

# THE NORTH DAKOTA **Soybean** GROWER MAGAZINE

VOLUME 14 • ISSUE 4  
AUGUST 2025

**INSIDE:**  
Components  
of a Farm Bill  
Included in BBB

PAGE 17





# THE POWER OF YOUR SOY INVESTMENT



Global demand. Local return. The value of your state and national soy checkoff is stronger than ever. In the last 5 years, your investments have...

  
CREATED JOBS AND  
GROWN THE ECONOMY

**\$9.8B**

added to the U.S. GDP

**~\$1B**

generated in tax revenue  
in 2023 alone

\$36M county | \$244M state | \$655M federal

**30,932**

U.S. jobs created

**\*\$2.6B**

in U.S.  
employment  
income

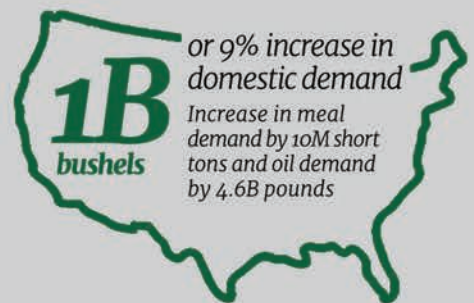


## DRIVEN DEMAND FOR U.S. SOY

**\*1.8B**  
bushels



or 18% increase in U.S. soybean exports  
Increase in meal exports by 5.2M short tons and oil  
exports by 3.4B pounds



## DELIVERED VALUE TO YOUR FARM

**\$12.30**

return for every \$1 invested

## AT LEAST 4.5-TO-1 RETURN ACROSS FOUR CATEGORIES:

- 1 Export market development
- 2 Domestic demand-enhancing research
- 3 On-farm production research
- 4 Soybean promotion

Learn more at [unitedsoybean.org](https://unitedsoybean.org)

\*Export initiatives supported by United Soybean Board, Qualified State Soybean Boards, the U.S. Soybean Export Council and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service. Source: Kaiser, H.M. 2024. An Economic Analysis of the United Soybean Board and Qualified State Soybean Boards' Demand- and Supply-Enhancing Programs. Cornell University.



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## n the cover

An international delegation of animal feed company leaders from Cambodia and Kazakhstan visited animal feed application experts at the Northern Crops Institute (NCI). Trade team members visited the United States to learn more about the value of U.S. soy for animal feed. The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) partnered with NCI to give trade team members a firsthand overview of soy production and an in-depth explanation on the value of amino acids in animal feed. Shane Mueller, NCI feed mill manager, led the demonstration.

—Photo by staff

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# House Bill 1442: North Dakota's Version of Federal DOGE

**T**he 69th Legislative Assembly overwhelmingly enacted House Bill 1442, which some people have referred to as our state's new Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), in reference to the federal government's initiative with the same name.

This measure is sweeping, comprehensive legislation that creates a new task force charged with, among other things, reviewing and analyzing budgets and reports from executive-branch agencies and the state's supreme court, receiving testimony from these agencies to identify areas to increase efficiency as well as methods to implement cost-saving measures, determining areas of state government that are deemed unnecessary or duplicative, targeting outdated or overly restrictive regulations, and finding areas where partnerships between the state and private industry would drive economic growth and job creation. In addition, the task force will review the effectiveness and necessity of programs and laws which were previously created by the legislature. The task force may request the state auditor or an independent, private auditing firm to conduct program evaluations.

The task force's membership includes six legislators, the governor's chief operating officer, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, a statewide elected official and an individual state resident appointed by the governor. The task force will meet at least quarterly and will submit an annual report, detailing its findings and progress

for implementing cost-saving measures and efficiencies, as well as any recommended future legislation, to legislative management.

This legislation was conceived by its prime sponsor, Nathan Toman (District 34), some years before the federal DOGE initiative. The legislature's goal is looking at efficiencies and effectiveness. Toman noted that he is not looking to cut an arbitrary percentage; instead, the legislation "is intended to create an effective, efficient government that is cognizant of the taxpayer dollars and is a good steward of those dollars, and not just spending them because we have some."

Likewise, the legislature's concerns are shared by the governor. According to the Bismarck Tribune, Gov. Kelly Armstrong, after approval of the state's new \$20.3 billion budget, expressed some concerns that "state agencies need to become more efficient in providing services"

and that "we can't sustain that growth as a state government." In my opinion, this task force's work may result in some needed and positive results for state government, whether with cost savings, increased efficiencies, the elimination of unnecessary regulations or duplicative areas/services, or the expressed goal of finding "areas in which partnerships between the state and private industry would create innovative financing models to drive economic growth and job creation."

Some gains or achievements should and will inure to benefit all taxpayers in terms of less monies appropriated by the legislature and spent by the state. However, other decisions could and will result in the realignment of spending priorities or decisions. Some of the cost savings could be a potential boon in future legislative sessions in the form of more funding for rural or agricul-



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tural communities or businesses; easing or eliminating overly strict regulations for our farmers and ranchers; or providing financial incentives for important new partnerships between farmers and ranchers as well as value-added agriculture, whether soybean crushing plants or animal agriculture operations. Time will tell.

## Service Recognized

**NDSGA President Justin Sherlock, left, presented Brad Thykeson with a plaque in appreciation for his service on the board. In May, Thykeson left the board to become North Dakota FSA State Executive Director.**

*—Photo by staff*





## Controlling the Variables

**A**s farmers, we deal with uncertainty all the time. We can't control prices; we can't control policy; and as we witnessed in June, we certainly are at the mercy of our weather.

The storm that raced across approximately 400 miles of North Dakota on June 20 caused severe damage to many homes, farmyards, outbuildings, bins and crops. Sadly, it also resulted in the loss of several lives. Who knows how many more lives would have been affected if not for the scientific tools that weather experts use to monitor storms and to warn people of impending danger?

In agriculture, we also rely on technology and sound science to make decisions. Unfortunately, as we saw in the recently released Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) report, not everyone follows that line of thinking. While the purpose behind the MAHA

report is noble, the report's content is highly flawed, unscientific and biased against agriculture. Without evidence, the MAHA report points to pesticides as a cause for chronic illness in children and denigrates seed oils, such as soybean oil. The report erodes consumer confidence regarding the health and safety of the food we produce.

The American Soybean Association (ASA) and other ag leaders have met with members of the Trump administration to push for greater transparency and increased farmer input with the final version of the MAHA report as well as any subsequent action plans. Farmers face enough adversity without having to combat negative decisions that are made based on false or misleading information.

Because there are so many variables in agriculture, achieving some level of certainty about a policy provides farmers with a path forward. Waters of the U.S. (WO-

TUS) is a policy under the Clean Water Act that has vexed farmers for years. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently concluded a comment period, and the Trump administration said that it plans to have the rule completed by the end of the year.

Over the years, there has been a divide between what agriculture-industry groups and environmental groups are seeking in WOTUS. Agriculture groups want clearer definitions for what waters fall under federal jurisdiction. The continued back and forth of definitions from administration to administration in the past 20 years has led to uncertainty about WOTUS. Many people are frustrated with the constantly shifting WOTUS definition and what those changes mean for industries like agriculture.

The North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) and the ASA are pushing for common-sense, science-based decisions from the MAHA Commis-



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sion and the EPA. Because we deal with so many variables from year to year, it's important to control what we can.

One of the ways we can help ourselves is through membership in organizations such as the NDSGA. While there are many uncertainties in agriculture, you can be assured that NDSGA farmer leaders are unwavering in our commitment to speaking out and advocating for North Dakota soybean farmers in order to help provide the certainty that is so badly needed.



## 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: \$250 ☐ Retired Farmer: \$25

☐ 1-Year Professional Membership: \$110 ☐ 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



# The Right Season



**F**armers know that most of their work can only be done when the timing is right and in the proper season. After several years away, the timing is right for Brent Kohls to get back into the world of agriculture advocacy.

Kohls, who farms near Clifford, has been appointed to

serve as one of North Dakota's three directors on the American Soybean Association (ASA). He replaces Brad Thykeson who left the ASA board after being named executive director for the Farm Service Agency in North Dakota.

"Brad's not too far away from me, and I have a lot of respect for him and what he's done," Kohls

says. "He talked to me about getting involved again. I enjoy all of the work, whether it's policy, trade or any of the other issues that the soybean associations stand for because that's what I believe in, too. With the timing of where I'm at in my life, I thought it would be a good way to get involved again."

Kohls is no stranger to soybean advocacy. He served on the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) from 2012 to 2018.

Although he grew up in the ag industry in western Minnesota, Kohls wasn't a farmer.

"I grew up in the elevator and chemical side of the business," Kohls explains. "My dad was a long-time elevator manager, so in the summer, I loaded rail cars, worked at the chemical plant and in our warehouse. It wasn't until after I got married that I got into the farming."

Kohls now farms with his wife, Jennifer, and a young farmer who also farms some of his own acres.

"We share labor and equip-

ment," Kohls states, "and it's been a good partnership."

Kohls also has one of his three daughters, Julia, who is getting more involved with the operation and is farming some of her own land.

## Young Leader

Kohls first became involved with agricultural advocacy through the ASA's Young Leader program in 2010-2011.

"That kind of kickstarted the interest in what we can do to be a voice in agriculture, to speak what we think needs to be said, but then also to be a good spokesman on behalf of others," Kohls recalls. "Then that got me into (the) North Dakota Soybean Growers Association."

Kohls was on the NDSGA board rising to the level of vice president. The time commitment of farming, operating a trucking business and raising three daughters prompted him to step away from the NDSGA. Now, having sold the trucking operation and with his youngest daughter in college, Kohls



**After several years away, Clifford farmer Brent Kohls is back advocating for the state's soybean farmers.**



felt the draw to get involved.

"I just feel that it's time to get back into advocating for agriculture and helping out in any way I can," Kohls declares.

## Issues Abound

There are plenty of issues for which to advocate in 2025, not the least of which is passage of a new five-year farm bill. The 2018 Farm Bill has twice been extended for a year, and lawmakers in Washington, D.C., have been unable to craft a new measure that provides the certainty farmers need. Many farm groups, including the ASA, have had the passage of a new farm bill as their top-priority issue for several years running.

"We've been struggling with this whole farm bill for years," Kohls explains. "Congress kicked the can down the road the last couple times around. It's been a while since we've had an updated and improved farm bill. Hopefully, that's something that can get resolved going forward."

A new full, five-year farm bill ranks at the top of Kohls' priorities because some titles and programs are outdated and don't reflect many farmers' current needs.

"A new bill has been a long time coming," Kohls says. "It's been status quo for a while, and I don't think it reflects where things are at today."

Trade policy is also a front-burner issue for Kohls. He recalls discussions about the need for in-state soybean processors during his tenure on the NDSGA board. The state had seen explosive growth in soybean acres, but nearly all of those beans were exported through ports in the Pacific Northwest on their way to Asia and, in particular, China. A 2018 trade war with China was devastating for North Dakota's soybean farmers.

Since that time, two soybean processing plants have opened in North Dakota, offering domestic markets for millions of bushels of



**Kohls says a new farm bill is necessary because many provisions in the 2018 bill are outdated.**

North Dakota soybeans.

"When I was working through my tenure with the NDSGA, we didn't have anything like that, and it was, obviously, a big discussion then to be able to build some demand within our state and within our region," Kohls remembers. "It is helping. I've shipped beans down to Casselton, and I know, within our area, trucks

are going there. It's good to have those options because we all know we needed another source of demand."

Local markets are key for North Dakota soybean farmers, but the state's growers still depend on exports. The current trade disruptions with many trading partners illustrate the need for diverse markets.



**Domestic crushing has increased in recent years, but Kohls says trade and international markets are still vital to North Dakota soybean farmers.**

"It's great that we have demand in our backyard," Kohls says, "but it's still obviously not enough. We still need a good trade policy and to be able to continue our exports to the Pacific Northwest, which is key for beans from here in the upper Midwest."

In addition to working with congressional leaders, agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have a lot of influence on agriculture. From regulating and approving crop-protection products to administering programs that protect endangered species, the EPA holds sway over farm practices.

As weed management becomes more challenging due to herbicide resistance, Kohls hopes that the EPA can be expedient in approving tools for farmers.

"Getting new products and traits approved is important because it is getting harder to control the weeds in soybeans, and resistance is a huge concern," Kohls asserts. "Growers are frustrated with the lack of choices for herbicides in soybean. Companies are working on new trait technologies, so if we can just get some of those regulatory approvals, it should help growers combat the weed problem and manage resistance."

Having been away from an advocacy role for several years and serving as a national organization director, Kohls knows that it will likely take some time getting up to speed to represent North Dakota soybean farmers.

"There will be a learning curve, but with the NDSGA, we did hill visits in D.C., and we sat in on some congressional meetings," Kohls explains. "We've had excellent representation from North Dakota on the national level, and I'm excited to be a part of it and, hopefully, continue that tradition."

*—Story and photos  
by Daniel Lemke*



# For the Greater Good

**T**here's no question that serving a year as chair of the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) was a learning experience. I'm honored to have been reelected, and I'm looking forward to serving a second term in that role. This task is a hands-on position, and I enjoy working with the staff and my fellow farmer leaders on the NDSC who commit their time and energy to benefit North Dakota's soybean farmers.

Agriculture is constantly changing, which presents both challenges and opportunities. The Environmental Protection Agency's recent announcement that it would increase the renewable volume obligation for biodiesel under the Renewable Fuel Standard is a positive development for soybean farmers. The move should build some momentum for the soybean industry and should increase both the market price for soybeans and their usage. That support will be especially important to help buffer the decline with international markets. With that said, the NDSC will continue to work aggressively to build North Dakota's status as a preferred soybean supplier and increase the state's market share around the world.

Whether it's increasing demand overseas or building markets here at home, the NDSC's purpose is to expand partnerships, markets and opportunities for the success of North Dakota soybean growers. As a soybean producer, you contribute to your own success through the soybean checkoff. As a farm-

er-led board, we make a very conscious effort to think about the dollars that are being handled and invested. We have to answer to our neighbors about where those dollars are being spent. That's why we strive to invest in projects and efforts that will have a positive return on investment.

Investments are made in a wide range of areas. Research is always very important, whether it's on the agronomic side or the new uses side. Market development is also a focus area as we work to investigate and to penetrate emerging opportunities. Making people aware of the different uses for soybeans and the product's economic contributions through outreach and education remains another focus area. Regardless of the pathway, it's important to invest checkoff dollars wisely on behalf of North Dakota soybean growers.

As a council, we are taking additional steps to more closely track the returns we're seeing on the invested checkoff funds. Some of those returns may not be evident immediately because we need to have a long-range vision. We're investing in projects that will make us better producers over the next three, five or even seven years. There are long-term implications for these programs. Overall, we support projects and efforts that are going to benefit the greater good.

Checkoff funds cannot be and are not used for lobbying or advocacy purposes. That task is the role of the North Dakota Soybean



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Growers Association (NDSGA). Its advocacy efforts often open the door for new markets and new opportunities. I encourage you to support the NDSGA's mission through membership. The NDSC and the NDSGA work together to increase opportunities and profitability for North Dakota soybean farmers. For more information on NDSGA membership, see page 5.

# Many Thanks!

**A**t the end of June, the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) sincerely thanked Rob Rose of Wimbledon for six years of dedicated service on the board. Rose served one year as treasurer and three consecutive years as vice chairman (2022–2024). The NDSC is grateful for his leadership and his commitment to serving North Dakota's soybean producers. The

council also extends heartfelt thanks to the Rose family for its support throughout his tenure.

*—Story and photo by staff*

**Pictured at right: NDSC Chairman Jim Thompson presents Rose with a plaque of appreciation.**





# WISHH'S Market Development Continuum Establishes Long-Term Trade



**T**he North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) has long partnered with the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH), which works to grow the trade for U.S. soy in developing and emerging markets. WISHH utilizes a market development continuum to expose and integrate partners worldwide to the use of U.S. soy. The market development continuum provides a strategic framework to move companies and sectors from no knowledge of soy to a preference for U.S. soy, ultimately toward becoming a commercial buyer that then works with the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) for further market development. The work in the southeast Asian nation of Cambodia highlights how WISHH establishes long-term trade for growers in the United States.

In Cambodia, WISHH's CAST project is wrapping up after 7 years. CAST is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-funded Food for Progress project that accelerates the production of high-demand fish species for the Cambodian market and develops a lasting aquaculture industry. As the industry has become stronger, so has its reliance on U.S. soy for fish feed. When the project began, many Cambodian fish farmers were unaware of soy's value for

feed, relying instead on homemade formulations that were inconsistent, labor-intensive and environmentally harmful.

While WISHH worked to strengthen Cambodia's fishing industry, the organization also helped farmers understand soy's nutritional benefits and economic value. WISHH met partners on their farms, holding meetings and trainings that were designed to increase yield, to cut down on fish disease and to increase food safety. CAST even created the Cambodia Aquaculturist Association (CAA), an organization comprised of fish producers, processors and government representatives, to drive the demand for aquaculture. CAA now counts thousands among its ranks, providing a strong backbone of players who could become viable trade partners for U.S. soy. This work covers the Exposure and Exploration phases of WISHH's Market Development Continuum.

WISHH's CAST project also introduced new technologies to the Cambodian market. Solar drying domes and floating cages are two examples of innovations that helped strengthen the industry. This scenario created more demand, more production and a great need for soy-based feeds. Then, companies began to adopt U.S. soy on a larger scale.

In the Adoption phase, some

WISHH partners in Cambodia began utilizing U.S. soy with their operations. For example, WISHH's work led to longtime partner AgriMaster purchasing the majority of the 12,900 metric tons of U.S. soybean meal that went to Cambodia. Companies shipped the U.S. soy from the Pacific Northwest (PNW) to Vietnam and then to Cambodia. Now, AgriMaster manufactures tons of fish feed per month in addition to food for swine, poultry and other animals. North Dakota is well-poised to supply soybean meal to the PNW with the addition of two soybean crush plants to our state, so Cambodia has been a market of interest for NDSC checkoff investments. Overall, WISHH's technical support, infrastructure improvements

and private-sector partnerships are helping businesses reach the Regular and Consistent Utilization of U.S. Soy phase worldwide; companies continue to benefit from the USSEC's expertise. From end to end, WISHH leverages USDA market development funding with soy checkoff support to create lasting partnerships. These relationships are exactly the kind of strategic outcomes that the checkoff aims to create: ones that support food security abroad while building stable, value-driven demand for U.S. soybeans.

To learn more about WISHH, visit [wishh.org](http://wishh.org).

—Story, graphic, and photo courtesy of WISHH



## MARKET DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM



[wishh.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/WISHH-Market-Development-Continuum.pdf](http://wishh.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/WISHH-Market-Development-Continuum.pdf)



# North Dakota Soybean Council Elects Executive Officers

**D**uring its board meeting on June 18, the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) reelected Jim Thompson of Page as the chairman. Thompson represents District 4, Cass County. He and his wife, Jennifer, farm soybeans, corn, wheat and dry beans. In addition to his work on the farm, Thompson serves as the chairman of Rich Township and the president of the Cass County Township Officers Association. He has a degree in aviation administration and business management from the University of North Dakota and also serves on the Soy Transportation Coalition's board on behalf of the NDSC.

"I'm honored to have been reelected as chairman of the North Dakota Soybean Council," said Thompson. "It's a hands-on role, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with staff and my fellow farmer leaders to invest checkoff dollars wisely and

(to) advance opportunities for North Dakota soybean producers."

Evan Montgomery of Grand Forks was elected to be the vice chairman. He represents District 7, which includes Grand Forks and Traill Counties. Montgomery's family has raised soybeans since the 1980s; the family also operates a livestock operation that includes cattle and a large horse boarding and training facility. A graduate of North Dakota State University with a degree in vocal performance, Montgomery is active with the Brenna Township Board, the Grand Forks Master Chorale as a singer and frequent soloist, and his local community theater. He also represents the North Dakota Soybean Council on the North Dakota Livestock Alliance board.

Milo Braaten of Portland has been elected as the secretary. He represents soybean producers in Nelson, Griggs and Steele Counties. Braaten farms with his two sons, raising soybeans, corn

and edible beans. He has held leadership roles with the Steele County Farm Bureau, the Portland Credit Union, Finley Farmers Elevator, and Bang Church. Braaten has degrees from Moorhead Technical College and the North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton. He also serves on the Northern Crops Council, which is the governing board of the Northern Crops Institute, on behalf of NDSC.

Dallas Loff of Wahpeton was reelected as treasurer. Representing Richland County, District 1, Loff has farmed soybeans, corn, and sugarbeets with his father and brother near Colfax for more than 20 years. He holds a degree in crop and weed sciences from North Dakota State University and has served on both township and school boards. Loff also represents NDSC on the North Central Soybean Research Program board.

*—Story and photo by staff*



The North Dakota Soybean Council executive team includes vice chair Evan Montgomery (seated left), chair Jim Thompson (seated right), treasurer Dallas Loff (standing left), and secretary Milo Braaten (standing right).



# New Directors Elected to NDSC

**T**he North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) recently welcomed two new directors to its board. Their official terms began on July 1, 2025.

Paul Q. Anderson, a soybean farmer from Harvey, was elected to represent soybean producers in District 9, which includes Wells, Foster and Eddy Counties. Anderson grows soybeans, spring wheat, pinto beans and alfalfa. His operation also includes livestock and seed production. A graduate of North Dakota State University with a degree in agricultural economics, Anderson is active in his community. He is involved with the Central Dakota FFA Alumni, serves on the Wells Township Board, participates in the Rural Fire Protection District, and is a member of Trinity Bethany Free Lutheran Church. He previously served on the board for the North Dakota Corn Growers Association. Anderson and his wife, Vanessa, have five children and four grandchildren.

“Being elected to the North Dakota Soybean Council is an honor,” Anderson says. “I’m ready to learn and contribute to decisions that will positively impact soybean farmers through effective use of checkoff dollars.”

Preston Burchill, a soybean producer from Page, was elected to represent District 5 (Barnes County).

Burchill farms alongside his

father, Duane, raising soybeans, barley and corn. He has a farm management degree from North Dakota State College of Science and is active in his community through involvement with the Dazey Sodbusters and the Barnes County Farmers Union board. Burchill and his wife, Beth, have three children.

“I’m proud to serve on the North Dakota Soybean Council,” Burchill explains. “I’m excited to work alongside fellow farmers to strengthen and grow the soybean industry.”

Evan Montgomery of Grand Forks was reelected to represent soybean producers in District

7, which includes Grand Forks and Traill Counties. Dallas Loff of Wahpeton was reelected to represent District 1 soybean producers in Richland County. Both Montgomery and Loff have served on the North Dakota Soybean Council since 2022 and are now entering their second and final terms on the board.

“We welcome Preston and Paul to the board and look forward to working with them as they represent North Dakota soybean producers,” states Stephanie Sinner, executive director of the North Dakota Soybean Council. “We also congratulate Dallas and Evan



**Preston Burchill**

on their reelection. Each of these farmer leaders brings valuable insight and experience that will support the council’s efforts to invest soybean checkoff dollars wisely and effectively.”

—Story and photo by staff



**Paul Anderson**

## The North Dakota Herbicide Resistant Weed Survey

# Is Back!

**FREE testing for 3 pigweed and/or kocio samples and 1 wild oat or green foxtail sample. Surveys available at your NDSU Extension**

NDSU
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# Empowering Teachers Through Agriculture



**N**orth Dakota teachers spent time in the classroom this summer examining how society can feed an ever-growing population and can establish food security. A unique Feeding and Fueling the World workshop at Casselton, supported by the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC), helped teachers gain a deeper understanding about the influence of food production on environmental issues and nutrition around the world. The workshop also helped teachers understand more about ag-based biofuels, including how those fuels are produced.

The event was organized by Nourish the Future, a national education initiative developed for science teachers which was created to inspire a network of educators to foster critical thinking, to connect students to modern agriculture, and to provide sound science-based resources that meet teachers' and students' needs in the classroom.

"This year's broad focus, as in previous years, was Feeding and Fueling the World," says NDSC Outreach and Engagement Director Shireen Alemadi. "While that core theme remains consistent, they always look for ways to expand the learning experience with fresh content. This year, they introduced new topics in the

food space, including food safety; environmental monitoring; and a fascinating exploration of the science behind marshmallow making, specifically how different recipes affect melting points and sensory qualities."

In addition to instruction about making biofuels, participants toured the North Dakota Soybean Processors crush plant, giving them a firsthand look at the processing side of agricultural production.

Alemadi states that the workshop's goal is to empower teachers to bring agriculture-centered lessons back to their classrooms while highlighting how agriculture, which is so central to the state's economy, also offers powerful educational opportunities.

"By making real-world connections, we hope teachers are able to inspire students to see agriculture not just as a career path, but as an essential part of science, sustainability and daily life," Alemadi explains.

## Unique Experience

Sandra Crusch and Bailey Brannan teach 7th grade science in Watford City. They saw the workshop as an opportunity which was too good to pass up.

"Bailey came into my classroom after school very, very excited about this opportunity to learn more about biofuels, which we do teach, but we don't teach well," Crusch declares. "We were

really excited to learn more about them as well as the fact that it is all funded for us, which is really unheard of for teachers."

"I heard about it from an email, and it seemed like a really exciting opportunity with lots of hands-on lessons, lots of things we can take back to our classroom," Brannan asserts. "It is an area of our unit that we are still developing. Now, we have a lot to bring back to our classroom, and we're really glad."

Stephanie Sevigny teaches family and consumer sciences at Grand Forks South Middle School.

"There's so much that could be connected in our chemistry classes to our nutrition classes,

and then making those connections for kids is going to be super helpful," Sevigny says. "It's going to make it real by applying those things that they're learning in science, bringing them over into our foods classes and then into their everyday life by thinking about what they're fueling their body with, reading labels and everything like that."

For several years, the NDSC has supported Nourish the Future events because they help make valuable connections to agriculture.

"What makes Nourish the Future so successful is the hands-on experience it offers teachers," Alemadi maintains. "They're not just handed lessons and materials;



**United Soybean Board Treasurer Matt Gast, a Valley City farmer, spoke with teachers about how food production impacts global nutrition, the environment, and ag-based biofuel production.**



they actively engage with them in both the classroom and the lab. Working side by side with other educators, they explore how to implement these lessons in their classrooms. This collaborative, immersive approach is what truly sets the program apart and makes the learning stick.”

For teachers, participating in Nourish the Future was time well spent because the program provided a fuller picture of agriculture and resources for the next school year.

“We are in the western part of the state, so it’s very heavy oil and gas,” Brannan says. “We love our

oil and gas industry, but it’s so nice to also tell the kids this is another aspect of North Dakota pride. North Dakota still has so much to offer in other energy sectors. Actually being able to make biofuels with them, their minds are just going to be blown. They’re going to be so happy. We can’t wait to run that lab in our classroom.

“Even though it’s our time off in the summer, this is the best time for us to also get out there and learn more and be able to offer more to our students during the school year,” Sevigny states.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by staff



Actively engaged in both classroom and lab settings, educators collaborate and explore how to bring hands-on lessons back to their own students.

# Cultivating Markets for NORTH DAKOTA SOY

While North Dakota’s 2025 soybean crop creeps toward maturity, the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) and partner organizations are actively cultivating relationships and building markets to help find users for those soybeans.

Despite well-documented trade disruptions and tariff disputes, soybean checkoff-supported work continues around the world to build a preference for U.S. soy, especially for North Dakota soybean products.

North Dakota Soybean Council Director of Industry Relations Craig Kleven took part in a recent trade mission to Taiwan. The trip was organized by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) and the North Dakota Trade Office (NDTO).

“It was important for us to partner with the NDDA and the NDTO in their mission of supporting agriculture as a whole,

but also to promote North Dakota agriculture and North Dakota soybean farmers specifically, to that region,” says Kleven.

Taiwan remains one of the United States’ most consistent customers. Kleven states that about 25% of Taiwan’s ag imports come from the United States, with soybeans at the top of the list. The U.S. Soybean Export Council places Taiwan as the 7th-largest U.S. soybean export market, based on information from marketing years 2022-2023. About two-thirds of the soybeans imported by Taiwan come from the U.S. Taiwan has a robust livestock industry that is supported by a large oilseed crushing sector.

Taiwan is viewed as a stable-to-mature market. The U.S. has collaborated with Taiwan for more than 50 years. Taiwan has a population of over 23 million people.

Soyfoods are an integral part of the Taiwanese diet. Many products consumed in that country are pre-packaged and come ready to



Group photo celebrating the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Importers and Exporters Association of Taipei. North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring is pictured in the bottom row, third from the left.

eat. In Taiwan, adults and teenagers eat most of their meals out, including breakfast. Popular stores such as 7-Eleven and Family Mart provide ready-to-eat meals, many

of which contain soy products like soymilk, tofu or soy sauce.

Taiwan has a substantial soybean crushing industry, so companies

—Story continued on page 14





**While in Taiwan, Klevan met with leading food companies, feed millers, and oilseed processors, including representatives from Food China.**

—*Story continued from page 13*

largely import whole soybeans. Hogs, poultry and fish produced on the island all rely on soy products for their diets. Some of the fish produced in Taiwan using U.S.-raised soybeans is then exported back to the United States.

In addition to whole beans and some soybean meal, Klevan explains how Taiwanese companies also import food-grade beans, including a substantial amount originating from North Dakota. Taiwan boasts one of the world's highest per capita soy consumption rates at approximately 24.9 pounds per year, which makes it an attractive market for food-grade soybeans.

"I was touring a plant that produced soy milk and soy powder, and there was a pallet of 50-pound bags of soybeans from SB&B Foods in Casselton," Klevan recalls. "It was interesting seeing a bag of North Dakota product in a facility halfway around the world."

## Face Time

In addition to participating in meetings with Taiwanese leaders and businesses alongside the NDDA and NDTO delegation, Klevan also arranged several meetings with leading food companies, feed millers and oilseed processors

such as Wei-Chuan, Kuan Chuan, Food China, GroBest and the Taiwan Vegetable Oil Manufacturers Association.

"Wei-Chuan is the 3rd-largest dairy company and is a top-five food company in Taiwan," Klevan says. "They've produced non-GMO soymilk for a decade. Their soybeans are 100% from the U.S. They're also the first company in the world to receive the Sustainable U.S. Soy label."

The Sustainable U.S. Soy label is available for international companies to use with soy products such as food or animal feed. Eligible products must contain at least 60% sustainable U.S. soy while whole soybean products must contain at least 90% sustainable

U.S. soy to meet the label's licensing requirements.

Information from the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) shows that Taiwanese consumers are placing an increasingly high value on sustainability, which bodes well for U.S. soybean farmers.

## Strengthening Connections

Ongoing uncertainty with global trade and exports has caused substantial turmoil and disruption for exports. For North Dakota farmers, domestic crushing capacity has lessened the reliance on foreign markets, but exports are still a vital part of the overall soy value chain.

Meeting face-to-face with existing customers and potential buyers remains an important part of customer service to help maintain existing markets and to identify new ones.

"It's very important to be there, to continue to cultivate those relationships," Klevan explains. "Our customers really like to have that human personal connection. They want to meet the farmer who is producing it or the people that are closely tied to it."

Klevan states that, during his meetings, he was quizzed about the growing conditions in North

Dakota, supply chain concerns and more.

"They were really interested in the difference in the growing season and how we had a dry harvest last year and how that affected the size of the soybean and the weight of it," Klevan asserts. "They're really intrigued. But over and over, they are really just impressed by the consistency and the quality of soybeans that North Dakota farmers produce."

Klevan describes how it's important that North Dakota soybean grower leaders and representatives are deliberate in sharing the message that North Dakota farmers are able to provide the high-quality soy products which customers around the world demand.

"We're still out there sharing that message of a very good, consistent and quality product coming from North Dakota and trying to work on those markets regardless of what the world of politics is doing," Klevan asserts. "Taiwan is very appreciative of the North Dakota soy products, and they were very happy to have us there in their country and showing an interest in what they want, what their people like to eat."

—*Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by staff*



**Klevan promotes U.S. and North Dakota soybean quality with Jeff Chen of GroBest in Taiwan, a leader in the aquafeed market.**





## Growing and Promoting North Dakota Agriculture

**N**orth Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring has gone from an early adopter of soybeans to one of the leaders working to grow markets for soybeans and the state's myriad other agricultural commodities.

Goehring recalls planting soybeans on his Menoken farm nearly 30 years ago.

"Asking around and working with some of my neighbors at the time, I would say for central North Dakota, there were only about six of us that even tried them," Goehring asserts.

Soybeans continue to be part of the Goehring farm's crop rotation and one of North Dakota's most valuable ag commodities.

For the past 16 years, Goehring has served as agriculture commissioner, guiding the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA). The NDDA has licensing and regulatory authority for many areas of North Dakota agriculture, but it also works to build and to promote markets for the state's farm goods around the world.

"We see our role as developing the relationships, providing information, understanding the market and appreciating where they're at," Goehring says. "Once we get some of that information and data, we work with companies to figure out if the market potential is worthwhile."

Goehring sees himself as both a salesman and a statesman for North Dakota, working with foreign governments to create a smooth path for ag exports.

"Part of my role is certainly to sell North Dakota; to sell the quality; and, to some degree, to represent all the different commodities that we produce," Goehring explains. "It's also to engage the government and political leaders on some of the non-tariff trade barriers and some of the tariffs that may exist in a market, some of the phytosanitary protocols or other issues where we're not on the same page."

North Dakota is in a unique position, according to Goehring, in part, because farmers in the state produce 54 different commodities commercially, and a large percentage of those ag products need to find a home outside the state's borders. North Dakota is among the states farthest away from major shipping ports, which presents challenges when exporting crops such as soybeans. Ensuring that North Dakota has adequate infrastructure to get crops to market is also part of Goehring's mission.

### Always Building

Goehring recently participated in a trade mission to Taiwan that was organized by the NDDA and the North Dakota Trade Office. Because buyers have options for sourcing their soybean products, customer service is an important practice.

"They (buyers) want to establish relationships. They want to know the companies on a business level and even on a more personal level to establish that trust and to build rapport," Goehring explains. "From

that point, you create long standing relationships that really help trade in the future because we're going to hit bumps in the road. We're going to see currency fluctuations. What I've seen is that, when these types of good relationships are built and trust is established, even when things are tough, they don't abandon you just because they can go buy it cheaper someplace else. They want to trust what they're getting, and when the value of the dollar is working against us, they're still willing to stick with us, to some degree, because they trust what they're getting, and they trust who they're doing business with."

For many export customers, price is their first consideration. However, Goehring describes how the quality of North Dakota soybeans offers a compelling argument for buyers to consider.

"We seem to always be competing against South American production, but it does open a conversation up about quality," Goehring says.



**North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring**

Instead of focusing solely on crude protein, the essential amino acid profile of North Dakota soybeans means that animals fed the northern beans tend to grow and to perform very well.

For years, much of North Dakota's soybean production was loaded on rail cars and shipped to ports in the Pacific Northwest. From there, most of the soybeans were bound for southeast Asia. While that scenario still happens on a large scale, other market options have developed.

In-state soybean crushing means that more soybean meal is being marketed. Food-grade and identity-preserved soybeans are also in-demand products.

"We can certainly still put soybeans on rail cars, but we also have the ability to look at containers and can get them into specific markets where maybe they don't use a whole Panamax, or they've got to go through another middleman to make it work to procure it," Goehring states.

Goehring contends that markets for soy products in southeast Asia continue to grow both for food-grade beans, but also with smaller soybean crushing companies. Central and South American markets are also increasing.

Export markets will likely always be important for North Dakota's soybean farmers, but the construction of two soybean processing facilities in the state means more attention is also being paid to enhancing domestic markets.

"Feeding the pork and poultry industries, and certainly the dairy and beef industries, is a goal of ours," Goehring asserts. "With these two crush facilities operating, we're putting more emphasis on our local livestock industry and trying to build on that and (to) support those efforts because we know they consume protein."

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos courtesy of NDDA



# Sherlock Participates in Hoeven Roundtable

Shortly after the Senate passed its version of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), which has now been signed into law, North Dakota Senator John Hoeven was back in North Dakota meeting with farm leaders from across the state and agricultural spectrum. Sen. Hoeven held a roundtable event at North Dakota State University to outline the measure's provisions.

The OBBBA contained some

facets of legislation that would typically have been included in a farm bill. The new policy, signed by President Trump, includes updated reference prices with built-in future increases, strengthened crop insurance to make higher levels of coverage more affordable for producers and more.

North Dakota Soybean Growers Association President Justin Sherlock was one of the agriculture leaders who participated in the event. Sherlock thanked Sen.

Hoeven for pushing for the ag provisions in the OBBBA.

"We've just not been successful getting things done in a farm bill for several years now," Sherlock says. "It was good to see progress on things like the Title One reform and crop insurance improvements. But the continued ask is, now that we have this behind us, let's get back to the business of trying to finish passing the rest of the farm bill, and then hopefully, we can get back to a bipartisan farm bill again in the future."

Sherlock describes how the OBBBA has some important pieces of the farm bill that are good for soybean producers. The measure includes the 45Z tax credit established to encourage the production of low-emission transportation fuels. The tax credit prioritizes domestic feedstocks such as soybean oil. The bill also doubled funding for the Marketing Assistance Program and the Foreign Market Development program, which help open new markets for soybeans.

Sherlock and other farm leaders are grateful for many of the ag-

based provisions in the wide-ranging funding bill. Sherlock states that a stand-alone, five-year farm bill is preferred, but he recognizes that the budget reconciliation process was the best mechanism available to get some provisions passed. He hopes that lawmakers and the ag industry can, once again, rally around the farm bill process that has often been a shining example of bipartisanship which can produce good legislation for the nation.

"Farm and food security are national security, and those shouldn't be partisan political issues," Sherlock explains. "We are thankful for the provisions because there are much needed reforms that we just haven't been able to get done any other way. It's good that we got them done, but now, let's keep the process moving and get the rest of the farm bill done. Hopefully, we can return to some bipartisanship on the farm bill in the future since it shouldn't be a partisan issue."

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by staff

Agriculture industry leaders, including NDSGA president Justin Sherlock (second from right), met with Sen. Hoeven to discuss the budget reconciliation package passed by Congress.





# Components of a Farm Bill Included in the “Big Beautiful Bill”

**W**hile it's not technically a farm bill, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), which passed in July, contained many provisions typically found in a farm bill.

The final package, which narrowly passed, includes updates to farm programs, such as raising the soybean reference price to \$10.00 per bushel and improving the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. The act also expands access to more affordable and responsive crop insurance, boosts support for young and beginning farmers, and significantly increases investment for market development and agricultural research.

“There are certainly a lot of things in that bill that are important to soybean farmers and farmers in general when it comes to price risk and risk protection with ARC and PLC, increases in the reference prices, and a lot of things that the American Soybean Association (ASA) and other farm groups have been pushing for in a farm bill that have now been included,” says Kulm farmer and ASA Chair Josh Gackle. “We’re glad to see that some of those aspects are included, but we still would like the committees in the House and Senate to continue to work on a permanent farm bill. We don’t want to do this year by year or budget by budget. There’s risk protection and certainty that’s provided in more of a long term, five year farm bill that that we’re still going to push for.”

The bill delivers long-sought enhancements to the clean fuels tax framework, including an

extension of the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit through 2029 and continued transferability of the credit. Importantly, the bill removes indirect land use change penalties for agricultural feedstocks, a change that recognizes the sustainability of U.S. soy and its role in the low-carbon bioeconomy. The package also prioritizes North American feedstocks and strengthens the incentives for small biodiesel producers.

On tax policy, the legislation includes several provisions that have long been supported by the ASA, such as a higher state tax exemption level, preservation of the step-up in basis and a permanent extension of the Section 199A qualified business income deduction. The bill also locks in lower individual tax rates, expands Section 179 expensing limits and restores 100% bonus depreciation on a permanent basis.

The OBBBA provides permanent relief from the estate tax by setting the exemption at \$15 million for single people or \$30 million for married people filing jointly, adjusted for inflation. The act permanently extends the Section 199A pass-through deduction for small businesses, farmers and ranchers, including the Section 199A(g) deduction used by agricultural cooperatives. The bill increases the Section 179 expensing to \$2.5 million and increasing the phaseout for qualified property at \$4 million. The measure establishes a 100% accelerated depreciation for new industrial and manufacturing facilities that begin construction between 2025 and 2028. The act makes 100% bonus depreciation permanent.

“At its core, the tax provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill are about allowing American workers and small businesses to keep more of their hard-earned money,” North Dakota Senator John Hoeven said after the bill was signed. “We worked to ensure this legislation provides trillions in tax relief for everyday Americans on a permanent basis. This includes preserving a higher standard deduction; expanding benefits for families with children; and eliminating taxes on tips, overtime, and Social Security for millions of workers and seniors, respectively. This will not only increase the quality of life for households throughout our country, but it will strengthen our economy by enabling businesses to invest in their operations, recoup their costs and create good-paying jobs across sectors.”

Gackle noted that the reconciliation bill provided the best route, at the time, to get some ag policies passed. However, a full farm bill remains a necessity.

“We worked really hard as the American Soybean Association, our state affiliates and other farm groups to get as much as we could into that bill,” Gackle stated. “It’s hard to get stuff passed through Congress and signed by the president. So, we’re happy to see many of those things included, but there’s still work to be done.”

Soybean industry representatives from across the country traveled to Washington, D.C., in July to advocate for a farm bill, workable trade policy and support for biofuel usage.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
Photo by Tom Fisk



# New Program Helps Farmers REBUILD

**T**ornadoes and derecho winds wreaked havoc on communities, homes and farms as powerful storms swept across most of North Dakota on June 20-21. The storage capacity for grain was heavily affected because high winds crumpled grain bins, toppled grain legs and even flipped rail cars.

The total storage capacity lost in the storm is unknown, but Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring estimated the loss in the tens of millions of bushels. He learned about the situation shortly after the storms passed.

"I have received reports of extensive damage to farms, grain

handling systems, grain bins, equipment in buildings and irrigation systems, as well as significant damage to powerlines in our communities," Goehring said. "We recognize the extreme challenges our producers will face this harvest season with little capacity to store grain at harvest time. We will continue to work with the governor's office and local communities to help assess the impacts."

In early July, Governor Kelly Armstrong unveiled the Grain Storage and Facility Rebuilder Program, through the Bank of North Dakota, to help with the rebuilding process.

"The Grain Storage and Facility

Rebuilder Program will provide an immediate source of low-interest gap financing for producers, so they can start ordering temporary or permanent grain storage solutions as they work through their insurance," Armstrong said. "By quickly replacing storage and other infrastructure, farmers will have more control over when they can market this year's crop, helping to minimize lost profitability."

The program provides options for temporary storage as well as for facility repair and replacement.

Financing is available for temporary storage solutions and related supplies to ensure harvest continuity for the 2025 crop. Examples of

eligible storage solutions include baggers and extractors, hopper bins and the rental of grain facilities.

Financing is also available to repair or reconstruct critical agricultural structures, including grain storage systems, livestock barns and machine shops.

Affected producers may access up to \$150,000 for temporary storage support for the 2025 harvest season with no collateral. As insurance proceeds are received, the proceeds may need to be applied to the loan because the combination of the outstanding loan amount and the insurance proceeds may not exceed the project's total costs.

Both loan options have a maximum term of 24 months at an interest rate of 2% while requiring an annual interest-only payment. All remaining principal and interest are due at maturity.

Approximately \$37 million are available through the Grain Storage and Facility Rebuilder Program, which stems from the Rebuilders Loan Program that is authorized under state law when the governor declares a disaster in the state.

The Bank of North Dakota will coordinate directly with grain elevators affected by the storm damage to offer flexible financing options that support reconstruct-



Strong winds toppled or crumpled grain bins across North Dakota.



Hundreds of rail cars were tipped by the powerful derecho and tornado.





**Because grain bin damage was so significant, North Dakota has created a new program to help farmers rebuild their storage capacity.**

tion efforts. Additional loan programs aimed at addressing broader infrastructure losses, including large-scale grain storage facilities and small businesses, are currently being developed.

To access the Grain Storage and Facility Rebuilder Program, producers should contact their local financial institution to submit an application. The program's application period opens on Wednesday,

July 9, 2025, and closes on December 31, 2025.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) also has technical and financial assistance available to help farmers and livestock producers

recover from these adverse weather events. Affected producers should contact their local USDA Service Center to report losses and to learn more about program options that are available to assist with recovery from crop, land, infrastructure and livestock losses and damages.

"Impacted producers should timely report all crop, livestock and farm infrastructure damages and losses to their local FSA (Farm Service Agency) county office as soon as possible," said Brad Thykeson, state executive director for the USDA Farm Service Agency in North Dakota. "As you evaluate your operation, take time to gather important documents you will need to get assistance, including farm records, herd inventory, receipts and pictures of damages or losses."

—Story and photos  
by Daniel Lemke

# CLEAN FUELS

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*Materials supported by United Soybean Board, soybean farmers and their checkoffs.*



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# Connecting International Buyers to North Dakota

## How NCI Courses Are Delivering Global Influence Through Local Investment

**T**his spring, the Northern Crops Institute (NCI) welcomed participants from around the world to three specialized soy-focused training courses, each designed to highlight U.S. soybean quality and demonstrate the real-world value of farmer-funded research. Supported by the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC), these courses not only educated international buyers and end users but also created connections between global markets and North Dakota farms.

Thanks to checkoff support from North Dakota soybean farmers, NCI was able to deliver high-quality, hands-on learning experiences for the international participants.

### Course 1: Essential Amino Acids for Asian Feed Millers

This past May, the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) partnered with the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) to host a delegation

of animal feed industry leaders from Cambodia and Kazakhstan to NCI. The visit was part of a broader effort to connect international buyers with the U.S. soy supply chain and showcase the value of North Dakota soybeans. This course brought together 18 feed millers from Cambodia and Kazakhstan to explore how U.S. soybean meal supports animal nutrition and feed efficiency. Participants learned how to assess soybean meal quality by calculating the value of essential amino acids—a key factor in optimizing livestock diets.

For the Kazakh visitors, this was their first experience with NCI's practical training and their first opportunity to engage directly with U.S. experts in feed applications. The program highlighted the strong nutritional profile of North Dakota soybeans and helped build important relationships in emerging Asian markets.

The course began in the Minneapolis area and concluded



**The Soybean and Soybean Meal Procurement Management Course** trade team held sessions at NDSU's Commodity Trading Room in Barry Hall, including real-time trading simulations and procurement exercises.

in Fargo, combining classroom instruction with site visits across Minnesota and North Dakota. Participants toured container loading facilities, feed companies, and NCI's recently renovated Feed Production Center. A highlight of the visit was a stop at the Casselton-area farm of former NDSC Chairman Joe Morken. There, the group observed soybean planting in action and spoke with Joe and his family about crop production and farm life in North Dakota.

Throughout the week, participants also heard from a range of experts in animal nutrition, soybean production, and global marketing. By the end of the course, they had a broader understanding of the value U.S. soy offers in animal feed and how it supports the global protein supply chain.

As international demand for high-quality protein continues to grow, educational efforts like this—supported by North Dakota

soybean checkoff dollars—help ensure U.S. soy remains top of mind for buyers around the world. WISHH's efforts to connect buyers in emerging markets with U.S. soy suppliers ultimately help build new demand and deliver long-term value for North Dakota soybean farmers.

### Course 2: Soybean and Soybean Meal Procurement

Another key highlight of NCI's spring programming was the Soybean and Soybean Meal Procurement Course, held in May. The course welcomed 24 participants from 11 countries and featured a mix of classroom instruction, facility tours, and on-farm experiences.

Participants began with market-focused training, including real-time trading simulations and procurement exercises. The course then moved into the field, offering a closer look at the soybean supply chain through tours



**Frayne Olson, Ph.D., of NDSU** taught the trade team key topics such as price risk management, export logistics, and options hedging.





**Group photo of the animal feed industry trade team during their visit to Morken Farm in Casselton.**

of local production and processing facilities.

A special part of the experience included a farm visit hosted by North Dakota Soybean Council Secretary Milo Braaten of Portland. At Braaten's farm, attendees saw modern soybean production firsthand, explored equipment up close, and asked questions about planting practices and farming in North Dakota. The visit offered participants a valuable farmer perspective and a deeper understanding of how North Dakota

soybeans are grown and managed.

This course offered an optional travel opportunity to the Pacific Northwest to visit export facilities. By the end of the program, participants left with a strengthened understanding of U.S. soybeans and soybean meal procurement as well as a connection directly to farms and soybean production in North Dakota.

### **Course 3: Food Grade Soybean Procurement**

Held in June, the Food Soy



**The Soybean and Soybean Meal Procurement Management Course trade team visited NDSC Secretary Milo Braaten's farm near Portland to learn about soybean production and explore modern equipment.**

Procurement Course had 9 participants from the United States, India and Nepal, all representing companies that produce soymilk, tofu and other soy-based foods.

The course covered the U.S. identity-preserved (IP) soybean system, food-grade soybean quality, pricing, shipping and risk management. Individuals toured regional facilities, including SB&B Foods and Brushvale Seed, where they saw food-grade soybean handling in action. A second session of this course, in August, will host an additional 20 participants from markets in southeast Asia.

These three courses reflect the Northern Crops Institute's mission to promote crops that are grown in the four-state region of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Montana through education and engagement. With support from the North Dakota Soybean Council and the checkoff funding, NCI continues to deliver high-quality training to educate international buyers and industry leaders about North Dakota soybeans.

*—Story courtesy of NCI and WISHH, photos by staff*



**The animal feed industry trade team observed planting and discussed soybean production and farm life with Joe Morken of Casselton.**



# Inspiring the Next Generation:

## NCI's Summer Ag Academy Gives Students a Real-World Look at Agriculture

**F**rom June 23–27, the Northern Crops Institute (NCI) hosted its third annual Summer Ag Academy, offering over 40 high school students a hands-on introduction to ag careers. Made possible through support from sponsors including the North Dakota Soybean Council and soybean checkoff dollars, the free event helped students explore opportunities in food science, animal science, and international trade.

Held at North Dakota State University, the academy welcomed students entering grades 10–12. They chose one of three career-

focused tracks, each combining classroom learning with expert-led sessions, facility tours, and hands-on projects.

In the Food Science track, students worked in NCI's Bake Lab to test flour types in muffin recipes and later developed and presented original food products. The Animal Science group toured livestock barns and feed facilities, learning about nutrition and feed technology. The International Trade track explored supply chains, trade policy, and marketing. Highlights included a trading simulation and a surprise visit from a foreign government official.

Students gathered midweek for a career fair and banquet with industry leaders. On Thurs-

day, they toured businesses in eastern North Dakota, including Abbiamo Pasta, Maple River Grain & Agronomy, Grand Farm, North Dakota Soybean Processors, and Buskohl Lamb Feedlot.

The academy wrapped up with a capstone challenge where students tackled a real-world ag scenario in teams and presented their solutions to a panel.

With support from the North Dakota Soybean Council and others, the Summer Ag Academy continues to encourage the next generation to consider careers in agriculture.

*—Story and photos courtesy of  
Northern Crops Institute*



The Food Science track introduced students to key concepts in food processing, safety, quality testing, and product development.



NCI's Summer Ag Academy inspires the next generation of leaders in food science, animal science, and international trade.

## Raising Safety-Smart Kids:

### How Farm Safety Camp is Cultivating the Next Generation of Responsible Farmers

**W**hether it's tractors, grain bins, power tools, or livestock, young people working on farms face real risks every day. Recognizing the need for practical training, NDSU Extension developed the Farm Safety Camp.

#### More Than a Certification

It was created to meet the U.S. Department of Labor's tractor and machinery certification requirement for youth hired to work on non-family farms.

"Farm Safety Camp expands beyond the typical tractor safety training," states Angie Johnson, NDSU farm and ranch safety specialist. "We needed to cover additional farm-safety topics that reflect the work these kids are doing."

#### Safety, Hands-On

Every station gives kids the chance to physically interact with equipment and to practice their skills.

"There are no PowerPoints in this camp," says Johnson. "Everything is one-on-one and designed



Campers worked with livestock and learned animal handling, vaccinations, and biosecurity practices.





**Youth tested their reflexes and critical thinking in live equipment scenarios, including hay balers.**

to be accessible no matter the skill level.”

Participants use a state-of-the-art tractor simulator before climbing into real machinery. They train with local fire departments. They test their reflexes and critical thinking in live scenarios involving ATVs, PTOs, powerlines, and more.

Mason Potteiger from Wildrose noted, “I learned how to use a hay baler. This is going to be useful for helping to bale this year.”

### **Building Skills, Confidence and Voice**

Organizers know that teens may

hesitate to speak up, especially when asked by a parent or boss to complete a task about which they’re unsure.

“We help coach kids through those moments,” emphasizes Johnson. “It’s okay to say, ‘I don’t know how to do this.’ We create a space where kids can admit that and get the training they need.”

Johnson mentioned one parent echoed this sentiment, “Our son became very cognizant of farm safety. That made all of us stop and talk through situations. It shifted the culture on our farm.” Community-Powered, Extension-Led



**Kids built confidence using a state-of-the-art tractor simulator before operating real machinery.**

Farm Safety Camp wouldn’t be possible without strong support from a wide network of partners, including commodity groups like the North Dakota Soybean Council, fire departments, hospitals, electric co-ops, and others. This grassroots support reflects the camp’s core belief that safety is a shared responsibility.

“Farm safety is a public health issue,” Johnson explains. “It has to be addressed collaboratively. These partners allow us to teach, equip and empower young people to go home and make a difference.”

Safety on the Farm and Beyond The program builds leadership,

critical thinking and workforce readiness: skills that transfer to any future job or career path.

“Now I feel like I can help out more – hooking stuff up or even driving the tractor,” said Jenna Nusviken of Larimore.

“I have already used what I have learned when operating tractors and ATVs,” noted Conrad Gjellstad, whose family farms near Velva. “I am placing the first aid kit in the shop and going through it with everyone that helps on the farm.”

—Story by staff, photos courtesy of NDSU

## **Exchange Program Illuminates Soy’s Role in** *Healthy Diets*

**S**oy serves a purpose beyond being a feedstock for biofuels and livestock feed. It’s a versatile, nutrient-rich ingredient that is finding its way to plates around the world.

To help share soy’s value as a food ingredient, Linda Funk, executive director of The Soyfoods Council, and four U.S. dietitians traveled to Japan in June; they participated in the Dietitian Soy Exchange program. It aimed to educate Tokyo dietitians about soy-based recipes, U.S. plant-focused diets, and soy’s role in managing diabetes and Glucagon-Like

Peptide-1 (GLP-1) related diets while also dispelling common myths about soy.

“I think the Japanese dietitians were really excited to hear some new information and see applications they weren’t familiar with,” says Funk. “The Japanese typically eat soy in a very traditional way, so showing them something a little nontraditional was very interesting to them.”

The North Dakota Soybean Council, the U.S. Soybean Export Council, and the Iowa Soybean Association supported the exchange program.

“I’m incredibly grateful to the

North Dakota Soybean Council, the Iowa Soybean Association and USSEC for supporting this

experience,” states Patricia Bannan, M.S., RDN. “Connecting with

—Story continued on page 27



**The Soyfoods Council and U.S. dietitians visited Japan as part of the Dietitian Soy Exchange program to promote soy’s value as a food ingredient.**



# Tiny Pest, Big Problem



**T**he biggest soybean yield robber that farmers face could be hiding in plain sight in many North Dakota soybean fields.

Soybean cyst nematodes (SCN) are microscopic roundworms that live in the soil, infecting the roots of soybeans and other plants. Yield loss from SCN can exceed 30%, yet above-ground symptoms aren't always visible. SCN can be present in a field for years before it is identified. Nationally, SCN causes an

estimated \$1 to \$1.5 billion in yield loss each year.

For North Dakota soybean farmers, the SCN problem is getting worse based on North Dakota State University's (NDSU) SCN sampling dating back to 2013.

"What we're seeing is that there are 24 counties within the state where SCN is present," North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension Pathologist Wade Webster, Ph.D. states. "That's a really big deal because there are a

lot of soybeans growing across the state. Most of those SCN positive reports have been on the eastern side of the state, but there are three counties on the western side of the state that have also had some positive reports. That's concerning because we can see that SCN is shifting further west along with soybean production."

Webster describes how the number of samples without any SCN present has decreased since 2013. The number of samples with low-to-moderate levels of SCN, from about 200 up to about 10,000 eggs per 100 cubic centimeters (cc), has increased over the past decade.

"SCN is establishing, and it is becoming a problem," Webster warns. "We're not seeing a lot of very high levels of SCN, anything above 20,000 eggs per 100 cc of soil, and that is good news. We're not seeing extreme levels of SCN increasing, but there are SCN numbers that are establishing within those fields, and they are not going away."

## Not Readily Visible

Webster explains that SCN is a highly evolved pest that moves

with soil via farm equipment, wind or even on dirty boots. SCN is very prolific, reproducing about every 24 to 25 days, depending on the soil's warmth. Generally, SCN produces about 3 to 4 generations per season. If the growing season is long and warm, there could be more generations.

Typically, SCN infestations aren't readily evident.

"SCN is a really effective pest because it doesn't really show symptoms," Webster asserts. "The only symptoms that we would see are going to be maybe some slightly stunted plants late in the season and also maybe some slight yellowing again towards the very end of the season. A lot of these symptoms look like other issues, including abiotic stressors like drought or fertility issues."

Webster contends that, generally, around 10,000 eggs per 100 cc is where substantial yield loss occurs. When that happens, it is recommended to rotate away from soybeans. If farmers plant a soybean variety that is susceptible to SCN, populations as low as 200 eggs per 100 cc could reduce yields.

"If we put soybeans into fields with low SCN levels, those populations can increase dramatically throughout just one growing season," Webster explains. "It's not so much about thinking if I have high levels or if I have low levels; if you have SCN in your field, you need to manage them appropriately. Even if you have low to moderate levels of around 1,000 eggs or less, those SCN populations can increase and still lead to substantial yield losses later in that season."

## Resistance and Knowledge

One of the best ways to combat SCN is by planting varieties which are resistant to SCN. Webster says that there are two main sources of genetic resistance: P88788 and Peking. Both sources are readily available in a range of commercial



Soil sampling is the best way to determine soybean cyst nematode (SCN) pressure, Free SCN testing is once again available to North Dakota farmers.



varieties. While it is still effective for combatting SCN, Webster states that farmers and researchers are starting to see some instances where SCN populations are overcoming the P88788 resistance. Rotating genetics is an important practice to reduce the likelihood of SCN developing resistance.

Crop rotation is very effective for managing SCN because crops such as corn, wheat and sunflowers are not suitable hosts. In the first year after rotating from soybeans, Webster notes that there is about a 50% reduction in SCN eggs.

“Rotation can help knock down those populations,” Webster contends. “We’re never going to eliminate them, but we

can always bring them down to manageable levels.”

Knowing the threat level from SCN in a field is an important first step. If farmers start to notice yields dropping in parts of a field, when the soybeans get to the reproductive stage, they should take a shovel and dig up some soybean roots to look for the SCN cysts. Taking a soil sample from those areas will also reveal what’s going on below the ground.

The North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC), in partnership with the NDSU Extension, is, once again, giving growers access to free SCN sampling bags. The NDSC, through the soybean checkoff, provides financial support for the

SCN sampling program by covering the cost of the laboratory fees when growers use pre-marked SCN sampling bags. The SCN sampling program supports growers by helping them identify the presence and pressure of SCN on their farms.

Information about how and when to sample for SCN is available online from the NDSC and NDSU. There is also information available through the SCN Coalition, a public/checkoff/private partnership formed to increase the number of soybean growers who are actively managing SCN.

The SCN Coalition also has a lot of valuable resources available to farmers, including a brand-new tool called the SCN Profit Checker.

“This is a really great resource that allows farmers to put in their SCN egg counts, their soil type and their expected yield,” Webster explains. “Farmers can estimate how much yield they’re going to lose because of SCN. This is another tool we have allowing farmers to predict and see the potential impacts on their operation from just this one pest.”

The SCN Profit Checker is available at [thescncoalition.com](https://thescncoalition.com).

—Story by Daniel Lemke, photos by United Soybean Board

To learn more about the free SCN soil sampling program, scan the QR code.



## Early Soybean Diseases CAUSE DELAYED REACTION

**M**uch of North Dakota had a cool, wet start to the 2025 growing season, especially across Eastern North Dakota. Those are prime conditions for several problematic soybean diseases, including sudden death syndrome (SDS) and brown stem rot (BSR).

SDS is the second only to soybean cyst nematode in the amount of soybean yield loss it causes. Still, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension Soybean Pathologist Wade Webster, Ph.D., says SDS remains fairly isolated across the state.

“SDS is found across the north central region of the country,” Webster explains, “but it is relatively new to the state of North Dakota. In 2018, there was one field in Richland County that was confirmed, and then one field in Cavalier County confirmed in 2020. Then it was relatively quiet across much of the state. In 2024, we had a lot of rainfall early in

that season, and that led to substantial incidences of SDS appearing across that southeast corner of the state. We had positive reports of SDS again in Richland, Dickey County and Cass Counties.”

Even though the SDS infection occurs during the early seedling stages in June, symptoms don’t start to show up until later after the flowering periods at stages R4 or R5 when pods start to develop.

“When symptoms do start to show up, we’re going to see yellowing on the leaflets where the veins on those leaves are still bright green, but in between are turning yellow and brown,” Webster describes. “In severe cases, those leaflets are going to actually drop off the plant and fall onto the ground, leading to the sudden death syndrome.”

Webster suspects SDS can be spread effectively through the movement of farm equipment, by the wind and through human contact.

“SDS is something that’s going to be very important to keep an

eye out for in the later parts of the season, around August and September,” Webster says.

Another disease that infects plants early in their growth cycle but isn’t evident until later in the season is brown stem rot (BSR). Webster says BSR is not as much of a concern as SDS, but it can also lead to similar symptoms to SDS, but with less severe yield losses.

Because the diseases aren’t readily evident until later in the season, the only management practices farmers have are to prepare for SDS and BSR in advance. Webster says planting soybean varieties that are resistant to the diseases is the first option.

“We are starting to see an increased number of resistant varieties in this portion of the country,” Webster says. “Seed treatments, particularly ILEVO® and Saltro® are traditionally very highly effective against SDS. There are more products that are being developed that have activity against those pathogens, but they’re still coming

to market.”

Management for SDS or BSR is done either before or right at planting.

“After we get the seed in the ground, there is nothing we can do to prevent the diseases from developing,” Webster explains. “We can’t go over the top and spray foliar fungicides like what we would for other diseases such as white mold. That’s why these diseases are a little tricky because there’s nothing you can apply after the disease has started to show up. Everything is preventative.”

Webster adds that if farmers do discover SDS, they should call the NDSU Extension Plant Pathology Lab, or contact their county Extension agent so that researchers can confirm it to better understand the pathogen’s distribution.

—Story by Daniel Lemke

For more info on soybean diseases from NDSU, scan the QR code.





# SOYBEANS COME TO THE CLASSROOM

**N**orth Dakotans are never far from agriculture, but that fact doesn't mean everyone has a connection to the industry. Education Mini-Grants from the North Dakota Soybean Council (NDSC) to teachers in the state helped to strengthen students' knowledge about some of agriculture's many facets.

"The grants were a way to invest in the future of agriculture by fostering awareness and understanding of the soybean industry among students," says Shireen Alemadi, NDSC outreach and engagement director. "They empower educators to bring agriculture into the classroom through creative, hands-on lessons that connect students to the science, economics and environmental impact of soybean farming."

For the 2024-2025 school year, the NDSC awarded 15 Education Mini-Grants. Each recipient was awarded up to \$500.

Desi Severance teaches agricultural education at Southeast Region Career & Technology Center in Wyndmere. She was one of the teachers who received NDSC support.

"Our curriculum in ag ed classes are extremely diverse; therefore, it requires a multitude of supplies to be on hand for labs," Severance explains. "I am always on the search for grants to help deepen the experiences and knowledge base for my students, and this fit

perfectly. We wanted to add more curriculum and hands-on activities on soybeans in our Ag Products and Processing course and for our Ag in the Classroom event that our FFA (Future Farmers of America) chapter puts on for the elementary students."

Severance states that, through the mini-grant, she was able to purchase materials to make soy candles and crayons as well as lab materials such as beakers, flasks, condensers and more to create soy-based biofuel in class.

"My students were so excited to try new activities that involved soybeans. They raved afterwards about how fun the activities were," Severance notes. "Being located in the southern Red River Valley, we are surrounded by acres and acres of soybeans and corn. While my students understand the busy times of planting and harvesting and how the plants grow, they never gave much thought to what happens to the grain product after being combined. This helped deepen their appreciation for why we are growing that crop, and all the versatility and uses of it within the agricultural industry."

Taylor Diede works in the Northern Cass School District. She teaches 4th grade social studies and science. Diede applied for the mini-grant after learning about it through another NDSC-sponsored program.

"I was inspired to apply for the mini grant from a professional development course I took last year at North Dakota State University called Nourish the Future," Diede recalls. "They told me about it, and I thought of one of the units I do with my 4th graders. I have an energy unit that I do with my learners. They have to build their own self-sustaining cities."

Diede describes how part of that unit includes identifying energy sources that are clean, reliable and efficient. As part of the energy source and engineering design process, each city has a primary source of revenue where it specializes in the production of a specific product to export and trade with other cities within my classroom; therefore, each city will have a different good or service they offer. The learners' exports were products that are based on soybeans or corn production. Some examples included soy crayons, candles, soybean lip balm, soybean-based soaps and soybean chocolate.

Diede used the mini-grant funds to purchase many of the items needed for the unit.

"My learners absolutely loved this unit," Diede says. "They had so much fun getting to do all of the different labs and explore the world of soybeans in a totally unique way. They got to learn about different products that soybeans are actually used in."

"By supporting teachers, NDSC helps students explore careers in agriculture, science, and related fields," Alemadi says. "It builds agricultural literacy and highlights how soybeans impact North Dakota and the world."

*—Story by Daniel Lemke, photos courtesy of the participating schools*



Grants helped students connect with the science, economics, and environmental impact of soybean farming.



Supporting teachers, NDSC helped students discover opportunities in agriculture, science, and related fields.



—Story continued from page 23

Japanese dietitians to share insights on soy's role in a healthy diet was truly meaningful. As someone passionate about global food culture, experiencing soy's deep roots in Japan firsthand was unforgettable."

Bannan is a healthy cooking expert; author of "From Burnout to Balance"; and founder of Wellness Intelligence, a program that combines nutrition expertise with evidence-based wellness strategies to create personalized systems for her clients. She presented to more than 50 Japanese dietitians and media professionals; her talk was about plant-based eating trends in the U.S., highlighting the rise of flexitarianism, a semi-vegetarian diet which includes plant-based food as well as meat and other animal products in moderation. She spoke about evolving consumer motivations and expanding the variety of soy-based products in the American market.

"The Q&A portion reflected genuine curiosity about how soy is positioned in U.S. food and nutrition conversations," Bannan explains. "The feedback was incredibly positive—it was truly an honor to represent U.S. dietitians in such a meaningful cross-cultural exchange."

Lorena Drago, a registered

dietitian, speaker, author, consultant, and certified diabetes care and education specialist, presented diabetes and the role of GLP-1 medications. She noted that these drugs are also being used in Japan, so the topic sparked interest among attendees.

"There's great research showing that soy is an excellent dietary partner when using GLP-1 medications," Funk asserts.

Abbie Gellman, a chef, registered dietitian and author, led a cooking demonstration, preparing ground pork, tofu meatballs and a chocolate dessert. All dishes were well received by the Japanese dietitians.

"I took a poll after they tasted the dishes and asked how many really enjoyed them; all hands went up," says Funk. "Then, I asked how many would personally make them or recommend them to clients, and again, every hand went up. It was a huge hit and really showed how easy it is to incorporate soy foods into everyday life."

Liz Weiss, a media dietitian (a registered dietitian nutritionist who specializes in communicating nutritional facts through various media platforms), helped to clarify the misinformation about soy.

"I think they (Japanese attendees) appreciated learning the key talking points to use when discussing soy at public events, ensuring



**U.S. dietitians toured a tofu processing plant to get hands-on experience with soy products.**

accurate information is shared," states Funk.

U.S. dietitians toured processing facilities to gain firsthand experience with soy-based products.

"Touring tofu, miso and natto production facilities gave me a whole new appreciation for the quality and care that go into traditional soy foods," explains Bannan. "I even tried natto for the first time: and had the best tofu of my life, so creamy, delicate and flavorful. Traveling alongside fellow dietitians made the experience even more meaningful. I came home with both professional inspiration and personal gratitude, excited to share the value of soy in a wellness-focused lifestyle."

As part of the Dietitian Soy Exchange program, U.S. dietitians will share their stories with fellow dietitians and will collaborate to develop an e-cookbook.

"I think it was a great experience. They (Japanese professionals) already had a solid understanding of soy foods as dietitians, but the experience enhanced their level of knowledge of how soy foods are made," asserts Funk. "Now, they can bring that experience back and apply it in creative and meaningful ways."

Promoting the health benefits of

soy, particularly seed oils, starts with providing accurate, science-based information. The trip ensured that participants returned with the knowledge needed to confidently discuss soy within the context of a healthy diet.

"Soy is one of my go-to ingredients because of its versatility, nutrition and ease of use," declares Bannan. "From tofu and tempeh to edamame and miso, it works in a wide variety of dishes. Whether I'm tossing edamame into a grain bowl or blending tofu into a creamy dip, soy helps make meals satisfying, nourishing and simple. Plus, it's a plant-based protein that supports both heart health and sustainable eating."

Seeing how soy is seamlessly woven into Japanese diets made an impression on Weiss.

"Soy is in everything from grab-and-go soy barns to natto; miso soup with soft, pillowy tofu; and fried tofu with miso glaze," says Weiss. "We ate school lunch as a middle school where cooked soybeans were integrated into a chili con carne dish, and the students seemed to love it, and so did we."

—Story by the Iowa Soybean Association, photos courtesy of program participants



**U.S. dietitians tried a middle school lunch with cooked soybeans added to chili con carne. Both students and dietitians enjoyed the meal.**



# Issues Resolved, More Challenges Ahead

**B**y nearly all accounts, North Dakota's 69th Legislative Assembly that concluded in May was extremely active. Lawmakers introduced nearly 1,100 bills and resolutions, covering myriad issues affecting North Dakotans.

Issues for agriculture and rural North Dakota were widely considered during the recent session in Bismarck.

## Funding Bills

Rep. Mike Beltz (District 20) of Hillsboro, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, points to several key funding bills that were passed by the legislature to support agriculture. The bills included an appropriation of \$30 million for infrastructure upgrades to compete for a potato processing plant in the Grand Forks area. This \$30 million expenditure will trigger \$1 billion of investments in North Dakota: \$450 million by Agristo, a Belgian company, and \$550 million in support of the plant, including storage facilities and producer investments.

The legislature committed more than \$285 million to North Dakota State University's (NDSU) Extension Service, the main NDSU research center as well as the regional Extension centers, the Northern Crops Institute, the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute and more. The legislation included State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE) priorities.



Rep. Mike Beltz

Lawmakers also pledged \$15 million for the Ag Diversification and Development (ADD) Fund for value-added ag projects.

"There is still \$10 million available in the fund for infrastructure improvements related to these projects," Beltz says.

Another bill provided \$5 million, or 5% of the total construction cost, in the ADD Fund for an incentive for a milk processing facility. Fifteen million dollars were provided in the Department of Water Resources budget for water conveyance to assist water resource districts with drainage projects.

Sen. Mark Weber (District 22) of Casselton was pleased that the legislature provided a mechanism to increase funding for rural roads and bridges.

"We have really fallen behind in the rural area for bridges and roads," Weber states. "We made some great improvements there. We were able to raise the percentage of the gas tax that goes back to the townships for roads."

Weber was disappointed that there wasn't an increase for the gas tax to help fund additional transportation needs.

"The one thing that did curb things in the big picture was the revised revenue forecast," Beltz contends. "The oil price went down, so we had to tighten up our budgets."

## Property Tax

As chair of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee, Weber had a front-row seat to many discussions and hearings about property tax relief. The legislature provided tax relief of \$1,600 for primary residences, more than tripling the amount homeowners had received previously. Lawmakers also placed a cap on a local political subdivision's ability to raise property taxes at 3% annually.

"As chairman of the Finance and

Tax Committee, I'm fully aware that one size does not fit all," Weber explains. "Take the city of Horace that is growing by leaps and bounds, and then you have another city that's going the other way; that 3% cap affects each city a lot differently. So, we know that it's not perfect."

The property tax package didn't include relief for agricultural land or commercial property. Weber expects there to be plenty of discussion on that topic during the next session.

"There was nothing in there for commercial and ag land, but I suspect we're going to have more discussions about that issue two years from now," Weber asserts. "I'm hopeful that we can carry some of that over for relief for commercial and ag property."

Beltz also expects additional property tax relief to be considered during the 70th Legislative Assembly, but he has concerns about how far relief should go.

"Right now, relief is strictly for primary residences. It didn't go beyond that," Beltz says. "Once you open up doors, then it becomes where do you stop opening doors? Once you open it up to ag, then you open it up to commercial, and then maybe you spend some of the oil taxes in lieu of property tax. You also open that door. That's a scary one because a significant part of our income comes from oil and gas."

Not all bills passed in the session involved funding. Several key



Sen. Mark Weber

policy bills were passed, including a measure which established that pesticide labels approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are sufficient to meet the state's labeling requirements. If a pesticide is registered with the EPA and its label is consistent with EPA standards, it also satisfies North Dakota's health and safety warning requirements. North Dakota was the first state to pass such a law.

Other policy measures passed in 2025 included a regulatory framework for bio-stimulants and beneficial substances in ag production, an updated code related to veterinary practice in the state, increases to both the barley and wheat check-off assessments, and the transfer of the Farm Management Program from Career and Technical Education to the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.

## Interim Committees

Consideration of additional property tax relief will be one of many issues addressed by legislative committees between sessions. A legislative advisory committee will be formed during the 2025-2026 interim to study property tax reform and relief.

A study of drainage management based on watersheds instead of political subdivisions will also take place during the interim. That bill was sponsored by Weber.

"I've been a big advocate of helping to push water management more along a watershed basin approach versus boundaries like county lines," Weber explains.

Beltz sponsored a bill calling for a study of inundated lands, ranging from seasonal sheet water in the spring to wetlands to issues surrounding Devils Lake. The committee will examine who has jurisdiction and what can be done for relief in some of these situations.

"This water also impacts soil



quality on areas outside of those directly impacted,” Beltz asserts.

Lawmakers supported a measure from the late Rep. Cindy Schreiber-Beck to compile research studies related to irrigation opportunities in North Dakota.

### Next Session

Looking ahead to the next biennium, Beltz expects ag-related

water issues, from irrigation to drainage opportunities, to be on the front burner. The possibility of a rate reduction for insurance when agriculture producers take some level of safety training will also be explored. Advancing animal agriculture in the state will likely be considered as will SBARE funding.

State revenue could loom large

over some of the legislative priorities. Beltz describes how North Dakota lawmakers prioritize K-12 education and human services. If funding is tight, some other issues fall by the wayside.

“The price of oil is going to be huge. When revenues get tight, then it becomes a push-push scenario,” Beltz maintain. “In that

situation, the state tends to push things back onto locals, and if they can’t handle it, it gets pushed off the table. When the state has money, we’re able to invest in different priorities. When things get tight, then we have to prioritize.”

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos provided by the North  
Dakota Legislative Assembly

## Farmer Leaders Take Ag Message to D.C.

**T**he One Big Beautiful Bill Act signed in July contained some provisions that are normally included in a farm bill, and soybean leaders across the country are still pressing Congress and the Trump administration to complete the job.

Farmer leaders returned to Washington, D.C., as part of the July American Soybean Association (ASA) meetings which included face-to-face discussions with senators, representatives, staff and members of the Trump administration. Dazey farmer and ASA director Justin Sherlock was among the grower leaders who went to Capitol Hill to meet with lawmakers.

“We thanked them for the ag provisions that were in the reconciliation bill and noted that we got a lot of the farm bill priorities through it, but there are still other

parts of the farm bill that were not included,” Sherlock said.

Sherlock explained how soy industry leaders are pushing a so-called Farm Bill 2.0 that would address some of the titles not covered in the reconciliation bill, including conservation programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs, Farm Service Agency loan limits and more.

The Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) commission’s report was a topic of discussion because farm groups, such as the ASA, have serious issues with the report which is critical of crop protection products and the use of seed oils. Sherlock states that the commission is likely delving into soil health, too.

“We expressed our concerns over MAHA and the potential

that they’re going to try and start interfering with how we farm,” Sherlock contended. “We want the commission to just return to scientific principles and scientifically proven concepts and information.”

Concerns about trade and the overall ag economy were raised with lawmakers. Sherlock maintained that there is a troubling lack of sales for new crop soybeans.

In addition to meeting with the state’s congressional delegation, Sherlock and other North Dakota farmers met with representatives from the U.S. Department of the Interior and talked about wetland easements. Other farmers, including ASA Chair Josh Gackle from Kulm, met with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin and representatives

from the USDA. Gackle also went to the White House to discuss biofuels with the National Energy Dominance Committee.

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—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by staff



(Left to right) ASA Directors Brent Kohls of Mayville, Justin Sherlock of Dazey and Corteva Young Leader Mark Knutson of Fargo, were joined Washington by NDSGA Executive Director Stephanie Sinner and Industry Relations Director Craig Kleven.



(Left to right) NDSGA Executive Director Stephanie Sinner, ASA Policy Director Carson Fort, North Dakota ASA Director Justin Sherlock, Minnesota Soybean Growers Association President Darin Johnson, North Dakota ASA Director Brent Kohls and Minnesota ASA Director Jim Kukowski pause in front of one of Washington’s more imposing figures.





# Fore! the Fun of it



**T**hank you for making the 12th annual Jamestown golf tournament successful! The tournament is a way for the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) to say thank you to members and supporters. Your membership dues and sponsorship of NDSGA events help to provide the necessary funds to continue policy and advocacy work in Bismarck and in Washington, D.C. We're proud of our past successes and are continually working to make things better for soybean growers throughout North Dakota.

## Congratulations to our Jamestown tournament team winners:

**First Place:** Midwest Seed Genetics A; Stuart Lamp, Reid Anderson, Donny Schrader and Alan Anderson.

**Second Place:** Central Sales; Jeff Romsdal, Easton Romsdal, Vaughn Romsdal and Hunter Geggelman.

**Third Place:** Midwest Seed Genetics B; Nick

Blaskowski, Ryan Wanzek, Myles Torgerson and Brandon Dale.

## Congratulations to the Jamestown contest winners:

**Closest to Pin #4:** Dave Barnick.

**Longest Drive #6:** Easton Romsdal.

**Longest Putt #9:** Bradley Barnes.

**Closest to Pin #12:** Jordan Kautzman.

**Longest Drive #16:** Lawton Allen.

**Longest Putt #17:** Mike Stoller.

## Thank you to our Jamestown golf tournament sponsors:

**Hole Sponsors:** AgCountry Farm Credit Services; Aligned Ag; Allied Energy & Agronomy; Bank Forward; BASF; Butler Machinery Company; Central Sales, Inc.; Centrol, Inc.; Clean Fuels Alliance America; Ihry Insurance Agency; Innovative Agronomy; MEG Corp. Biodiesel; North Dakota Soybean Council; Nutrient Ag Solutions; Proseed; Purple Wave Auction; and Valley Plains Equipment.

**Lunch Sponsor:** Ihry Insurance.

**Dinner Sponsor:** BNSF Railway.

**Golf Cart Sponsor:** Bayer.

**Programs:** Syngenta.

**Signs:** D-S Beverages.

**Welcome Bag:** Midwest Seed Genetics.

For more photos of the tournaments, check out [facebook.com/NorthDakotaSoybeanGrowersAssociation](https://facebook.com/NorthDakotaSoybeanGrowersAssociation).

Please check the NDSGA website soon at [ndsoygrowers.com](https://ndsoygrowers.com) for dates and locations of our 2026 golf tournaments.

—Story by staff, photos by Addison K Creative Co. and staff



Jamestown Tournament winning team – Midwest Seed Genetics A; Stuart Lamp, Alan Anderson, Donny Schrader and Reid Anderson.



Jamestown Tournament second place team – Central Sales; Hunter Geggelman, Vaughn Romsdal, Jeff Romsdal and Easton Romsdal.



Jamestown Tournament third place team – Midwest Seed Genetics B; Brandon Dale, Myles Torgerson, Ryan Wanzek and Nick Blaskowski.



# Potential Public Health Risks of Avoiding Seed Oils

Scientific evidence supports the role of seed oils in reducing chronic disease risk, improving cardiovascular health, and providing essential fatty acids and nutrients. Avoiding seed oils could lead to negative public health implications.



## Deficient in Fatty Acids Needed for Bodily Function

Seed oils are a primary source of the polyunsaturated fatty acids **linoleic acid (omega-6)** and **alpha-linolenic acid (omega-3)**, both essential for human health. Humans need to consume fat (along with carbohydrates and protein) daily to support bodily function. Seed oil helps us consume the fatty acids what we need.<sup>1</sup>

## Increased Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Risk

Scientific evidence supports the replacement of saturated fats with **polyunsaturated fats (PUFAs)**, which lower LDL cholesterol and reduce heart disease risk.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. **FDA recognizes canola, corn, soybean, and olive oils**<sup>3</sup> for their heart-protective benefits. Studies show that **consuming linoleic acid can decrease risk of coronary heart disease by 29%.**<sup>4</sup>

## Higher Type 2 Diabetes Risk

Research suggests that linoleic acid improves **insulin sensitivity** and reduces **insulin resistance**, lowers risk of type 2 diabetes.<sup>5-11</sup> Studies suggest as linoleic acid intake increases, the risk of developing diabetes decreases.<sup>12</sup>

## Loss of Essential Nutrients

Seed oils provide vital **vitamin E**, an antioxidant crucial for **immune function, vision, brain health, and skin protection.**<sup>13</sup> Avoiding seed oils may lead to deficiencies in this essential nutrient.

**Eliminating seed oils could result in higher cholesterol levels, increased CVD and diabetes risk, and essential fatty acid and vitamin E deficiencies. Maintaining a balanced intake of healthy fats, including polyunsaturated fats, is crucial for long-term health.**



For a deeper dive into the scientific evidence, scan this QR code or visit [www.SNIGlobal.org/seedoils](http://www.SNIGlobal.org/seedoils).

The Soy Checkoff, in partnership with Soy Nutrition Institute, utilizes these fact sheets for outreach with consumers and health professionals. A seed oil economic impact study conducted by the Soy Checkoff and American Soybean Association found a seed oil ban would decrease demand for soy, lower farm income, increase food costs, and potentially limit consumer choice.

1. <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/circulationaha.108.191627>

2. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/375034>

3. <https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-food-labeling-and-critical-foods/qualified-health-claims-letters-enforcement-discretion>

4. <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/cir.0000000000000510>

5. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/6783415/>

6. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20127308/>

7. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18042359/>

8. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10889798/>

9. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/7926311/>

10. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16132958/>

11. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16895896/>

12. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31182488/>

13. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-vitamin-e/art-20364144>





# MAHA Report a Disservice to Food Safety, Agriculture

**A** report from the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission, released in May, was roundly blasted by many agricultural organizations and leaders as misleading and damaging.

The Make Our Children Healthy Again report, issued by the MAHA Commission and led by Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., focused on addressing four potential drivers behind the rise in childhood chronic disease: ultra-processed foods, environmental chemicals, a lack of physical activity and chronic stress, and overmedicalization.

The MAHA report suggests that glyphosate, atrazine and other pesticides, which are essential to farmers, are potential contributors to health ailments. The report also implies, without evidence, that seed oils contribute to reduced human health.

The American Soybean Association (ASA) called the MAHA report brazenly unscientific and damaging to consumer confidence in America's safe, reliable food system.

"The biggest concern that the ASA has is that this report, regardless of any official actions that the federal government takes, has begun the process of eroding consumer trust in the health and safety of our food systems," says Alexa Combelic, ASA executive director of government affairs.

Officials with the Soy Nutrition Institute Global argue that the science of nutrition is complex and that our understanding about the diet's influence on our health is continually evolving. Because research often produces inconsistent findings, it is paramount that conclusions about the health effects of any given food or dietary pattern be based on the preponderance of evidence, taking into consideration study type and quality.

## Harmful to Ag

Soy industry leaders contend that, if the Trump administration acts on the report, which was drafted without input from the ag industry, it will harm U.S. farmers, increase food costs for consumers and worsen health outcomes for all Americans. Growers are concerned the report contains recommendations which are not grounded in science but seem to advance the agenda of food elitists and activist groups that have long sought to undermine U.S. agriculture.

There is also concern among leaders in agriculture and the medical field that the research cited in the report was flawed, misrepresented or nonexistent along with the fact that social-media personalities, not scientists, carried undue influence.

"The content of the report really explained that every major government piece of public health advice over the past 30 years has been fake in a real substantial way," said Calley Means, the brother of Trump's surgeon general nominee Casey Means and a special government employee for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Calley Means is a lobbyist; entrepreneur; healthcare-reform advocate; and co-founder of TrueMed, a company that promotes using tax-free health savings accounts for healthy lifestyle expenses, such as food, exercise and wellness coaching.

"There is ZERO plan—and in fact it would be insane—to do anything rash to hurt the American farmer," Means wrote on X. "But we also need to engage in a mature conversation about what the optimal world should look like in 10 years and how to get there through pro-growth policies."

ASA Regulatory Committee Chairman and Tennessee farmer Alan Meadows understands the MAHA report's implications

and spoke about the ASA board's deep concerns. "Both farmers and members of Congress tried to warn the administration that activist groups were trying to hijack the MAHA Commission to advance their longstanding goal of harming U.S. farmers. Reading this report, it appears that is exactly what has happened."

## Urging Input

Combelic describes how the ASA leaders had multiple meetings with members of the administration both at the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture ahead of the first report being released. Soy leaders also met with the White House Domestic Policy Council and the National Economic Council.

"Unfortunately, none of the folks that we met with were any of the primary authors of this report, but we did our best to go in and make sure that our voice was being heard to the greatest extent practicable," Combelic says.

A second report is to be issued within 80 days of the first release, providing policy recommendations based on the findings of the initial report.

Combelic noted that the ASA had the opportunity to go to the white House in June to share the organization's thoughts on the MAHA report and to offer insights about outcomes and processes which the ASA would like to see in the second report, which is due in August.

"That meeting wasn't a productive forum for having a frank conversation about our concerns with the report, but it did provide us with the opportunity to, once again, ask for more formalized stakeholder engagement," Combelic explains. "We've asked for more than just one 30-minute meeting. We've also asked that they

engage in a more formal comment period, whether that is a formalized request for information to be published in the Federal Register prior to the drafting of the second report or perhaps a comment period on the draft version of the report ahead of final publication."

Combelic clarifies how the ASA wants to ensure that the second report from the MAHA Commission is meant for strategy rather than new policy.

"I think that the administration is looking for this report, rather than making health claims, to be identifying potential structural reforms, innovation and reduction of government barriers," Combelic states. "ASA will continue to try to have productive conversations with the administration, and if we do identify opportunities to make tangible differences in childhood health, we will share them. At the same time, we continue to be concerned with ensuring that we protect both the tools that our farmers rely on to grow a safe and abundant crop and that the market for our edible soybean oil for human consumption remains moving forward in the U.S."

Despite serious concerns with the content of the initial MAHA report, Combelic maintains that ASA supports the overall objective of focusing on childhood chronic disease and childhood health.

"We think that goal is honorable," Combelic says. "However, the way in which this administration is going about it, we find deeply concerning. At the end of the day, we're eager to work with this administration and find workable solutions that make sense not just for improving outcomes of childhood health, but also ensuring that our agriculture community and the U.S. farmers can continue to thrive and be economically sustainable."

—Story by Daniel Lemke



# North Dakota Soybean Growers Association Elects Officers and Announces New Appointments

**T**he North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) held officer elections during a recent Board of Directors meeting. Josh Gackle of Kulm was elected as the secretary. Reelected NDSGA officers were President Justin Sherlock of Dazey, Vice President Chris McDonald of Leonard and Treasurer Stephanie Cook of Davenport.



Josh Gackle



Justin Sherlock



Chris McDonald

Brent Kohls of Mayville was recently appointed to serve as an American Soybean Association (ASA) representative to provide a voice for North Dakota soybean

producers on national farm policy. Gackle currently serves as the ASA chairman, and Sherlock serves on the ASA board.

Todd Stutrud of Barton was

recently appointed to an At-Large position on the NDSGA board.

—Story and photos by staff



Stephanie Cook



Brent Kohls



Todd Stutrud

## Get Involved!



### SOYBEAN Event Calendar

Here's what's happening over the next several months:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| August 21 – 22   | USSEC Soy Connex 2025 • Washington, D.C.   |
| August 26        | 22nd Annual NDSGA Golf Tournament • Leonard  |
| September 9 – 11 | Big Iron, Red River Valley Fairgrounds • West Fargo<br>Membership Matters! Visit us at booths C8 and C9 to learn how the ND Soybean Growers Association works for you. |
| September 13     | Red River Market, Broadway Square • Fargo<br>Stop by for easy, tasty ways to add soy to your meals.  |

*Please visit our websites for details and to learn how to participate!*  
NDSGA: [NDSoyGrowers.com/events](https://NDSoyGrowers.com/events) • NDSC: [NDSoybean.org/events-and-activities](https://NDSoybean.org/events-and-activities)



## RVOs a Win for Biofuels

The American Soybean Association (ASA) and other biofuel proponents applauded the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) long-awaited, proposed renewable volume obligations (RVOs) for 2026 and 2027, which reflected a strong commitment to strengthening the domestic biofuel industry and supporting U.S. soybean producers.

Under the draft rule, biomass-based diesel volumes would rise from 3.35 billion gallons in 2025 to 5.61 billion gallons in 2026, a 67% increase. This amount surpasses the 5.25-billion-gallon request from a broad coalition that included the ASA, the National Oilseed Processors Association, the Renewable Fuels Association, Growth Energy, Clean Fuels Alliance America and the American Petroleum Institute.

The EPA notes that this increase accounts for recent and projected growth with the domestic feedstock supply, especially for soybean oil, which remains the largest source of feedstock for biomass-based diesel in the United States.

If finalized, the rule would help revive a biofuel market that has struggled in recent years, largely due to weak Renewable Identification Number (RIN) credit values. The EPA's action offers renewed confidence for soybean farmers, processors and biofuel producers alike.

Another major component of the EPA's proposal is a recommendation to discount RIN credit values for biofuels which are produced from foreign feedstocks or finished fuel imported from overseas. The proposed 50% reduction in credits aims to re-level the playing field for U.S. producers, many of whom have lost market share to cheap, foreign alternatives such as used cooking oil.

## Coalition Calls for MAHA Commission Transparency

The American Soybean Association (ASA), joined by the National Corn Growers Association, the National Oilseed Processors Association and the Corn Refiners Association, led a coalition of more than 250 food and agriculture groups representing millions of American farmers, ranchers, producers and manufacturers. The coalition urged the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission to increase transparency and

stakeholder input for its work.

The coalition expressed concern that the commission's recent report contained numerous errors and distortions, which could have been avoided with greater opportunities for public engagement. The organizations cautioned that making policy decisions based on misinformation or unproven theories could have serious consequences for U.S. agriculture, including weakening the global competitiveness of American producers and increasing the reliance on foreign food imports. The groups also noted that several studies cited in the report either misrepresented the findings or were nonexistent.

To prevent future errors and misrepresentations, the coalition called for the formal inclusion of representatives from the food and agriculture sectors with all future MAHA Commission activities as well as opportunities for public comment on upcoming reports.

While the groups appreciate recent listening sessions held with some food and agriculture stakeholders, the organizations expressed concern that it remains unclear how those sessions will influence the commission's work or whether additional input will be welcomed. The coalition hopes that a formalized process for stakeholder engagement will be established before the commission releases its next report, which is expected in mid-August.

## ASA Testifies About the Importance of the Grain Standards Act

American Soybean Association (ASA) Secretary Dave Walton of Iowa appeared before Congress to deliver testimony on the value of the U.S. Grain Standards Act and the need for a one-time reauthorization of its expiring provisions. Speaking to the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities, Risk Management and Credit, Walton emphasized the law's role for ensuring consistency, transparency and trust in global grain markets, especially for U.S. soybeans. He emphasized the real-world importance of reliable grain inspection systems to farmers marketing their crops.

Walton noted that, while trade agreements and diplomacy open doors, it's trust in the U.S. grain

inspection system that keeps those doors open. Under the Grain Standards Act, the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) provides official grading and cargo inspections for soybeans and other commodities. These services ensure that shipments are consistent, contaminant-free and reliably graded, giving international buyers confidence in the U.S. product.

"Our strong grain standards, backed by the force and weight of the U.S. government, are one of the strongest reputational enhancements available to U.S. soybean farmers," Walton said in his testimony.

He pointed to recent feedback from international customers who described the FGIS as the "gold standard" for grain grading. This consistency also enabled growth for the futures markets, helping farmers and buyers hedge risk and support price discovery.

Walton shared how the ASA and the industry successfully worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to address grading concerns related to "soybeans of other colors" (SBOC). After off-color soybeans increased due to the adoption of a new seed variety, the FGIS conducted a study; reviewed stakeholder feedback; and, ultimately, removed SBOC as a grade-determining factor in 2023. The change preserved clarity for global buyers while protecting value for U.S. farmers.

With key provisions of the Grain Standards Act set to expire on September 30, the ASA is urging Congress to act.

## Ag Groups Push for Continued U.S. Support of the WTO

Several ag organizations, including the American Soybean Association, have called on the U.S. government to maintain full funding for the World Trade Organization (WTO), underscoring the institution's critical role in supporting American agriculture's global competitiveness.

In a letter addressed to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer, the groups highlighted how the WTO's trade rules have helped increase U.S. agricultural exports from \$52 billion in 1994 to \$176 billion in 2024. These rules protect American farmers and ranchers from unfair foreign trade practices, such as discrimi-

natory border measures, subsidies and non-science-based trade barriers.

"The WTO has provided predictable market access that is essential for American producers to compete effectively and for rural economies to thrive," the letter stated.

While recognizing that the WTO faces significant challenges, including stalled negotiations and difficulties enforcing some rules, the groups warned that reduced U.S. involvement could lead to increased trade barriers, threatening export opportunities for American agriculture.

The letter called continued funding an investment in the future of U.S. agriculture and urged policymakers to maintain strong U.S. leadership for reforming and strengthening the WTO.

## ASA Seeking Nominations for Soy Recognition Awards

The American Soybean Association (ASA) is recognizing exceptional soy volunteers and leaders, requesting your help with candidate nominations. During the 2026 Commodity Classic, individuals will be recognized and honored for state association volunteerism; distinguished leadership achievements; and long-term, significant contributions to the soybean industry. The ASA's Soy Recognition Awards categories include:

**Outstanding State Volunteer Award.** This honor recognizes the dedication and contributions of individuals who have given at least three years of volunteer service in any area of their state soybean association's operation.

**ASA Distinguished Leadership Award.** Visionary leadership within the ASA or a state soybean association is recognized by this award, which is presented to either a soybean grower-leader or association staff leader with at least five years of leadership service.

**ASA Pinnacle Award.** This honor is an industry-wide recognition of those individuals who have demonstrated the highest level of contribution and lifetime leadership within the soybean family and industry.

Nominations must be submitted through the ASA website.

All nominations must be received online no later than Friday, October 24, 2025. Awards will be presented at the 2026 Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas.

—Story by Daniel Lemke





# GLOBAL AQUACULTURE IS ON THE RISE

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JOIN US AT THE BIG IRON FARM SHOW

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**Why Join NDSGA?** Members gain access to:

- Timely, relevant industry updates
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