virtual meetings than he probably wants to remember. He was such a great champion for U.S. soy and was just tireless in terms of being able to represent the USSEC. He brought a lot of great support to me as we worked through a lot of issues with travel policies and issues in various countries with COVID policies.”

In addition to hosting virtual meetings, Peterson has represented North Dakota and U.S. soybean farmers at events and trade missions around the world. He’s also hosted numerous trade teams at his Valley City farm.

Lasting Influence

Peterson retires from the ASA board in December, wrapping up another chapter in his distinguished volunteer career.

“It’s just been a tremendous opportunity for me,” Peterson states. “I couldn’t be more pleased with the opportunities that have come my way, and hopefully, I’ve provided some value back to the organizations and to my fellow soybean producers.”

Among the most memorable parts of his soybean-promoting career are the friendships that he’s made with other farmers across the country who are dedicated to promoting the soy industry. Having seen the soybean industry from nearly every perspective, Peterson recognizes the need for checkoff and policy organizations to work together.

“My focus for years has been about collaboration and how we work together,” Peterson asserts.

“It was obvious to me the tremendous value that the checkoff can bring to the research and the promotion of soybean production across the U.S. and, of course, here in North Dakota. But there is another link, and that is the policy and advocacy side of things which checkoff boards can’t work on. One organization is just as vitally important as the other one, so it’s even more important, in my belief, that the organizations collaborate as well as they can to obtain and to achieve the desired results for our fellow producers.”

Peterson says that farmers can influence the future of their own industry by becoming NDSGA members, calling membership the vehicle by which farmers can make sure that policy and advocacy work gets done on their behalf.

—Story and photos by staff, Wanbaugh Studios and American Soybean Association



As an American Soybean Association director, Peterson (second from left) advocated for favorable ag policy.



As chairman of the U.S. Soybean Export Council, Peterson met with customers and potential buyers to build a preference for U.S. soy.

Give it Back

Nearly every effective organization or outreach effort has committed members to thank for a good portion of that success. Nowhere is that notion more true than in agriculture. I have had the opportunity to serve on the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) for over five years, including two years as the chair. My tenure with the organization will end in June 2024. I've learned many things over the course of my service, including recognizing the importance of giving back.

Farming can be a very individualized occupation. Many farmers love the independence that comes with making their own decisions and trying new things that they think will better their operations. Farmers are also the beneficiaries of collective investments, which have been made through the soybean checkoff, in important areas such as research, market development, outreach and education.

When I started farming over 20 years ago, there were very few people in my area raising soybeans. Only about 5% of the acreage near me was planted with soybeans. Now, many farms in my area plant 40% to 50% soybeans. Some of that growth can be attributed to the work that is supported by the soybean checkoff and is overseen by the NDSC.

The global demand for soybeans remains strong, thanks, in part, to efforts to build relationships and markets around the world. Many of those efforts are supported by checkoff funds and are overseen by your fellow farmers.

Now, we're experiencing a period of processing growth, the likes of which we've never seen, in the state. The opening of one crush plant, with another to follow next year, gives North Dakota farmers options that they've never had before.

These success stories may not have happened without a team of dedicated farmer-leaders who gave of their time and their expertise to help grow the soybean industry. Now, it's your turn to consider giving back.

The NDSC is, once again, seeking farmers who are interested in serving as county repre-

sentatives. The 2024 election process will begin in December for the following counties:

District 3: LaMoure and Dickey Counties

District 4: Cass County

District 6: Stutsman County

District 11: Divide, Williams, Burke, Mountrail, Renville, Ward, Bottineau, McHenry, Rolette, Pierce, Towner, Benson and Ramsey Counties

Soybean producers who reside in these counties are encouraged to nominate a fellow producer or to consider nominating themselves to run for county representative.

These openings are the perfect opportunity to consider giving your time and expertise to a growing soybean industry.

To learn more about the NDSC election process, visit bit.ly/NDSCelections.



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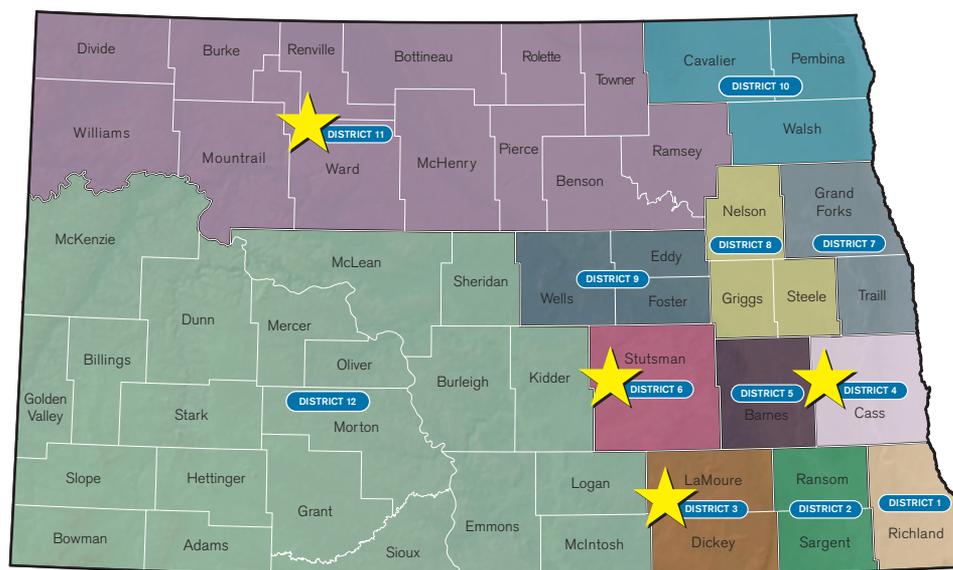
The ND Soybean Council's 2024 Election Process will begin in December 2023, for the following districts:

District 3: Dickey and LaMoure Counties

District 4: Cass County

District 6: Stutsman County

District 11: Benson, Bottineau, Burke, Divide, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Ramsey, Renville, Rolette, Towner, Ward and Williams Counties



Council Service Offers Education, Connections

These days, nearly every business, ranging from fuel stations and farm supply stores to credit card companies, offers rewards that pay people back for being loyal customers. The North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) doesn't offer a rewards program, but many farmers who have served on the NDSC feel that they've gotten back as much from their service as they've given.

The NDSC is a farmer-led organization that directs the investment of checkoff funds to grow the opportunities for North Dakota's soybean farmers.

Warwick, North Dakota, farmer Austin Langley served on the NDSC for six years from 2016 to 2022, including a term as chairman.

"That was the best six years, being on the soybean council," Langley says.

Each year, the NDSC holds elections for county soybean representatives. Those individuals have the potential to serve on the statewide NDSC board of directors. This year, seats are open in District 3, which includes LaMoure and Dickey Counties; District 4, which consists of Cass County; District 6, which is Stutsman County; and District 11, which is comprised of Divide, Williams, Burke, Mountrail, Renville, Ward, Bottineau, McHenry, Rolette, Pierce, Towner, Benson and Ramsey Counties. (See page 8.) Soybean farmers who reside in those counties are eligible for nomination.

Matt Gast of Valley City served on the

NDSC before being appointed to the United Soybean Board (USB), the national checkoff organization. In his experience, soybean council service gave him a broader understanding of agriculture's influence.

"It gives you a big picture of North Dakota agriculture," Gast asserts. "Probably my biggest takeaway from serving on the board is how important ag is to the state of North Dakota and how important the work is that we do at the state and national level to promote soybeans, find new uses, and to fund things that get a return on investment to farmers with their checkoff dollars. For every dollar a farmer puts into the checkoff at the national level, they get \$12.34 back."

Lasting Connections

Because the NDSC is comprised of farmers from across the state, Gast and Langley describe how they've made some lasting connections.

"I think the most enjoyable thing being on the soybean council would have been relationship building with people from just across the state and across the country and across the world," Langley explains, "and through those relationships, learning an in-depth analysis of the soybean industry. I still have phone conversations with people I met on the council. You learn more than just things in the soybean industry; you can see how others do things and bring that knowledge back to your farm, whether it's about soybeans, wheat, corn or marketing.



Matt Gast and Austin Langley talked to guests about soybeans during the Banquet in a Field event in 2017.

There's just so many endless opportunities to learn and garner information."

"I'm in my fourth year on the USB, so I've been off the council now for four and a half years," Gast states. "I still talk to those guys that I was on the board with and became lifelong friends with some of them."

Board service may offer camaraderie with other farmers, but there's important work to be done investing in research, market development, education and outreach. Serving on the NDSC gives farmers a front row seat to changes in the soybean industry.

"It's fast paced," Langley says. "Things are changing every day in the in the soybean industry. There are no boring moments."

Gast describes how he's had the opportunity to participate in trade missions to other countries that are customers of U.S. and North Dakota soybeans.

"It's eye opening to see how fortunate we are and how dependent some of these countries are on U.S. and North Dakota soybeans and how we need to continue to grow our export markets to continue to feed the world," Gast explains. "That's something that a lot of people don't think about."

Gast contends that growers see their beans from the combine to the elevator. Then, the crop is out of sight and out of mind. With his involvement on the NDSC and the USB, he's

—Story continued on page 27



Matt Gast was a co-chair during the Northern Corn and Soybean Expo in 2019.



Building the Industry

The demand for low-carbon fuels such as renewable diesel is putting North Dakota at the forefront of a rapidly growing industry. That growth is spurring opportunities for a broad range of new careers which are connected to agriculture.

Marathon Petroleum Corporation (MPC) Process Optimization Engineer Mitchell Braegelmann is one of the young professionals who is carving a career in a growing industry. Braegelmann grew up near Kimball, Minnesota, and attended the University of North Dakota where he earned

his master's degree in chemical engineering. While he was an undergraduate student, Braegelmann worked with Distinguished Professor Wayne Seames, Ph.D., through a summer grant program that was funded, in part, by the North Dakota Soybean Council.

"Dr. Seames was the principal investigator, and he had secured some funds to study biofuel development from any feedstocks," Braegelmann recalls. "There was a handful of oils like canola, rapeseed and soy. Other researchers were focused on the pyrolysis unit to create biofuels. My research was on the separation of the resulting mixture. I spent two

summers and a full year doing my research project on the separations of these biofuels created in their onsite reactor."

Braegelmann is putting that biofuel training to work at the MPC renewable diesel refinery in Dickinson.

"My current role is as a process optimization engineer, and I'm really responsible for monitoring and improving the process," Braegelmann explains.

For several years, Braegelmann monitored the refining process, making certain that the facility was delivering the reactions which were needed, getting the required separations and attaining the desired heat transfer through all the processing equipment to take feedstocks (including soybean oil, distillers corn oil and tallow) and turn them into renewable diesel.

For the past several months, Braegelmann has been looking into potential new opportunities for the Dickinson site.

"That includes modifications to our existing process to recover more energy or to increase yields of our product, all the way up to some of the larger projects that Marathon is looking for to position Dickinson for the future," Braegelmann says, "so the next opportunity, if you will, in the renewable fuels space."

Braegelmann states that, because feedstock costs and utilities are the largest expenses, maximizing the value along every step of the refining process is important.

"It's about making sure that we're using absolutely every bit of that molecule and processing it in such a way that it has the highest value leaving the facility and that we are getting the highest value product, and then the next highest value, and then the next on down the line," Braegelmann contends. "It's a continual process, something that we are constantly working on, and we'll never fully get there, but there has been a lot

of progress in the three years since this facility started up."

In recent years, the biofuel industry in North Dakota has accelerated rapidly, and Braegelmann expects that growth trajectory to continue. In September, Green Bison Soy Processing in Spiritwood, a joint venture between MPC and Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), started receiving soybeans, and the site is expected to begin processing those beans soon, with the oil destined for Dickinson's renewable diesel refinery.

"This will supply Marathon with additional local feedstocks, more deeply integrating our operations in North Dakota," Braegelmann asserts. "I think there really is a bright future in this industry with a lot of room for continued growth, including other feedstocks. North Dakota is a very agricultural state, and I think there's going to be a lot of opportunities for continued growth, certainly in renewable diesel, but also in other areas of the biofuels sector."

To learn more about renewable fuels at Marathon Petroleum, visit bit.ly/MarathonRenewableFuels.

*—Story by Daniel Lemke,
photos by staff and courtesy
of Mitch Braegelmann*



The Marathon Petroleum Corporation Dickinson refinery converts feedstocks like soybean oil into renewable diesel.



UND grad Mitchell Braegelmann is helping shape the future of renewable fuels in North Dakota.

Training for Emerging Opportunities

The North Dakota State University (NDSU) Center for Trading and Risk (CTR) opened more than a decade ago to expand teaching, research and outreach about the risk related to commodity marketing and financial analysis. The effort was supported by many groups involved with agriculture in the state, including the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC). Given the growth with the state's agriculture industry, the CTR's opening couldn't have been timed much better because the need for well-trained ag industry leaders was expanding.

"We talked to employers when we first started this in 2012, and they said they needed more students, better training, better technology," recalls NDSU Distinguished Professor William Wilson, Ph.D. "Every company looked at their company and realized that they had to fill the pipeline of future employees. Number one, they (companies)

needed to get them (employees) there. Secondly, because of the state of the industry, they (companies) tried to get the smartest people possible. Thirdly, they (companies) knew the technology of commodity marketing and information was changing radically, so they wanted to address those issues."

Jessica Fleck from Mandan earned a Bachelor of Science in agricultural economics and a Bachelor of Science in crop and weed sciences from NDSU in 2018. She also received a master's degree in applied economics and agribusiness.

"I initially pursued a degree in crop and weed sciences with a minor in agribusiness at NDSU, but found I was enjoying my agribusiness courses more," Fleck says. "I looked into earning an ag economics degree, still allowing me to graduate on time with my class in May of 2018. The addition of the ag economics degree gave me the opportunity to enroll in two of Dr. Wilson's com-

modity trading courses."

Fleck worked as a teaching assistant, which exposed her to many different software systems that the CTR provided as well as the students' different learning styles. Because the CTR held lab hours for students to come in and ask questions about assignments and systems, Fleck deepened her

understanding of the material.

Her training and experience led to three different internship opportunities in grain trading, with her final internship being with ADM (Archer Daniels Midland Company) in Decatur, Illinois. ADM hired her full time in January of 2020. For North Dakota's soybean farmers,

—*Story continued on page 32*



Jessica Fleck (far right) is using her NDSU training as a merchandiser for the Green Bison Soy Processing facility in Spiritwood, North Dakota.

2024 Best of the Best in Wheat and Soybean Research

February 7, 2024 – Alerus Center, Grand Forks

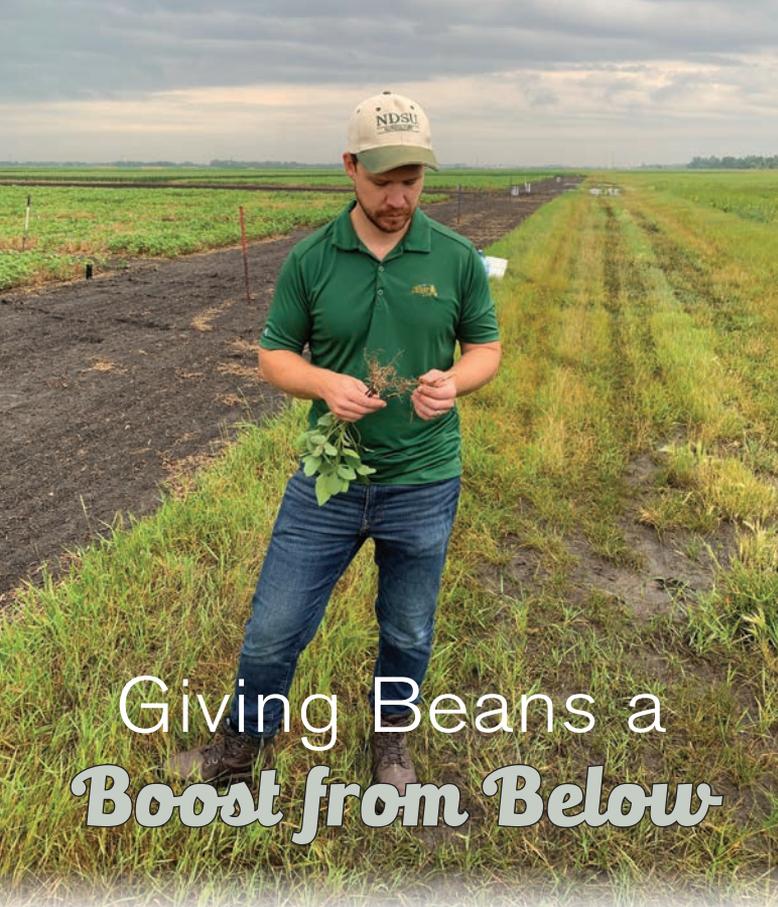
February 8, 2024 – Courtyard by Marriot, Moorhead

The annual Best of the Best in Wheat and Soybean Research workshop offers growers a chance to learn the latest in checkoff-supported wheat and soybean production from researchers and extension specialists. Featured session topics include:

Weed control, weather issues, pest management, cover crops and more!

Best of the Best is proudly sponsored by: MN Association of Wheat Growers, MN Wheat Research & Promotion Council, MN Soybean Research & Promotion Council, ND Soybean Council, ND Grain Growers Association and ND Wheat Commission

Visit mnwheat.org/council for upcoming registration details



Giving Beans a Boost from Below

Sometimes, the little things can make a big difference in achieving the maximum crop yield. For soybeans, it's the really little things—like microbes—that may have a big influence.

Soybean research funded by the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) is digging deeper to understand the role that inoculants and microbes can play for improving soybean yields.

The North Dakota State University (NDSU) Assistant Professor Barney Geddes, Ph.D., is leading several research projects to study soybean inoculants which are used to ensure that a microbe called rhizobium is present in the soil.

Soybean is a legume crop that can fix its own nitrogen by forming a symbiotic relationship with nitrogen-fixing bacteria known as *Bradyrhizobia japonicum*.

“That relationship is a sustainable alternative to having to fertilize with nitrogen fertilizer because rhizobia take nitrogen directly out of the air and transforms it into usable forms for the plant,” Geddes

says. “Soybeans are capable of this amazing process, but not all crops are. So, if farmers can take advantage of that symbiosis and reduce the amount of nitrogen inputs in their operation, that's a great thing.”

Soybean can obtain up to 50 to 75% of its nitrogen requirements from the air when nitrogen-fixing bacteria have established functioning nodules on the roots. For nitrogen fixation to occur, the nitrogen-fixing bacteria must be established in the soil through seed inoculation – a process of adding a specific live rhizobium to the seed or the soil with the goal of promoting improved N-fixation during the growing season.

Inoculants are often added to the soil in fields where soybeans haven't been planted before or when it has been a number of years since soybeans were planted. Currently NDSU research recommends adding inoculants if soybeans haven't been grown in a particular field for the past five years. Because adding inoculants is much cheaper per acre than applying fertilizer, getting more productivity from the natural

soil microbes could be a big benefit to farmers. Still, any added inputs are an additional cost for farmers.

Geddes describes how research is underway to learn more about when inoculants are working and when they're not. Conditions such as drought, high soil pH and other factors can affect how well the rhizobia fare in the soil. Inoculant-related projects are also looking at where technology, including plant breeding, could be improved to get more gains from the inoculants.

One goal of the NDSU research is to develop a soil testing tool that helps farmers determine if they have enough rhizobia in their soil to form a functional symbiosis with the soybeans. Studies are also examining how various agronomic conditions affect rhizobium populations.

“Some of the advice about not needing to inoculate for about five years after the first time comes from research in pretty fertile soil,” Geddes asserts. “We've been looking at western North Dakota where the soils are a bit drier and trying to understand if that advice will hold up out there or if rhizobia will struggle a bit more, and maybe farmers should be inoculating more often in drier conditions.”

Geddes states that most inoculants currently offer a one-size-fits-all approach. He believes that there is potential for improving the technology to tailor an inoculant to provide the optimal benefit for a particular soybean variety.

“That would be a better approach because there are interactions between the plant and the

rhizobia that, on a genetic basis, might affect the productivity of the symbiosis. So, we're exploring if there are different inoculants that perform a little bit better under more challenging conditions for symbiosis, like drought and acidic pH and waterlogged conditions,” Geddes explains.

Geddes contends that a collaboration with NDSU soybean breeder Carrie Miranda, Ph.D., could result in the production of soybean varieties with enhanced symbiosis bred into the seed.

“So far, the work we have done indicates that the recommendation for adding inoculants after five years is right, but we have seen also cases where, fields will just not have many rhizobia left even after two years,” Geddes says. “I recommend farmers stick to that general five-year recommendation, but if they want to hedge their bets and really rely on the symbiosis, then they might want to consider inoculating more often.”

Geddes hopes that, in the near future, the symbiotic relationship between rhizobia and soybeans can play a larger role in helping North Dakota farmers improve soybean yields.

“My long-term goal is to get to the point where soybean yield, whether there's any nitrogen in the soil or not, is absolutely maxed out because the symbiosis is functioning so well,” Geddes states. “There's a bit of work to be done, but hopefully, we can get there.”

—Story by Daniel Lemke,
photo by staff

To watch a video highlighting Geddes' research, please visit bit.ly/NDSUGeddesSoyNodulationVideo.



To learn more about nitrogen and soybean nodulation, visit bit.ly/NDSUNitrogenSoyNodulation.





WHAT'S ON SANTA'S LIST? U.S. SOY PRODUCTS!

Soy's applications go beyond food and animal feed, and soy's influence does, too. Purchasing art supplies, sporting goods and other products made with soy not only supports local farmers and communities, but also contributes to the health of our planet.

Before Santa Claus packs his sleigh for the holiday season, explore the many affordable, sustainable soy-based gifts for everyone on his list.

For Kids

• Soy-Based Crayons

Companies such as Prang and Azafran swap petroleum-based paraffin commonly found in traditional crayons for soy ingredients to create vivid crayons that any child would love to receive. Soy ingredients create a creamy texture, allowing for easy application on paper. To learn more, visit prang.com or bit.ly/SoyAzafran.



• Crayon Rocks

Made of a soft soy wax and tinted with mineral powders, Crayon Rocks come in vibrant colors and make beautiful textures. Designed to strengthen the tripod grip muscles, these crayons prepare little fingers and hands for handwriting. Learn more at crayonrocks.com.



Clothing Made from Soy Materials

• Baby's Socks

Adding Babysoy Stay on Socks with Grips to Santa's gift list can make a baby's early walking adventures safer. Grips provide traction on hard floors, and a soy protein cotton blend fabric keeps babies warm and dry to regulate their body temperature. To order, visit babysoyusa.com.



For the Fashion Forward

• Soy Handbag

Individuals returning to the office would

be thrilled to receive a durable, spacious tote, especially one by household name designer Tory Burch, from Santa. The luxury label has partnered with an American biotechnology company, Modern Meadow, to produce its Ella Bio tote bag from soy grown in North America. Order at bit.ly/SoyEllaBioSmall.



For Homebodies

• Soy Candles

Pride of Dakota is a program created and managed by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture to promote and market North Dakota businesses. Three North Dakota soy candle companies are members.

Lighthouse Soy Candles provides soy candle products and soy bath and body products. The company offers hand-poured soy candles in containers, pillars and votives and soy wax melts. Visit lighthousesoyproducts.com.

Little Town Soy Candle Company products are handmade in small batches in the small town of Gladstone, North Dakota. Every candle is hand wicked, stirred, poured, labeled and packaged. Visit littletownsoycandleco.com.

Ten Acres Candles has products which are hand-crafted in North Dakota and are made with quality, clean ingredients to cozy up spaces. Learn more at tenacrescandles.com.



For Self-Care

• Soy-Based Beard Oil

When No Shave November extends to December, men might appreciate all natural beard oil by Lavish. Soybean oil joins peppermint and sweet almond oil to provide light moisture and sheen for men's beards and scalps (Yes, it's multipurpose!) while stimulating circulation and improving hair elasticity. Learn more at lavishproductline.com/product/beard-oil.



• Soy-Based Cosmetics

Santa can help the fashion-forward on his list to achieve full, smooth lips without fillers by stuffing their stockings with Huda Beauty Silk Balm Hydrating and Nourishing Lip Balm that is infused with soybean extract. Order at bit.ly/HudaSoySilkBalm.



• Soy SPF

It's always important to wear sun protection factor (SPF)! Containing soy isoflavones, Soy Doctor's Ultra Light Moisture Screen offers SPF 30 protection. Go to bit.ly/SoySPF.



For the Pet

• Soy Leashes

Pets are a part of the family and should be included on Santa's gift list. Available in fuchsia or mint, the New Earth Soy Dog Leash is crafted from a blend of all-natural soy fibers that withstand normal wear and tear. Order at bit.ly/SoyLeashes.



• Cat Collars

Earth Soy offers adjustable collars for cats which are made from 100% eco-friendly soy fibers. Order at bit.ly/SoyCatCollars.

For Shoe Aficionados

• Soy Sandals

Whether a loved one is traveling to a warm-weather locale or lives in one, Okabashi offers stylish flip flops and other warm-weather shoes made from soybean oil. Go to okabashi.com.



• Soy Sneakers

For people on your list are active, consider soy-based sneakers. Sketchers uses soy-based rubber, and the company collaborated with Goodyear to create fashionable and better-gripping shoes. Go to bit.ly/SoySketchers.



Before drafting this year's letter to Santa Claus, consider all the soy-based products that can make life more comfortable, fun and sustainable for everyone on your list.

—Story courtesy of the United Soybean Board
photos courtesy of companies listed

Looking for the perfect Christmas gift? Learn about and shop for products that use U.S. soy as a main ingredient at bit.ly/USsoyproducts





Higher Interest Costs in Store

Higher interest rates increase the cost of borrowing money, and they can also cost farmers money in less obvious ways. Interest rates have about doubled in the past year, which dramatically changes how much it costs farmers to store grain.

When farmers harvest grain, they

have the option of selling that grain right away or storing it to take advantage of expected price increases down the road. Because most farmers have some sort of debt, whether in the form of an operating loan or a loan on equipment or farmland, they could take the grain, turn it into cash and pay down debt. By storing, farmers are willing to bear

the opportunity costs in anticipation of receiving potentially higher prices at a later date.

“Because interest rates for many years have been so low, the cost of keeping your grain in the bin has been pretty low,” says North Dakota State University Extension Crops Economist Frayne Olson, Ph.D. “We’ve become accustomed to not even really thinking about it. We’re now seeing higher interest rates so that the cost of storage has gone up.”

Olson contends that, because interest rates have been so low for so long, it’s been easy for growers and grain managers to become complacent when calculating the true cost of storage.

“I don’t want people to make poor decisions,” Olson explains, “without recognizing the change.”

Rising interest rates also mean that it costs more per bushel per month for elevators to store grain. Olson describes how, if a grain elevator is buying the grain from farmers, the elevators have money invested and that it’s going to take time for elevators to resell the crop. Someone

has to pay those interest costs.

“If you look at the price in the nearby futures market, the one that’s closest to today’s date versus the futures market prices, as you go further and further into time, typically what happens is the prices go up just a little bit, and that’s called a carry in the market,” Olson clarifies. “That carry in the market is the futures market signaling to farmers if it wants them to store or not. If there’s a big carry in the market, it means that, for every contract month, as we go into the future, that price goes higher. This helps pay a portion of the cost of storage.”

Olson says that the local basis can also help pay for storage costs. At harvest, the inflow of grain is much more rapid than the outflow. The local cash price typically starts to fall as a disincentive to sell today and is a stronger incentive for farmers to store. Once harvest wraps up, the basis tends to be less negative, creating an incentive to sell.

What farmers have to consider is how much it’s costing them to store

—Story continued on page 21

NDSU Extension’s Getting it Right in Soybean Production Webinar

Soybean producers, crop advisers and others who are interested in soybean production management should plan to participate in the Getting it Right in Soybean Production webinar on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, starting at 8:30 a.m. and ending at noon.

This online-only meeting will be hosted on Zoom. The webinar is organized and will be conducted by North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension, and the event is supported by the North Dakota Soybean Council.

|| This soybean educational event will provide research updates and recommendations that can help farmers with soybean production decisions for the 2024 growing season. ||

—Greg Endres, Extension cropping systems specialist and the event’s organizer.

Tentative topics to be discussed include variety selection, plant establishment, soil management and plant nutrients, plant protection (weed, disease and insect management) and soybean markets. The primarily live presentations will be given by NDSU Extension crop specialists.

Participants will have the opportunity to ask the speakers questions after the presentations. The event will be recorded and archived. Certified crop adviser (CCA) continuing education credits will be available.

Everyone who pre-registers will receive emailed instructions about how to participate.

Additional Getting it Right crop production webinars are scheduled via Zoom for:

- Jan. 30, 2024: Dry beans
- Feb. 27: Sunflowers
- March 12: Canola

For more information, contact Greg Endres at (701) 652-2951 or by email at gregory.endres@ndsu.edu.

—Story courtesy of NDSU Extension

There is no participation fee, but pre-registration is required at bit.ly/NDSUGettingRight



NDSU | EXTENSION



Tuesday, February 6, 2024 • Butler Arena • Red River Valley Fairgrounds • West Fargo

Tentative Agenda

7:00 a.m. | Butler Building

Registration, Breakfast, Research Pavilion and Trade Show

8:00 a.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Welcome
Emcees Katie Pinke and Mick Kjar

8:10 a.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

One Voice for Agriculture
Brandi Buzzard, Buzzards Beat

9:00 a.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Corn and Soybean Trade
Jim Sutter, CEO, U.S. Soybean Export Council;
Cary Sifferath, Vice President, U.S. Grains Council

9:50 a.m. | Butler Arena Trade Show

Visit Trade Show Vendors and Research Pavilion

10:15 a.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Priority Policy Issues for Corn and Soybean
Christy Seyfert, Executive Director of Government Affairs, American Soybean Association; Wayne Stoskopf, Director Public Policy, National Corn Growers Association

11:05 a.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

National Perspectives on the Corn and Soybean Checkoffs
John Jansen, Vice President, Oil Strategy, United Soybean Board;
Neil Caskey, CEO, National Corn Growers Association

12:00 p.m. | Hartl Building

Lunch
ND Corn Association and ND Soybean Association Annual Meetings

1:15 p.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Weather Outlook for North Dakota and the Upper Great Plains
Mark Ewens

2:10 | Butler Arena Trade Show

Break
Visit Trade Show and Research Pavilion

2:50 p.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Geopolitics Update
Peter Zeihan, Zeihan on Geopolitics



4:00 p.m. | Butler Arena Main Stage

Closing Remarks

Agenda subject to change

NEW LOCATION: Butler Arena • Red River Valley Fairgrounds West Fargo, North Dakota



Plan to Attend. Plan to Learn.

For more information visit bit.ly/NorthernCornSoyExpo

Online registration opens January 4, 2024.





NDSGA Delivers Input on Prevented Planting Coverage

Many North Dakota farmers are all too familiar with prevented planting. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), North Dakota had more than 2.37 million acres of prevented planting in 2022 alone.

Prevented-planting coverage is available through Federal Crop Insurance. Prevented-planting insurance provisions provide valuable coverage when extreme weather conditions prevent the expected plantings. Prevented planting is when a producer is unable to plant an insured crop (due to an insurable cause of loss) in time to grow a viable crop. Final planting dates and late planting periods are detailed in a producer's crop insurance policy, and they vary by crop and location. Prevented-planting coverage is intended to assist with the normal costs associated with preparing the land up to the point of seed going into the ground. The insurance covers as many as 37 different crops in cases where farmers are unable to get those crops planted (due to weather or other related conditions) by the appropriate Risk Management

Agency (RMA) deadline.

The RMA is in the process of reviewing prevented-planting provisions for possible changes and upgrades. Members of the USDA's

RMA administration held a listening session in Fargo to obtain feedback from farmers, crop insurance providers and others about possible changes to prevented-planting coverage.

Dazey farmer and ASA director Justin Sherlock (far right) participated in a roundtable discussion with Sen. John Hoeven and RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger.



Justin Sherlock (standing) provided testimony on changes the NDSGA is advocating for in the prevented planting program.

North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) Director Justin Sherlock, who farms near Dazey, was among the farmers who provided feedback to RMA staff at the Fargo meeting, which included RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger.

“Because we’re in the Prairie Pothole Region, we face many challenges unique to this area and in North Dakota,” Sherlock says. “Not being allowed to perform drainage or other water management practices that most producers take for granted in other states means our needs are slightly different.”

Sherlock provided testimony because the NDSGA wants to protect or to enhance prevented-planting coverage.

Among the concerns that soybean growers have is that prevented-planting coverage is much lower for soybeans compared to other crops. For example, during the 2023 growing season, an operation in North Dakota may have been eligible to receive around \$450-\$480 of prevent-plant payments per acre for corn that could not be planted but may only receive around \$220-\$245 of prevent-plant indemnities per acre from a soybean prevent-plant claim. This situation puts soybean producers at a significant disadvantage. Farmers face many fixed costs, including land rent, machinery payments and labor costs, that still need to be covered even if a crop cannot be planted.

The NDSGA is supportive of allowing producers the option to choose either a projected price or a harvest price option for their prevented-planting policy because it would allow prevented planting to more closely mirror the current Revenue Protection offerings with the multi-peril crop insurance system. Many producers take advantage of the harvest price option if they are utilizing a revenue-protection insurance product. Prevented planting should also offer this option to mirror the producer’s decision which he/

she chooses in the spring for the bushels he/she actually harvests.

An additional change to the prevent-plant rules that the NDSGA would like to see regards the “1 in 4 Rule.” This rule requires that acreage must have been planted with an insurable crop, insured and harvested (or if not harvested, adjusted for claim purposes due to an insured cause of loss) in at least one of the previous 4 years. The NDSGA contends that the 1 in 4 requirements should not be applied to years in which a presidential or secretarial disaster declaration was issued during any period within the

planting window for that particular crop in the county where the disaster declaration was applicable. Making this rule change would help soybean producers maintain their prevent-plant eligibility because disaster declarations likely mean that the weather events were so extreme that they fall outside the normal range of weather events to which this rule was meant to apply.

The NDSGA is also advocating for farmers to, once again, have the choice to purchase a 10% additional coverage option. Farmers could “buy-up” coverage, which would allow producers to better tailor

their coverage to match their actual prevented-planting costs. The additional level of prevented-planting coverage would require farmers to pay additional premiums. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation removed the Plus-10 option in 2018, but the RMA has considered reinstating the program.

In addition to providing verbal testimony at the Fargo hearing, the NDSGA has also submitted written comments to the RMA.

—Story by *Daniel Lemke*,
photo by staff



THE CARBON CONUNDRUM 2.0

This year’s theme is all about carbon in agriculture. This one-day event will focus on the value proposition of soil carbon management on North Dakota farms and ranches.



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Contact **Amanda McClean** at amcclean@ndfu.org or 701-952-2126

FEBRUARY 20, 2024
9AM-3PM

North Dakota Farmers Union
Headquarters
1415 12th Ave SE
Jamestown ND 58401

Hosted by:



Strong Opposition to EPA Herbicide Strategy

The American Soybean Association (ASA) has led a coalition of 226 agricultural groups in voicing strong disapproval of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Endangered Species Act (ESA) Herbicide Strategy framework proposal. In a letter sent to the agency, the groups, including the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association, urged EPA to consider alternative or refined means for meeting its ESA obligations, expressing grave concern over the impacts the Herbicide Strategy would likely have on U.S. agricultural production and conservation efforts.

To minimize ecological impacts of herbicides on endangered species and their habitats, EPA is proposing an Herbicide Strategy intended to minimize erosion, runoff and spray drift from agricultural herbicides.

To minimize runoff risks, EPA would require on herbicide labels that growers gain "efficacy points" by implementing certain conservation practices including no-till practices, vegetative filter strips and contour terracing.

Many herbicide users could

need at least 6 points to comply with general label restrictions, while producers in four pesticide use limitation areas (PULA) could need 9 or more points to comply. Exemptions are available for fields under site-specific runoff reduction conservation plans or applications made 1,000 feet from any potential terrestrial or aquatic habitat, although ASA and other ag groups contend the definition of "habitat" is very broad, limiting the application of this exemption. Growers in areas with subsurface drainage may not be able to comply by attaining points and must direct all drainage into water retention ponds or buffer zones.

To minimize spray drift risks in the four PULAs, growers would have to implement downwind spray drift buffers up to 500-feet from habitat for aerial applications and up to 200-feet for ground applications. These distances can be reduced by installing windbreaks or using other mitigations, such as hooded sprayers or coarser droplet sizes.

"This incredibly complex, costly, and onerous proposal presents a significant threat to U.S. agricultural herbicide users

in the lower 48 states," the groups wrote. "It risks depriving farmers of tools they need to protect their crops; maintain important conservation practices; provide an affordable, sustainable food, fiber, and fuel supply; among many other benefits. Concerningly, this proposal also seems highly unlikely to be consistent with the agency's legal obligations under multiple federal statutes."

The groups outlined recommendations for future ESA proposals, along with suggestions for more science-based approaches to implementation that would fulfill EPA's obligations and minimize impacts on farmers and other pesticide users.

ASA also submitted comments urging EPA to scrap the proposal

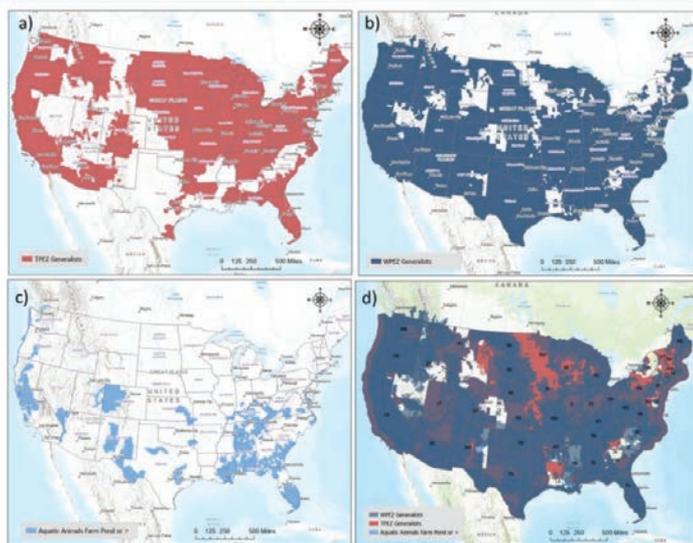
and seek alternative means to comply, underscoring how U.S. soybean farmers believe that the proposed herbicide strategy, "is so deeply and fundamentally flawed that it would not be possible for the agency to remedy these defects prior to finalization."

ASA also raised concerns with the proposal lacking sufficient, affordable options with which growers can comply. For many producers, the new regulations could cost their farms millions of dollars, while others may be unable to comply at all, jeopardizing their access to needed herbicides and thus threatening their businesses.

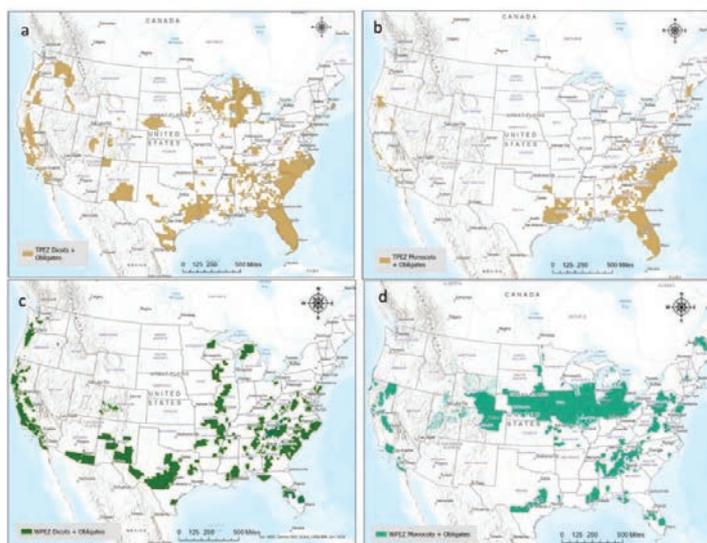
—Story by Daniel Lemke, graphics provided by ASA

BENEFITS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Agriculture advocates and farmers also have concerns with the proposal's likely impact on the environment. Many conservation practices, such as reduced tillage and cover crops, are highly dependent on herbicide access. Most growers in the U.S. terminate their cover crops with herbicides before planting their primary crop. Herbicides also afford farmers an alternative to tilling the soil to eradicate weeds, allowing for soil carbon sequestration and significant reductions in both soil erosion and tractor fuel use. These and other environmental benefits could be at risk if farmers lose access to herbicides under EPA's proposal.

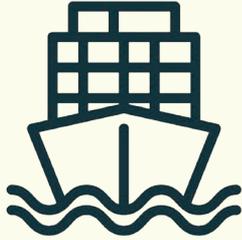


Areas with plant-reliant endangered species resulting in proposed general label herbicide restrictions.



Proposed PULAs containing endangered plants/obligates resulting in greater herbicide restrictions.

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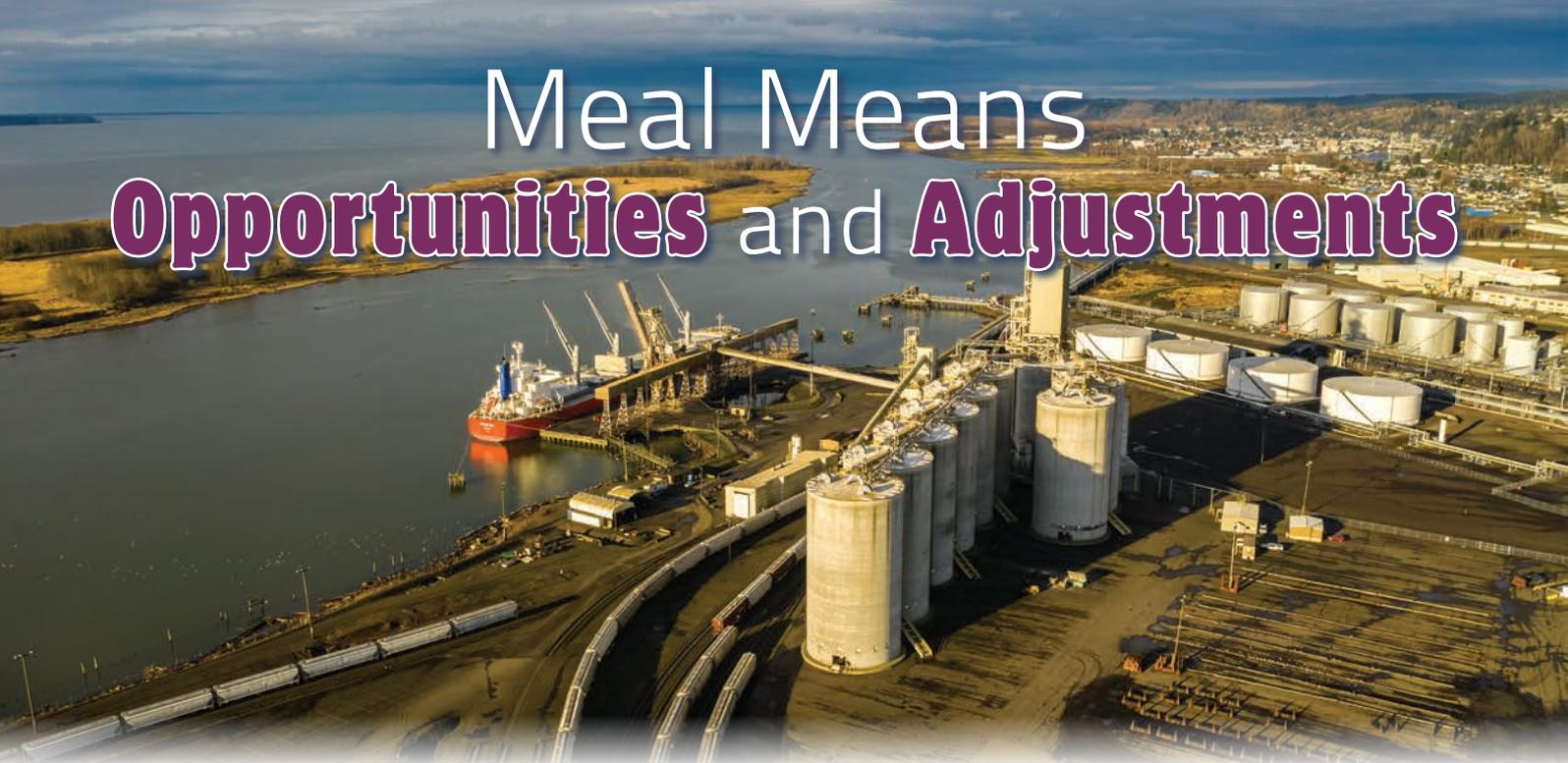
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WISHH is a program of the American Soybean Association and is funded in part by the United Soybean Board and state soybean board checkoff programs.

Meal Means Opportunities and Adjustments



The dynamics of North Dakota's soybean industry are changing. No longer reliant on solely exporting whole soybeans, in-state soy processing now means that more soybean meal will enter the supply chain.

Much of North Dakota's transportation infrastructure was developed to transport large shuttle trains filled with whole soybeans to terminals in the Pacific Northwest (PNW). Now, railroads and shipping ports will have to contend with increasing amounts of meal.

"Supply chains prefer consistency," says Mike Steenhoek, executive director of the Soy Transportation Coalition. "They prefer 365 days a year with a routine amount of volume that they need to handle from point of origin to point of destination. When you're shifting to a model of a processed product and are going from whole soybeans to soybean meal, you have more of the scenario transportation providers often prefer."

Steenhoek describes how, for years, railroads needed to have a lot of railcars available because the assumption was that the railroads would be moving whole soybeans in an often-compressed time. Most of those beans were

shipped between September and February. Shipping a high volume of soybeans in a short timeframe often taxed the system. With the introduction of more soybean meal production, shipping opportunities should be available year-round.

"This change could provide (a) benefit to the soybean industry because we'll increasingly be moving a higher value product, and it won't require as many railcars to do so," Steenhoek explains. "That's obviously an adjustment that railroads are making, and they're confident that they can handle the volume that's going to be produced, but it obviously is a change."

"I think, for the transportation and grain trading companies, there's definitely opportunity," says American Soybean Association Chief Economist Scott Gerlt. "More crushing plants provide higher soybean basis, which incentivizes more soybeans to be produced, and they'll need to be transported."

Addressing Growth

Railroads aren't the only entities adjusting to the changing soy industry. Grain trading companies and export terminals have recognized the shift in the nation's soybean industry not only in North

Dakota, but also in other parts of the country. Eleven new soybean processing plants are planned or are under construction, and several existing plants are undergoing expansion. Much of the growth with soybean processing is attributed to the increased demand for soybean oil for biofuels such as renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel.

To handle the anticipated increase with the soybean meal supply, trading and export companies are building and enhancing their capacity to store and to handle meal.

"EGT (Export Train Terminal) currently handles soybean meal for export through our Longview, Washington, facility," states David Jenkins, EGT's director of logistics. "We are expanding the facility to better serve our customers at both ends of our value chain, providing an additional export outlet for the incremental meal expected to be produced in the U.S."

EGT recently announced that it will nearly triple the current capacity of soybean meal storage at its Longview export terminal. The project also includes improving the handling capabilities, which enables the company to operate the facility with greater speed, flexibility and efficiency. Jenkins says

that all bulk products vary in their handling characteristics to some degree, but flowability is one of the biggest differences for soybean meal compared to whole beans.

"This investment will allow us to even better serve American farmers, providing an additional export outlet for the incremental meal expected to be produced in the U.S., mostly influenced by higher demand for vegetable oil from the renewable diesel industry," Jenkins contends.

Ag Processing, Inc. (AGP) has also announced an expansion at its current facility, Terminal 2, in Aberdeen, Washington, at the Port of Grays Harbor. The company is adding additional storage silos to bring the facility to around 100,000 metric tons (MT) of product storage. AGP has also announced the building of another ship-loading facility, Terminal 4 (T4), that should come online in late 2025.

"Once T4 opens, AGP plans to ship around 6 million metric tons (MMT) per year to southeast Asia and pull product from the Midwest," asserts Scott Ritzman of Ritz Ag Consulting.

Bigger supplies of soybean meal not only affect transportation and handling, but also change the

market dynamics.

“There is certainly an increase in competition of crush around the world, and the U.S. is becoming a stronger supplier to the global market,” Ritzman maintains. “The world continues to see an increase in population, which means there are more mouths to feed, and soybean meal is an excellent source of protein for feed in poultry, swine and aquaculture. Southeast Asia is a 17 MMT soybean meal market, and the U.S. historically has about a 14% market share. Our market share should increase as we have close to another 12 MMT of soybean meal available for export in the coming years.”

“It can be challenging, especially as we grow soybean meal exports; some countries, such as China, have their own domestic crushing infrastructure that they want to support,” Gerlt says. “It can be hard to break into those markets with meal. Southeast Asia is a prime market for soybean meal, and they’ve historically bought their soybean meal from Argentina, which is fairly cheap, so U.S. soybean meal exports are going to have to be priced fairly competitively.”

Exciting Times

North Dakota Soybean Council Director of Market Development Jena Bjertness doesn’t expect any

big issues with moving more meal because companies such as AGP and EGT currently operate in that space.

“I would anticipate that the process of exporting meal from the PNW will go pretty smoothly because both of these companies have exported meal before,” Bjertness explains, “They’re just going to be doing more of it now and with newer equipment.”

Marketing more soybean meal may present some challenges, but in the end, soybean farmers will, hopefully, be the beneficiaries of a changing industry.

“Anytime you can migrate along that value continuum where you’re exporting the higher value product, that’s going to be beneficial to farmers,” Steenhoek states. “The old adage within the soybean industry is that it’s better to export meat than meal and better to export meal than whole soybeans. Particularly in the state of North Dakota, that opportunity has not been accessible up to this point, and now it is. That’s something that is very exciting for North Dakota soybean growers. The fact that you’re seeing processing throughout the country is exciting for the industry.”

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photo courtesy of Port of Grays Harbor

—Story continued from page 14 grain versus selling it. For example, soybeans in November sold for around \$13 per bushel. With interest at 8%, it would cost farmers \$1.04 per bushel to store the grain for a year. Divided by 12 months, the total is about 8.7 cents per bushel per month to store the crop. A year ago, soybeans in November sold for about \$14.60 per bushel while interest rates were at 4%, so the storage costs were only about 4.9 cents per bushel per month.

“The cost of storing grain, the cost that we have to consider

per bushel per month in form of interest, is almost double from a year ago,” Olson states. “That really does change the math on how long we should store the crop and how much of a price increase we need to be able to justify storing this crop for a long time.”

Olson asserts that most elevators and processors recognize the situation and may offer pricing in future months that makes it worthwhile to store the grain. It’s still up to each individual farmer to determine what makes the most financial sense.

“If I’m storing the soybean crop



Save the Date
**NDLA's
5th Annual
Livestock Summit**

**January 30, 2024
10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.**
Hilton Garden Inn Fargo
4351 17th Ave South, Fargo, ND
FREE ADMISSION!



Calling all North Dakota agriculture producers, landowners, local leaders, and industry stakeholders!

Please join NDLA and our incredible array of member organizations and trade show vendors for a day filled with new knowledge, livestock development next steps and networking opportunities. The day will include a variety of breakout sessions, panel discussions, and an entertainment segment focused on celebrating animal agriculture's contributions to North Dakota's culture. County and Township board members and zoning staff are urged to attend to hear the many programs and services NDLA provides to ND communities.

For more information and to RSVP go to:
ndlivestock.org
or call 701-712-1488

Pictured: Panel discussion, NDLA 1st annual Summit, January 2019

The Grain Quality and Safety Connection

In 2020, North Dakota and Minnesota tied for the states with the second-most grain entrapments in the country, with seven incidents each, according to the 2020 Summary of U.S. Agricultural Confined Space-Related Injuries and Fatalities. State-wide numbers improved in 2021 when North Dakota had two grain bin incidents, and there was just one in 2022, even though there were 42 grain-related entrapments nationwide in 2022. That total was the highest number of grain entrapments in over a decade.

North Dakota State University Extension Farm and Ranch Safety Coordinator Angie Johnson says

that the information from 2020 may seem like old news, but the cause behind the increased number of incidents is what was most telling.

“That fall was horrible for harvest conditions,” Johnson recounts. “It was wet. Not only were field conditions wet, but it was really a struggle getting the grain to dry down.”

Johnson explains that there is a lot of research which shows how, if farmers have to deal with high moisture conditions going into harvest and during storage, it can be much more challenging to get and to keep stored grain in good condition.

“You’re going to see situations take place in the bin where that

grain becomes out of condition quite quickly because it was stored too wet,” Johnson asserts. “In 2020, I truly believe there’s a strong correlation with the weather conditions we saw that resulted in more individuals making that decision to go in the bin because they had some type of problem occur from grain crusting, plugging or bridging inside the bin.”

The quality of the grain going in the bin helps dictate the quality of what’s coming from the bin. Getting grain dried down to the recommended levels for long-term storage is important to maintain grain quality and to prevent mold, rot and grain bridging. Johnson recommends starting with clean bins that have had the seams properly caulked to make sure that moisture and insects can’t enter and cause problems.

Moisture isn’t the only concern for grain quality. Johnson contends that farmers often underestimate the amount of chaff and screenings which are put into the bins along with the grain.

“When we harvest grain, it’s not always just perfect grain. We’ve got broken kernels; in soybeans, there’s going to be pods, stem pieces, possibly leaf pieces,” Johnson explains. “It doesn’t take much for all of that to help create a caked-up layer.”

If possible, screening grain before or while it’s being augered into a bin can help alleviate some of the concerns with foreign material causing storage issues.

“If you’re able to stick the auger in or turn the sump on, and you empty out a bin without having to go inside at all, it means that you’ve managed your grain really well and it flowed,” Johnson says. “The biggest reason an individual chooses to go in the bin is because there’s something wrong. There’s something where, all of a sudden, grain quits flowing out of the auger system or something somewhere is plugged up.”

Despite a farmer’s best efforts,

grain problems can still arise, forcing farmers to consider going inside a bin. If that situation occurs, Johnson recommends that farmers slow down and think through the situation before taking action because hurried decisions can be problematic.

Johnson explains that dealing with plugged augers or bridging grain isn’t as simple as strapping on a safety harness and jumping into a bin. She describes how grain bin roofs are designed to keep grain dry and for snow to slide off, but they’re not made to support the weight of people lowering themselves into a grain bin.

The best way to deal with any sort of blockage is from the outside.

“If there’s any way you can safely try to get that grain to start flowing while staying on the outside of the bin, that’s my biggest recommendation,” Johnson contends.

Johnson describes how it’s unfortunate that there isn’t a lot of research-based information on methods to get the grain moving, but she has heard of farmers using poles to poke at stuck grain from the outside; others have tried air compressors to power through blockages. She’s even heard of farmers using concrete vibrators on the bin walls to shake the caked grain loose.

Going into a grain bin should only be done as a last resort, and even then, it should be done with proper fall protection, using lock-out/tag-out procedures to shut down and lock all power sources, and with the assistance of others. Preserving grain condition is one way to keep the need to enter a grain bin from arising.

For more information about grain bin safety, please visit bit.ly/NDSUGrainBinSafety.

For guidance from NDSU Extension regarding harvesting, drying, and storing soybeans, visit bit.ly/NDSUSoyHarvestStoring.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photos by staff and Wanbaugh Studios



NDSU Farm and Ranch Safety Coordinator Angie Johnson says grain quality plays a part in farm safety.



NSM Midwest Crop Tour Buyers get an Up-Close Look at Soy Quality

Northern Soy Marketing (NSM), a soy quality marketing effort comprised of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin soybean boards, hosted a Southeast Asia trade team to the upper Midwest earlier this harvest. NSM's inaugural Midwest Crop Tour took place September 11-15 in North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska, before ending in the Pacific Northwest.

The team of 13 international buyers included professionals who were employed in their companies' procurement, purchasing, market research, supply chain and other divisions. The companies represented on the tour included some of the largest soybean purchasers in southeast Asia: Charoen Pokphand, Japfa, Thai Vegetable Oil and more.

"These are big companies from both countries that are representing," NSM Chairman Patrick O'Leary asserted. "It's very important they see how we produce high-quality beans."

The multi-state visit was handled in coordination with the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC).

North Dakota

The "reverse crop" tour started in North Dakota where participants were exposed to more than just soybeans. As the bus pulled into North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) Director Dallas Loff's farmyard in Richland County, attendees were glued to the window as they watched the sugarbeet harvest unfold.

Because most group members had never heard of sugarbeets, it was an excellent opportunity to highlight North Dakota's agricultural diversity. Of course, Loff gave them an in-depth view of the soybean growing-and-harvest process for his operation.

"My great-great-grandpa started farming here in the late 1800s," proclaimed Loff, who farms near Wahpeton, North Dakota, and represents North Dakota for NSM. "This is where I grew up, and now, I farm with my dad and brother."

The group also spent a few hours at the NDSC's office, hearing from Executive Director Stephanie Sinner and Research Programs Coordinator Miki Miheguli. Sinner highlighted the state's expanding soybean growing region.

"Soybean production has grown north and west in the state of North Dakota," Sinner explained. "Checkoff investments in variety research have been a big factor."

North Dakota's shuttle facilities

were also highlighted.

"Our farmers have invested in their local elevator system to put shuttle facilities in over the last 15-20 years," Sinner declared. "It's one of the most efficient systems for moving grain in the United States, and most farmers in the state have a really good proximity to a large shuttle facility."

Day one ended with a visit to the Alton Grain Elevator, which handles about 23 million bushels of grain per year—or 55 shuttles per year—and was the first shuttle facility in North Dakota.

Minnesota

At the second stop, a group of southeast Asian buyers stepped off the charter bus and onto the O'Leary farm in Danvers, Minnesota, as Patrick O'Leary greeted a few familiar faces.

"I recognized some of them from a trade mission NSM took earlier this year to Indonesia and Thailand," O'Leary said. "It's always a good sign when visits like these are reciprocated."

O'Leary is a fourth-generation producer from Benson and farms with his two brothers and father. O'Leary grows soybeans and corn, and his family contract grows hogs.

Upper Midwest-grown soybeans contain low foreign material (FM) and have low moisture content, O'Leary said.

"When these beans leave this farm, they are clean and of high

quality," O'Leary told his customers.

Chayut Pattananusintu, a crop analytics officer with the Bangkok Produce Merchandising Public Company, returned to the Upper Midwest after meeting O'Leary while touring Ag Processing, Inc.'s (AGP) facilities last year.

"It's important to learn the basics of soybean and corn production: what you should do and what you shouldn't do," Pattananusintu said. "The farmers here have a lot of experience, and we have to learn from them, step-by-step."

South Dakota

Farmers and buyers continued the conversation over lunch before the southeast Asian group headed to South Dakota to visit Peever farmers Bob and Bud Metz as well as Kevin Scott of Valley Springs.

While at the Metz farm near Peever, South Dakota, participants took a deep dive into the agronomy decisions that Bob Metz makes with his agronomist to grow a quality soybean crop.

Kevin Scott, former president of the American Soybean Association, is the fourth generation of his family to farm near the South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa borders in Valley Springs, South Dakota. Kevin Scott and his family discussed the operation and equipment, including the planter, sprayer and grain cart.

Future Plans

Northern Soy Marketing is in the process of planning a return to southeast Asia in early 2024.

"These relationships are important to having our customers understand that NSM should be top of mind when they're making those buying decisions," O'Leary said. "We look forward to visiting with our friends in southeast Asia again soon."

Learn more about Northern Soy Marketing at SoyQuality.com.

—Story and photos courtesy of Northern Soy Marketing



North Dakota farmer Dallas Loff (second from left) talks with a Southeast Asian trade team that visited his Richland County farm.



Argentina Hosts International Oilseed Producers Dialogue

In the global market, farmers who raise soybeans, canola and other oilseeds in different countries compete for market share. However, they share many challenges and goals.

In 1994, U.S. soy farmers led the creation of the International Oilseed Producers Dialogue (IOPD) with canola producers in Europe in order to provide a forum to tackle common issues and to promote worldwide demand. Producer organizations from around the world meet every year to discuss markets, new uses, production technology and more.

In August, Argentinian soybean growers welcomed farmers from around the world to Rosario, Argentina, which is about 185 miles northwest of Buenos Aires on the Paraná River, for the 2023 IOPD. The U.S. contingent included Darren Kadlec, a soybean farmer from Pisek, North Dakota, who serves as a farmer-leader on the United Soybean Board (USB) and the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC).

“I appreciated the opportunity to be part of the conversation about building resiliency in the oilseed supply chain,” Kadlec says. “Along with the discussions about sustainability, innovation and other topics, I met farmers with different views on the world who share our challenges and desire to find solutions.”

Delegates from the attending countries shared brief updates about the local oilseed markets. Representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and the U.S. focused on soybeans while individuals from Australia, Canada and Europe centered on canola. With canola as part of his crop rotation, Kadlec connects to many facets of the industry. During the U.S. presentation, he shared a USB update which highlighted the importance of soy for everyone.

Similar Priorities

The themes emerging from the dialogue included the importance of soil health, sustainability and the

USB Director Darren Kadlec of Pisek attended the 2023 International Oilseed Producers Dialogue and shared the importance of U.S. soy.

pressure to maintain profitability. The producers discussed changing climate patterns, the frequency of extreme weather events and building resiliency into production systems.

“We agreed that we need innovative breeding and practices that limit soil erosion,” Kadlec states. “While we can’t tell others how to farm in their conditions, we shared successful cover crop and no-till practices in our conditions.”

Kadlec heard how Australian farmers battle weed resistance just like growers in the U.S. European producers described the challenges created by the loss of pest management chemistries, which Europeans manage to a greater extent than U.S. growers.

“A European farmer expressed the need for regulations to use a scalpel, not a meat cleaver,” Kadlec recalls. “That sentiment resonated with many of us.”

While touring the farm and the soy processing facility, Kadlec identified many similarities to the U.S. and to North Dakota.

“Argentina’s main farming region, the Pampas, is much like the Red River Valley in terrain and soil type,” Kadlec explains. “They can raise soybeans very efficiently, though recently they have faced their worst drought in generations, harvesting less than half their average crop.”

The processing facility is located on the Paraná River, the equivalent of the Mississippi River for Argentinian agriculture.

“That tour caused me to consider ways we can ensure the Mississippi River continues to be the lifeblood of U.S. agriculture,” Kadlec says. “U.S. soy needs to continue supporting infrastructure projects that support our efficiency of getting products to customers around the world.”

Differing Challenges and Opportunities

Kadlec also observed factors that create different market challenges

for other oilseed producers. For example, current economic conditions in Argentina require farmers to finance the operations with cash.

“Their challenges demonstrate the advantages of a strong agricultural economy and the value of encouraging an ag-friendly environment,” Kadlec asserts.

Producers around the world understand how the changing dynamics of the renewable fuels market will increase global meal supplies. Delegates talked about how emerging markets can take advantage of that supply, but trade policies and domestic factors change how countries can support the development of those markets.

“For example, Argentinians acknowledge how their recent drought created opportunities for others and may impact their export market share as they return to typical production levels,” Kadlec contends.

Concepts of ag technology are similar, yet the U.S. is on the leading edge. For countries such as Argentina with more no-till production, Kadlec found the planter attachments and other equipment technology to be much different than what North Dakota farmers use. University research focused on nutrient deficiency and flooding while global experiences encouraged faculty to model programs after the U.S.

“Participating in IOPD was a great experience that reinforced the importance of U.S. soy efforts to support soybean production and markets,” Kadlec adds. “Understanding how others manage challenges and find solutions helps us continue to improve. Together, we can grow the market we share.”

To learn more about the USSEC, visit ussec.org. To learn about the USB, visit unitedsoybean.org.

—Story and photos courtesy of the U.S. Soybean Export Council



Southeast Asian Customers Learn About Shifting Dynamics for North Dakota Soybeans

The North Dakota soybean industry has more potential to continue exporting whole soybeans while increasing soybean meal exports, thanks to soybean crushing facilities that are coming online this fall and next year as well as ongoing infrastructure investments. To share this exciting story with key international customers, Matt Gast, a soybean farmer from Valley City, North Dakota, as well as a farmer-leader on the United Soybean Board (USB), participated in the Southeast Asia U.S. Agricultural Cooperators Conference in Danang, Vietnam, in September.

“As a speaker, I shared the 2023 soybean crop outlook, innovations that help us raise soybeans sustainably and how shifting dynamics in North Dakota will allow us to export more soybean meal,” Gast says. “I also participated in a speaker panel, answering audience questions about our on-farm practices.”

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Wheat Associates co-hosted the event, which welcomed customers from countries throughout the region to address global challenges such as food security, sustainability and innovation. The conference aimed to promote U.S. agricultural products and to share the latest global market and industry information with attendees.

Throughout the U.S. Agricultural Cooperators Conference, Gast networked with customers, answering specific questions about U.S. soy and the changes in North Dakota. He understands the potential for North Dakota to export more soybean meal because he can see the construction for one of the new crushing plants from his backyard. Last summer, he also visited the Port of Grays Harbor with the USB to see the expansions to efficiently move more soybean meal. That Pacific Northwest

port receives soy via railroad from North Dakota.

Combined with what he heard from customers during this conference, Gast believes that soybean meal from North Dakota will position U.S. soy to compete more effectively with soybean meal from Argentina as well as meal from other origins.

“Many customers, including some from Vietnam and Indonesia, told me they were glad North Dakota will export more soybean meal because they recognize the quality of our soybeans,” Gast explains.

Many of these markets currently import whole soybeans from the U.S. However, the U.S. has the potential to grow its market share for soybean meal imports in the region.

“Other customers, including a group from China I spoke with through a translator, wanted to be sure we would still export whole soybeans,” Gast continues. “They want to be sure the shifts in our market won’t impact the product they receive.”

The soybean customers he met value North Dakota soybeans and soybean meal for the quality due, in part, to the cold storage conditions offered by the climate. The customers also pay close attention to the practices used to raise soybeans and the shipping logistics involved with getting soybeans and soybean meal from the U.S. to their businesses.

“One of my personal takeaways is that we have to continue producing high quality soybeans,” Gast says. “And we need to continue improving our sustainability so that demand for our products remains high. At the same time, we need to keep our infrastructure up to date so we can keep our soybeans and soybean meal moving.”

Gast adds that he observed how the conference cultivated a preference for U.S. soy, including soybeans and soybean meal from North Dakota. This outreach provides value to North Dakota agriculture and benefits customers.

“I know how our crushing facilities will support our small towns in North Dakota,” Gast states. “But I learned how they will also benefit customers and their end users around the world. What we do on our farms and in our communities really does have a global impact.”

To learn more about the USSEC, visit ussec.org. To learn about the USB, visit unitedsoybean.org.

—Story and photos courtesy of the U.S. Soybean Export Council



USB Director Matt Gast, third from left, participated in the Southeast Asia U.S. Agricultural Cooperators Conference in Danang, Vietnam.



During the conference, Matt Gast, middle, networked with customers and answered questions about U.S. and North Dakota soy.



Getting the Complete Soybean Picture

On a breezy fall afternoon, the crowd of visitors huddled around Jim Thompson at his Page, North Dakota, farm and they listened intently as he explained the process of growing, harvesting and marketing soybeans. This gathering of on-farm guests was a unique collection of chefs, healthy cooking experts, culinary students, chef instructors, extension agents, media personalities, bloggers, social media influencers and dietitians from across the country, including Los Angeles, Boston and New York, as well as participants from North Dakota.

The delegation was part of the 2023 North Dakota Food and Farm Tour, which was sponsored by the North Dakota Soybean Council

(NDSC). The event covered the gamut of soybean topics, including soy nutrition and how to incorporate soy into meals. The first order of business, however, was to give participants an understanding of what it takes to grow soybeans.

Because most of the attendees had never been on a farm or witnessed a soybean harvest, Thompson, NDSC treasurer, answered his fair share of questions.

“Some of the questions were about where soybeans go once we’ve harvested them, what kind of crop rotation we have with the soybeans, why soybeans are a good fit in the rotation and how long we’ve been raising soybeans,” Thompson says, “a lot of curiosity.”

“It was really cool being able to go out and actually pick the beans

and then see how the combine runs,” states Becky Bergley, owner of Becky’s Gluten Free, a cottage bakery in the Fargo-Moorhead area. “He (Thompson) explained all the different screens and electronics and what the different spikes are for and the airflow to blow everything back. It was very cool, very interesting.”

Patricia Bannan is a nationally recognized dietitian, healthy cooking expert, author and media personality based in Los Angeles. She travels the world talking about nutrition, and she was excited to visit Thompson’s farm as a participant.

“One of my greatest joys as a dietitian who works for herself and is an entrepreneur is actually having the privilege to go to the farms and talk to the farmers and also see the processing plant, so literally from

farm to table,” Bannan asserts. “I love that. That’s what we did here. We went to the farms; we went to the processing plant; we cooked in the kitchen to really see not only the health benefits of soy, all the different ways that you can use it culinary wise, but also what the farmers are up against. Everyone goes to the grocery store and thinks that they know better how things should be done. As a communicator, I often fall into that, too. Then, when you talk to the farmers and you realize what they’re up against, it’s such a huge education and such a huge privilege to see what they’re doing.”

“We want them (participants) to realize North Dakota soybean producers are very good at what we do; how efficient we are; the type of technology that we use to produce a good, safe, reliable, plant-based protein product for them; and that we’re one of the leaders in the country in soybean production,” Thompson explains.

Soy Benefits

Because the workshop attendees had a food focus, the event included a tour of Identity Ag Processing LLC, the soybean processing facility in Casselton, and an update on research about the health benefits of soy from renowned expert Mark Messina, Ph.D., director of nutrition science and research at the Soy Nutrition Institute Global. Among other benefits, soyfoods may



Local and national dietitians, chefs, and influencers sample a wide variety of soy-based food items.



Participants worked together to prepare dishes utilizing soy-based products.

reduce the risk for a range of health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, coronary heart disease and some cancers, as well as assisting with skin health (wrinkle reduction) and promoting gains in muscle mass.

The Soyfoods Council's Executive Director Linda Funk worked with the attendees on ways to add soy products to culinary creations.

"We want people to understand the hows, including what it takes to grow soybeans and how to incorporate it in everyday meals," Funk contends, "but after the crops are harvested, we want participants to understand the whys of soybeans, including the health benefits."

Funk displayed a wide range of soyfoods for the group to taste. The products were used to make a wide range of appetizers, main dishes and desserts.

"Tasting is believing," Funk says of working with soy products. "You have to taste it and understand how to work with it to really end up with a delicious, healthy meal or recipe."

Greg Cook was one of the workshop's participants. He is a co-owner of the 4e Winery near Mapleton.

"I've been eating a vegan diet for

the last seven years, and I cook a lot, and I serve vegetarian and vegan foods at my winery," Cook asserts. "All the things we can do with soy are really important for those types of operations."

In addition to preparation ideas, Cook also left the workshop with insights about the benefits of soy products.

"I think the main take homes are that soy gets a bad rap for the wrong reasons. It's not justified or based in science," Cook contends. "It was really interesting to see that there's actually a lot of nutritional health benefits to soy. They're not negatives; they're positives."

Taking it Home

Liz Weiss is a dietitian based in Boston, Massachusetts; she has a large media presence. She publishes a blog, produces podcasts, has a food and nutrition website, and is a sought-after speaker. She came halfway across the country as a participant to learn more about soybean production and soy nutrition.

"A big part of what I do is educating consumers about how to eat a more healthful diet in an easy, affordable; culturally appropriate;

practical; and, of course, delicious way," Weiss states. "I'm always looking for new recipe inspiration, and new tips and ideas to help consumers get healthy meals on the table quickly. Also, learning where food comes from is so important and understanding the challenges that farmers face as they grow products and process products and distribute products. Getting to see where soybeans come from is an important component of what I do as a dietitian and a food educator."

NDSC Education and Outreach Coordinator Shireen Alemadi describes how the goal for the Food and Farm Tour was to provide an opportunity for national and local registered dietitians, chefs, influencers and culinary students to see various aspects of a soybean's life and to learn about the crop's health benefits.

"Seeing from farm to table provided the participants an opportunity to get the whole picture and an appreciation for 'the miracle bean,'" Alemadi says.

"The North Dakota Soybean Council really wants people to know that we're investing these checkoff dollars in very important



Prepared dishes included Mexican, Italian and Indian cuisine.

programs that promote North Dakota soybeans and the understanding that we produce a high-quality product," Thompson declares. "We do it with groups like this, through various research projects and in expanding market opportunities. We're promoting North Dakota soy as a whole."

To learn more about adding soy to your diet, visit soyconnection.com or thesoyfoodscouncil.com.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photos by staff

—Story continued from page 14

learned firsthand about what it takes to get soybeans to customers, including the transportation and shipping infrastructure as well as the processing needs in other countries.

"It's a full-circle moment to see how important U.S. soy and North Dakota soybeans are and how valuable they are to not only us in our small, rural communities, but to the whole world," Gast asserts.

"We are suppliers of a product that goes all over the globe," Langley adds. "So, getting involved, that was just the greatest way to build relationships across the world."

Commitment Wanted

Langley and Gast both say that they had a lot to learn when they were first elected to the NDSC and that, at times, the learning curve was steep. Both farmers maintain that, if farmers come ready to learn and to serve, new board members

will find time on the council to be well spent.

"You've just got to bring an open mind, the drive to learn and the drive to give your input," Langley states. "If you have those things, there's amazing staff who will help you learn the things you need to learn, and the knowledge will all come. You just have to have an open mind and the drive to want to help the industry. If you're interested in soybeans, if you have a desire at all to learn a little more or you to want to help to increase the value, it's just the greatest opportunity in the world."

"There's a lot that's thrown at you right away, a lot of understanding of how all the programs work, but if you're willing to put in the time, you won't regret it," Gast contends. "When your time is done, you will miss it."

To learn more about the NDSC election process, visit bit.ly/NDSCelections.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photos by staff



During a processor tour in 2017, Langley checked out a large container of soybean cooking oil that is sold in China.



Court Action Spurs New WOTUS Rules

In May, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the Sackett v. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) case, which narrowed the definition for Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act. In late August, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers announced their new final rule, which incorporated changes brought about by the Supreme Court ruling.

Attorney Kale Van Bruggen with the Rinke Noonan law firm provided some clarification about how the Supreme Court's decision and the new EPA rule will affect North Dakota farmers.

The Supreme Court rejected the "significant nexus" test in its Sackett

ruling. Does the new EPA final rule address that ruling?

The amendments to the final rule very clearly eliminate the "significant nexus" test, which was difficult to apply and nearly impossible to predict the outcome for jurisdiction. In that regard, the amendments provide clarity and eliminate jurisdiction over many wetland acres previously claimed as jurisdictional by the agencies. However, the amendments fall short of providing clarity on what it takes for a water to be "relatively permanent," and I believe we will continue to see litigation on this issue, particularly challenging jurisdiction over tributaries to navigable waters as lacking

the "permanency" required by the amended rule and Sackett.

Are there other areas of the new final rule that leave unanswered questions?

Although not likely to be addressed by the WOTUS rule, there may be a question now about the treatment of members of the regulated community who were denied permits or were subject to enforcement actions based on jurisdictional determinations that would be invalid under this amended rule. I expect we will see an uptick in permit applications, some of which will be from those members of the regulated community who were previously denied permits. What is less

clear is whether there is any recourse now for members of the regulated community who were subject to enforcement actions based on the agencies' overreach of jurisdiction.

North Dakota is one of 27 states with an injunction against the WOTUS rule that was presented in January. Does the new EPA final rule change anything?

The injunction against enforcing the WOTUS rule remains in place. The amendments likely resolve some, but not all, of the issues being litigated in the challenge to the WOTUS rule. It is likely that the litigation will proceed, as it has with prior administrations' attempts to write a WOTUS rule that is compliant with precedence. There will be more to come from the litigation.

What physical properties now make a wetland jurisdictional for the EPA?

First, the land must meet the definition of a "wetland," which are those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Generally, this means that the wetland consists of three characteristics that must be present during some portion of the growing season under normal conditions: (1) hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation, (2) hydric soils and (3) indicators that water is present at or above the soil surface for a sufficient period of the year to influence the plant types and soils that occur in that area.

Second, there must be a continuous surface connection between the streams, oceans, rivers and lakes that makes it difficult to determine where the water ends and (the

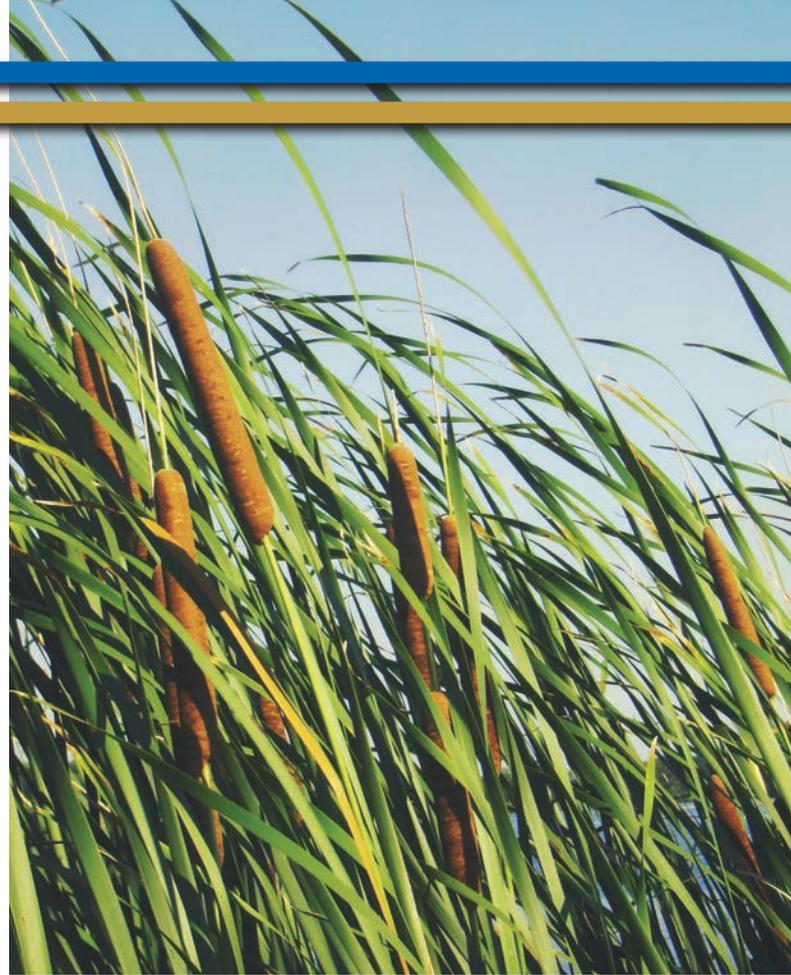
wetland begins. Thus, the presence of dry land between waters and wetlands is one identifier for scoping wetlands outside (the) Clean Water Act authority. The court noted that temporary interruptions in surface connections caused by phenomena such as dry spells may occur without breaking Clean Water Act jurisdiction. In wetland regulatory contexts, it is most commonly key to evaluate properties, including the continuity of surface connections, under normal conditions.

In what ways might this ruling affect North Dakota farmers?

North Dakota farmers feel the impact of the Clean Water Act in how it is administered by field agents on the ground. The Sackett opinion should result in more

certainty (about) the jurisdictional status of wetlands. But some wetlands will still be covered by the act, and property owners who discharge pollutants into covered waters may face criminal penalties and fines of up to over \$60,000 per day. With such a heavy enforcement hammer, farmers have an enormous incentive not to challenge claims of jurisdiction and to look for ways to minimize the risk of running afoul of the act's prohibitions. New rules or guidance from the agencies will inform how farmers evaluate those risks. I expect that this ruling will minimize this risk assessment in many wetland areas but is unlikely to eliminate consideration of the act's scope to farming activities.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photo by Daniel Lemke and stock photo



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Caring for *Rural* North Dakota

Few states are as rural as North Dakota. Part of the state's charm and allure is the wide-open spaces, vast natural resources and productive farmland. Thirty-eight of the state's 53 counties meet the federal designation of frontier counties because their populations have seven people or fewer per square mile.

Not only is the state decidedly rural, but its population is also aging. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 16.7% of the state's residents are over the age of 65. With an aging population often comes the need for more medical care.

Palliative care is among the healthcare needs found in many rural areas. Palliative care is intended to maximize the quality of life for a patient dealing with a serious illness while simultaneously working toward a cure. Palliative care focuses on relieving symptoms, pain and stress for both the patient and his/her family. Hospice is one type of palliative care, but patients with many serious illnesses or conditions can benefit from palliative care.

While frequently associated with older populations, palliative care is appropriate for any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and the care can be provided along with curative treatment. People may need palliative care in hospitals, in the community, in nursing facilities and in their own rural homes. Care can include pain and symptom management as well as

psychosocial and spiritual support for both the patient and his/her family.

Palliative care has traditionally been provided by hospitals, so access can be more challenging in rural areas. North Dakota has 37 Critical Access Hospitals and 57 Rural Health Clinics; most of them are independent community facilities and are not affiliated with the state's larger tertiary hospitals or health systems.

Through a private grant, staff with the North Dakota Center for Rural Health began working to establish community-based palliative-care networks.

"The grant kick started the process for us," says Jody Ward, program director for the Center for Rural Health.

Ward explains how the process started by meeting with the state's Critical Access Hospitals.

"Their community-based team is who they identified in their community as resources. Including nurses, doctors, clergy, social workers, counselors and more," Ward states.

Ward contends that one benefit of the effort was getting communities to know of one another as well as identifying the network of resources available to serve residents. These networks allow patients who need palliative care to access those services close to home, so people aren't forced to relocate or to travel hundreds of miles to get the care they need.

"The whole goal of this is to

keep people in their homes longer, so they get the care they need and don't have to be uprooted," asserts Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Specialist Nancy Joyner.

In addition to palliative care through larger providers, 11 North Dakota communities, Cavalier, Grafton, Park River, McVillage, Harvey, Jamestown, Tioga, Watford City, Bowman, Hettinger and Hazen, have established rural, com-

munity-based, palliative-care teams.

The initial funding to establish rural, community-based palliative-care networks only lasted for three years, but the work to increase access continues.

"We utilized lessons learned and presented across our state and nationally to teach others how to build or develop this model in their own communities," Ward explains. "It's a way to keep rural alive, to keep programs within arm's reach and to raise awareness on how to access healthcare."

The goal is to gain additional funding and possibly even legislation to help increase awareness about and accessibility to palliative care in rural parts of the state.

Information on palliative care is available from the North Dakota Palliative Care Task Force at qualityhealthnd.org/contracts/palliative-care-task-force/.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,
stock photo

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Getting to Know the NDSC County Representative



Kevin Zikmund
Park River, North Dakota

Tell us about your farm.

My brother and I farm 5,000 acres of corn, soybeans and canola in northeastern North Dakota near Park River.

What do you like best about farming?

I love the fun weather that we experience and the fact that it's a

different job every day.

Did you always know that farming was something you wanted to do?

I'd say I've always known that I wanted to farm.

Why did you get involved with the

different job every day.

“Number one is the demographics of the industry. As older people are getting towards retirement, they've got to be replaced. Agriculture is hot, and it's hot in this country, in this state and with soybeans in particular,” Dr. Wilson explains. “Today, the stakes are really high; companies have got to take a little time and get the smartest people possible working in their enterprises.”

“I believe the training that is directed by the CTR will provide college students with competitive advantages and performance-based experiences to help them understand the commodity industry, in general, and any affiliated indus-

North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) as a county representative?

Someone asked me if I would do it, and I said “yes” to help the farmers in my area.

Why are soybeans part of your crop mix?

We used to raise pinto beans, and then, we switched to soybeans because they're an easier crop to raise. They've been doing really well.

If you could change something about the current operating climate for North Dakota farmers, what would it be?

I would increase the number of livestock in the state to help the grain farmers.

What has changed most about farming since you've been involved?

The yields are much larger compared to when I first started farming.

What changes do you expect to see on your

farm in the next 5 to 10 years?

Hopefully, in 5 to 10 years, I will retire!

What do you like to do outside farming?

I like to relax and watch sports.

If you could go anywhere, where would it be?

I would go to my living room to relax!

What's the one piece of farm equipment or technology you wouldn't want to be without?

I couldn't live without the GPS (Global Positioning System) in my equipment.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,
photo by staff

Kevin is one of the North Dakota Soybean Council's county representatives. To learn more about serving on the North Dakota Soybean Council as a county representative or board member, visit ndsoybean.org/council-election.

—Story continued from page 11

NDSC's investment in the CTR over a decade ago has come full circle as Jessica returned home to fill an important role at North Dakota's first dedicated soy processing facility.

“I serve as merchandiser II at Green Bison Soy Processing where I will be managing the fiber (soy hull pellets) position, managing the soybean meal position that leaves the facility on trucks and buying soybeans,” Fleck states.

Growth with North Dakota's agriculture production and processing is presenting new opportunities for farmers and for the next generation of ag industry leaders. For several reasons, Dr. Wilson

tries that might result from the introduction of soybean processing in North Dakota,” Fleck says.

Supplying well-trained talent for employers is crucial to the CTR, and those next generation workers, including Jessica Fleck, are a positive reflection.

“She's pretty seasoned, and she's very smart and well trained,” Dr. Wilson contends. “I'm sure she will do extremely well and have a big impact on the industry and on her company, and that's good for us.”

Learn about Green Bison Soy Processing at GreenBisonSoy.com.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,
photos courtesy of Jessica Fleck



Jessica Fleck says the CTR can prepare students for opportunities in the soybean industry.

Getting to Know the Legislator



Sen. Larry Luick
Chairman of the Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
Fairmount, North Dakota

Tell us about your background.

I grew up on a farm about two miles from where I currently live. Back then, we raised cattle, hogs, and chickens; we were grain farmers; and we also had a salvage business. I got married to a local teacher, and through her, I became tied to education. I was on the local school board for years, and my wife and I coached competitive robotics for several years. We have five grown children and eight grandchildren.

What do you do in addition to serving in the Senate?

I still farm; I do some custom ag work; and I do excavation construction.

What interested you in running for the legislature?

In 2009, I was asked by many others to consider running for a legislative position. I didn't feel I had the time to do it, but I agreed to run, was elected and filled the Senate seat. I am now very appreciative of those who truly sacrifice to make better laws and a better living for the people of North Dakota. Doing this job well is exhausting and often thankless. I know that I have

made a difference in improving North Dakota law and am thankful for those who originally encouraged me to run.

What are some of the things you're most proud of in your tenure?

Just this last session, we worked to get better clarity on some complex water issues working toward unified watershed districts.

We have increased the incentivization of finishing North Dakota commodities like soybeans, corn, beef, milk, biofuels, etc. within the state, rather than transporting raw commodities out of state. Historically, we have taken the brunt of the costs of raising all these commodities, and then, we shipped it out of state or out of the country. Money is made in the value-added processing. North Dakota is increasing its capacity for processing grains and other commodities within North Dakota.

I was very involved with getting financial protection for farmers and elevators who are involved with grain dealer licenses and sales contracts that may go bad. These are just a few of the many different things I'm proud to have been a part of on the agricultural side.

On the humanitarian side, I believe it's vitally important to continue to work with others to reform property taxes. I'm very happy about the bills we passed

for protecting babies in the womb and all people going forward. The Judicial Committee has also made positive revisions to juvenile justice reform, concealed carry laws, etc.

Is it important that agriculture is represented in Bismarck?

Absolutely. We currently have a few more senators with farming backgrounds; that number was low for a few years. We are working together to get funding for counties, small towns and townships. It's been tough sledding since we only have a handful of active farmers, but the rural legislators are joining hands to get money for our townships, roads and small communities just as well as the state provides for the metro areas. We've got to fight for it, and we have been. I am eager to continue this necessary approach to state funding for rural needs.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photo courtesy of Senator Larry Luick

Editor's note: This NDSGA article is part of a series of legislative profiles to help readers learn more about the people elected to represent North Dakota growers in Bismarck.

Bean Briefs

Brazil Expected to Produce More Soybeans

Brazil's corn production will drop significantly while the soybean output will surge during the 2023-2024 marketing year, ac-

cording to CONAB, Brazil's food agency. CONAB now forecasts soybean output to be 162 million metric tons, or about 5.9 billion bushels. The rise is tied to strong overseas demand, especially from

China. During the previous marketing year, production totaled 154.6 million metric tons.

Higher Interest Rates, Strong Dollar Affecting Rural Economies

CoBank says that the combination of high interest rates and a strong U.S. dollar is beginning to take a disproportionate toll on rural industries such as agriculture,

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—*Story continued from page 33*

forestry and manufacturing. Most international transactions are still conducted in dollars, and a strong dollar makes U.S. exports more expensive and imports cheaper. CoBank's Knowledge Exchange describes how that situation disproportionately hurts the backbone of the rural economy.

"The challenge for agriculture and other rural industries that rely heavily on global markets is their export partners simply can't afford to buy U.S. products," Rob Fox, Knowledge Exchange director, states.

America's economic position relative to other countries has gotten much stronger than anticipated. The expectation that interest rates will remain high for the foreseeable future has also contributed to the stronger dollar.

"When you combine the export loss with a general slowdown in the U.S. economy, it's a double whammy for many businesses in rural America," Fox asserts.

Anti-Checkoff Amendment Struck Down

While Congress has yet to deliver a new farm bill, soy growers still celebrated a major win when the House struck down Indiana Rep. Victoria Spartz's amendment to the ag funding bill that aimed fire at commodity checkoff programs. Even though a funding bill has not been passed, Spartz's amendment was defeated. The amendment was vehemently opposed by the soy industry and others.

Although it is unclear when the Senate will move forward with its ag appropriations bill, the American Soybean Association will continue to watch the developments closely because an anti-checkoff amendment to this bill was recently filed by Sen. Mike Lee of Utah.

Farm Bill Languishes

Congress did pass stopgap legislation to keep the federal government funded, but the measure did not include an extension for the current farm bill, which expired Sept. 30. Temporary lapses and

extensions have occurred in past reauthorizations of the farm bill. If history is a guide, an extension of some sort—short or long term—may arrive in the December timeframe, if needed.

House and Senate Agriculture Committee leaders are delayed with unveiling the draft farm-bill legislation and moving it forward for a variety of reasons, including budget challenges.

Despite the lapsed bill, Title I farm safety net programs for soybeans are effective through the 2023 crop year, rather than Sept. 30. Crop insurance is authorized under an entirely separate law and does not expire. Amendments to crop insurance are often incorporated into the farm bills to address various interests.

ASA Submits Comments About Pesticide Residue Verification

The American Soybean Association (ASA) has submitted comments to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) about the pesticide-residue verification documentation that can satisfy requirements under the agency's channels of trade guidance.

Under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets pesticide-residue tolerances, which the FDA then enforces. With instances such as chlorpyrifos, where the EPA suddenly revoked tolerances, there can be crops in the field or food in the supply chain that contains residues which would no longer be legal.

In these cases, the crops with residues could be deemed to be adulterated and then destroyed. The FDA has guidance that allows food/feed containing residues which is already in the channels of trade to clear the supply chains if documentation can be provided to demonstrate

- The residues resulted from applications that were made prior to the tolerances being revoked; or
- The residues are within the previously legal limits; or

- The FDA's channels of trade guidance are currently ambiguous about what documents could satisfy these verification requirements, prompting this comment period.

The FDA says that it plans to be flexible with the types of documents required and does not plan to impose any new record-keeping requirements. Instead, the agency plans to provide examples of documents that could satisfy the verification requirements.

The ASA agrees that a more predictable protocol is warranted and would offer greater certainty to stakeholders and supply chains. In the comments, the ASA pointed to the recent chlorpyrifos revocation:

"Recently, U.S. soybean farmers were greatly concerned when (the) EPA suddenly and without warning revoked tolerances for chlorpyrifos, leaving thousands of growers with treated crops in the field and harvested soybeans in storage which might contain residues and could be found adulterated. Understanding they may need to retroactively provide documents they could not have anticipated needing to demonstrate the legality of residues was an enormous source of anxiety to many farmers."

While supportive of this approach, the ASA's comments raise concerns about how the document examples are all focused on downstream stakeholders, such as processors/manufacturers, in the food supply chain. The ASA encourages the FDA to provide examples that could satisfy the needs of upstream stakeholders, including farmers. The ASA urges the FDA to consider pesticide application records as documents that could satisfy these requirements for growers. Furthermore, the ASA requests that the agency clarify how the records could still satisfy these needs even though the records may not be able to demonstrate specifically when/where an application was made, resulting in a residue for a mixed commodity.

Having this certainty from the

FDA would protect farmers in the event of another chlorpyrifos-type incident where stakeholders may be required to provide documentation for verifying the legality of residues.

Groups Push the Administration on Biofuels

The American Soybean Association, Clean Fuels Alliance America, the U.S. Canola Association and the National Oilseed Processors Association urged the Biden administration to accurately assess the environmental benefits of feedstocks that produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). In a letter to the White House, the groups highlighted the importance of the biofuel industry and the industry's commitment to producing 6 billion gallons of biodiesel, renewable diesel and SAF annually by the end of the decade, with 4 billion gallons expected this year.

The letter focused on the SAF tax-credit guidance under development by the Treasury Department, particularly the choice of an emission model. The tax credit, which was established by the Inflation Reduction Act, directed Treasury to determine the appropriate methodology for calculating emissions. The group argued against using the outdated International Civil Aviation Organization model, which would discriminate against U.S. farmers and their feedstocks, suggesting that the Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory model is more accurate and should be the model utilized for the new SAF credit. The letter underscored the SAF Grand Challenge's heavy reliance on the clean fuels industry, particularly soybean and canola oil, and urged the administration to recognize the Argonne National Laboratory's Greenhouse Gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy Use in Transportation (GREET) model as the preferred methodology for determining SAF credit eligibility. Failure to do so could hinder SAF production investments.

—*Story by Daniel Lemke*

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