

 **SUMMER 2024**

# **SOYBEAN NEBRASKA**

*A Publication of the Nebraska Soybean Association and the Nebraska Soybean Board*



## IMPROVING THE FUTURE

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**14-25** | Learn how we are improving the future of Nebraska soybeans in the Demand & Utilization feature section.

**29** | Learn strategies for navigating generational shifts and effective transition planning.

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# SOYBEAN NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA) and the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) are proud to share the FY24 Summer edition of this publication with you—members of our shared community.

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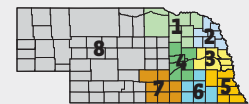


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The Nebraska Soybean Board is a private, nonprofit checkoff board responsible for the research and promotion of soybeans in an effort to increase the profitability of the state's 22,000 soybean producers.

### Nebraska Soybean Board Members

- District 1**  
Anne Meis (Vice Chair), Elgin
- District 2**  
Jason Penke (Chairman), Craig
- District 3**  
Ruth Ready, Scribner
- District 4**  
Eugene Goering, Columbus
- District 5**  
Mark Caspers, Auburn
- District 6**  
Mike Tomes (Secretary), Utica
- District 7**  
Doug Saathoff, Trumbull
- District 8**  
Blake Johnson (Treasurer), Holdrege
- At-Large**  
Greg Anderson, Newman Grove



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- Tony Johanson, Oakland
- Ed Lammers, Hartington
- Victor Bohuslavsky, Seward

### Nebraska Soybean Board Staff

- Lisa Ablor
- Andy Chvatal
- Thomas Hoxmeier
- Lois Ronhovde
- Wesley Wach

## On The Cover

The Aden boys near Farnam, Nebraska enjoy a hot summer day, gazing out over a soybean field on their family's farm.

*Note from the*  
**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**



*By Andy Chvatal*

Many things amaze me as the days pass in my role at the Nebraska Soybean Board, but the most impressive part of my job is the fact that I am surrounded by passionate and hard-working people—staff, volunteer leaders, soybean growers, other state and national colleagues, international customers and the list continues.

This job, in a nutshell, is to help guide a team of soybean producers in a positive direction, aligning their passion with their purpose, so they can grow value for Nebraska farmers by maximizing their checkoff investments.

It can be hard for me at times to play word-scramble and really turn my feelings into the right words. My wife can attest to this. But when I get asked what the checkoff does, or how the checkoff shows a return to the Nebraska soybean producer, my brain kicks into overdrive. There are so many people worldwide who carry a passion and energy for promoting U.S. and Nebraska soybeans. As we dive into our Demand and Utilization magazine issue here today, you'll get to see information about the Soy Excellence Centers and the work of the U.S. Soybean Export Council. These projects and their funding wouldn't make a dent if the right people weren't in the right places. These individuals have a passion for educating our foreign customers. They help teach malnourished parts of our globe about nutrition and educate them on the quality of U.S. Soy. Without the support of the checkoff, this education wouldn't happen, and Nebraska soybeans would struggle to stand apart.

There are many vital links in the soybean supply chain, and each one plays an important role. Be proud of your farmer leaders and the hundreds of individuals working worldwide to ensure your soybeans stand out and that your checkoff dollars are well spent. If you ever want to learn more about your checkoff investments, please reach out to me at the office at (402) 441-3240.

**Checking In With The Chairman**

**PLANTING  
POTENTIAL**



*By Jason Penke, NSB Chairman, Craig*

There's a sign on the wall of our equipment shop at home that, says "It's not the harvest you reap, but the seeds you plant." This is a great reminder of the long-term investment that producers put into their crops every year. I think Mother Nature might have thought we all needed to spread out the planting season this year... and possibly practice due to replant situations in multiple areas of the state. All kidding aside, I hope everyone had a safe planting season. Now, on to getting your fields scouted and managed according to plan for another bountiful harvest.

The Nebraska Soybean Board is working diligently at maximizing your checkoff funds to invest in domestic and international programs that support livestock, biodiesel, infrastructure and new uses for soybean meal and soybean oil. At our June meeting, over 140 project proposals were reviewed for potential opportunities to "plant the seeds" for the next growing season. Growing demand for Nebraska soybeans is an ongoing task for the Nebraska Soybean Board. Increased demand and utilization of Nebraska-grown soybeans bring more benefits back to producers and our great state to keep Nebraska agriculture thriving.

Another way producers can help maximize their checkoff funds and make their voice heard is to take time and submit your vote for the candidate of your choice if you live in Districts 1 or 3 this year. We have excellent candidates in each district who are ready to serve and represent as farmer leaders for Nebraska soybeans. Please take time to read the candidate profiles and, if applicable, vote for your district representative.

As we get into the heart of summer, I hope you all continue to receive timely and beneficial rainfall to nurture the seeds we have planted and achieve the bountiful harvest we all strive for.



Soy Action Center

# MAKING PROGRESS

By Kent Grotelueschen, NSA President, Octavia



While the planting season was welcomed with timely rains in several areas of the state, the work in Washington, D.C. on the Farm Bill by the House Ag Committee was also a welcome sight for farmers and ranchers.

With the House Ag Committee completing and passing its mark-up in late May, soybean farmers should be encouraged. This is a good step forward in a long farm bill process. Soybean farmers expressed appreciation that Chairman Thompson heard the concerns and needs of soybean growers and has worked to address them in the bill. We also thank Congressman Don Bacon, a member of the House Ag Committee, for his work to bring the priorities of Nebraska farmers to the forefront.

What's in the House bill? The Farm, Food and National Security Act of 2024 includes significant enhancements to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of the farm safety net, meaningful investments to promote expansion

and diversification of markets and protection of vital programs like crop insurance and the soy checkoff, as well as other important provisions.

What's next? The bill will now move to the full U.S. House of Representatives for consideration. The American Soybean Association (ASA) stands ready to advance the bill as it moves forward in the legislative process. Rest assured that soybean growers will be well represented in the process. ASA continues to advocate in Washington, D.C. every day for the pressing needs of soybean farmers and underscores how critical strengthening the farm bill is for the future of U.S. soybeans.

Membership in NSA and ASA is by voluntary membership dues; your support is what we need to be your industry advocates in D.C. and in Lincoln. Contact our office at 402-441-3239 or visit [nesoybeans.org](http://nesoybeans.org) to become supporting members. Hoping you take a few days to enjoy the summer and recharge.



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**2024 President**

Kent Grotelueschen, Octavia - **District 4**

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- Clint Hostler, Grand Island - **District 3**
- Doug Bartek, Wahoo - **District 5**
- Daryl Obermeyer, Brownville - **District 6**
- Wade Walters, Shickley - **District 7**
- Craig Frenzen, Fullerton - **At Large**
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**SOYBEANEBRASKA** is printed four times a year by the Nebraska Soybean Association and managed by the Nebraska Soybean Board.

For address corrections, contact the Nebraska Soybean Association, 4435 O Street, Suite 210, Lincoln, NE 68510. Phone: 402-441-3239 Email: [tom@nebrasokasoybeans.org](mailto:tom@nebrasokasoybeans.org)

For advertising information in **SOYBEANEBRASKA**, please contact Larson Enterprises. Phone: 515-440-2810 Email: [dave@larsonent.com](mailto:dave@larsonent.com)

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## Applications open for the 2025 Young Leader Program

Applications are being accepted for the 2025 ASA/Corteva Agriscience Young Leader Program. Individuals or couples passionate about agriculture's future should apply for this two-phase leadership training program.

**Program training dates:**

- ▶ **PHASE I:** December 2 – December 5, 2024, Corteva Global Business Center in Johnston, Iowa
- ▶ **PHASE II:** Feb. 28 – March 4, 2025, in Denver, Colorado, in conjunction with Commodity Classic

For application and details visit: [soygrowers.com](http://soygrowers.com) and click on the Education Resources tab, or contact the Nebraska Soybean Association at 402-441-3239. The application deadline is Sept. 16, 2024.



# NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD 2024 JULY ELECTIONS



## MEET THE CANDIDATES



### Anne Meis

Elgin, NE | Antelope County (District 1)

- Anne and her husband, Jim, operate a family farm alongside Jim's brother, sister-in-law and son, Jonathon. They grow corn, soybeans and alfalfa and raise Angus beef cattle on their fourth-generation family farm. Anne and Jim have three grown children and two grandchildren.
- After graduating with a BS in mathematics, Anne taught various grades and subjects at Elgin schools. Eventually, she returned full-time to the farm as the operation expanded. Meis Farms strives for continuous improvement to increase soil health through no-till and cover crops, conserving water through irrigation technologies and managing nitrogen with precious ag.
- Anne currently serves as Vice Chair of the Nebraska Soybean Board. Anne also serves as secretary for the U.S. Soy Export Council Soy Excellence Center Advisory Panel. She is the former Chair of U.S. Farmers and Ranchers in Action.

- Anne graduated with LEAD Class 33 and was named outstanding LEAD alumni in 2024. She is a 15-year 4-H leader, a member of the Nebraska Farm Bureau and was the 2016 Ag-Ceptional Woman of the Year at NECC.

*Comments by Anne: "As a board member, we are responsible for investing your checkoff dollars in programs that will increase the demand for and value of our soybeans. I dig deep into proposals for their effectiveness by asking questions, reading outside sources and reviewing past effectiveness. I have learned much about the soybean industry in the 9 years serving on the Nebraska Soybean Board. Your checkoff funds quality research, education and promotion of our soybeans in Nebraska and beyond. After traveling extensively to overseas markets, I am honored to be on the Global Advisory Panel with the Soy Excellence Centers, a unique program offering training to those utilizing U.S. Soy worldwide. My experiences have been valuable in serving Nebraska soybean farmers, and I would appreciate your vote so I can continue in my leadership roles promoting Nebraska-grown soybeans."*



### Mike Korth

Randolph, NE | Cedar County (District 1)

- Mike Korth has been farming for 50 years, currently growing soybeans and corn on his farm near Randolph, Nebraska.
- Mike has four grown daughters and is married to Deb.
- He has extensive board experience, having served on the Nebraska Soybean Board for 12 years, the United Soybean Board for nine years and various other agricultural boards and organizations including the National Biodiesel Board, now known as Clean Fuels Alliance America.

*Comments by Mike: "I am motivated to serve on the Nebraska Soybean Board again because I see opportunities for positive change within the organization. With a strong commitment to innovation, I aim to develop and guide new uses for soybeans, expand markets through new export partnerships, while also increasing domestic and in-state demand. I am also focused on the growth of biodiesel, renewable diesel, and sustainable aviation fuel. I'm always on the lookout for the next "home run" when it comes to new uses for soybean meal and oil. I believe the next big use is out there, and we need to research and find it. Biodiesel has already made a significant impact on the soybean industry, providing a reliable market for our crop and positively impacting Nebraska soybean farmers. With my hands-on experience with NSB and USB, I'm well-prepared to tackle these important areas and keep our soybean industry moving forward."*

#### NOTES:

- ▶ **District 1 & 3 ballots** will be mailed in mid-July.
- ▶ **Voting Eligibility:** Must produce soybeans, be a resident of their district and pay the soybean checkoff.



## Ruth Ready

### Scribner, NE | Dodge County (District 3)

- Ruth and her husband, Sid, operate a farm near Scribner on land that has been in Ruth's family since it was homesteaded in 1870. They are parents to four adult children and have four grandchildren.
- On their farm, Ruth and Sid utilize a no-till farming method to grow soybeans, corn and alfalfa, while also incorporating cover crops. These cover crops serve as forage for their small herd of Shorthorn cows. In addition to this, Ruth raises chickens and turkeys, and they sell the beef, poultry and turkeys directly to consumers.

- Ruth is an alumna of LEAD 24 and actively contributes to the agricultural community. She serves on the planning committee for the National 4-H Dairy Conference and volunteers with the organization CommonGround.

*Comments by Ruth: "Over the past three years, I have learned a great deal about NSB and its impact for Nebraska soybean producers. In my first year on the board, I helped craft the mission statement and initiatives that drive our decision process. I currently serve on the Farmer Support and Community Engagement initiative committees. As a member of these committees, I see the value of investing checkoff dollars and how it benefits producers and their communities. With your support, I will continue to help feed, fuel and innovate for the future."*



## Jay Hanson

### Mead, NE | Saunders County (District 3)

- Jay and his wife, Jenna, operate a family farm near Mead, NE, along with their oldest daughter Emily and Jay's older brother, Jeff. The farm was homesteaded in 1871 and is currently working with the fifth and sixth generations. They raise corn and soybeans on mostly irrigated ground.
- Jay and Jenna have two daughters. Emily is a recent graduate of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln with a degree in Agronomy, and Kaitlyn is a sophomore at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in Animal Science.
- Jay graduated from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1994 with bachelor's degrees in Agronomy and Mechanized Systems Management. Jay has also been involved in many UNL On-Farm Research projects with the family farm throughout the years.

- Jay is a member of the Saunders County Soybean Association and has served as Director and Past President. He has also served four years as an Associate Director on the Frontier Cooperative Board. Jay is also actively involved in the Mead FFA Alumni and the local church council.

*Comments by Jay: "As a board member, I would like to serve to help direct our checkoff dollars toward projects that will help benefit Nebraska soybean producers through developing new markets and increasing demand through new products developed with soybeans. I would also like to continue providing research dollars to help find solutions for diseases and insect problems affecting soybean production in the state. The Nebraska Soybean Board has done a great job in the past funding these projects, and I would like to help serve on the board to continue these efforts."*



## Mike Tomes

### Utica, NE | Seward County (District 6)

- Mike is a lifelong farmer. He and his wife, Dawn, live in the rural Utica area. For over 40 years, their farm has produced soybeans and corn. They have also grown hybrid seed corn for 35 years, and 90% of their farm is irrigated. They use no-till and strip-till and two of Mike's sons are involved in the operation. Mike also owns and operates a crop insurance agency.
- At a young age in 4H and FFA, Mike became involved in livestock production. Recognizing the importance of utilizing their grain production efficiently, Mike emphasizes the value of livestock in Nebraska's agricultural industry.
- Mike's past and present personal and community involvement includes Nebraska LEAD Class 24, Nebraska Ag Leadership Council, Seward County 4H Foundation and MHCS Hospital Board.

*Comments by Mike: "I am in my second year on the Nebraska Soybean Board. It has been an honor to serve District 6. I am ready to continue in this position. As a board, we allocate soybean check-off dollars to benefit the Nebraska soybean farmer in many ways. Research promotes profitability by offering new ways of controlling various pests and diseases, increasing return on fertility expense, sustainable farming practices and so much more. We support the ongoing development and promotion of new uses for soybeans. The new soy crush facilities, along with soybean use in the renewable fuel market, are encouraging. There is always a need to continue to educate ourselves as producers of soybeans. Trade missions connect local soybean farmers with ever-changing world exports. I encourage others to get involved. We all need to advocate for our own industry. United, we will continue to move forward today and in the future."*

- ▶ Qualified farmers who do not receive a ballot by July 19, 2024, may call **402-564-5827** to request a ballot.
- ▶ Ballots must be postmarked by **July 31, 2024**.



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# EVENING PROGRAMS SOYBEAN TAPS

## to Highlight 26th Year of SMFD

**M**arking the 26th year, Soybean Management Field Days (SMFD) will take place from August 13 to 16. This year brings a change in format with a move to an evening program focused on applicable, local soybean topics at three locations across Nebraska on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday night. The week culminates on Friday at the University of Nebraska's Eastern Nebraska Research, Extension and Education Center (ENREEC) near Mead, NE, with a mid-day program highlighting the soybean Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS) program competition, including plot tours and presentations.

Watch your mailbox for more information about this year's Soybean Management Field Day locations and topics!

The TAPS program, initiated by the University of Nebraska in 2017, has grown into an innovative platform for farm management competitions, with this being the first year the TAPS program broadened its scope to include soybeans.

Designed to provide a low-risk, competitive environment to enhance agricultural skills and knowledge, the TAPS program utilizes a research framework that learns from participants' decisions. By engaging in real-time competition, participants have the opportunity to test and implement tools, technology and strategies for profitable and input-efficient farm management. The program emphasizes skill development, awareness and relationship-building within the

agricultural community.

With 18 teams participating in 2024, each soybean team is tasked with making critical farm management decisions, covering crop insurance, variety selection, seeding rate, pest management decisions (fungicide, insecticide and herbicide), nutrient management and marketing. Early decisions have been interesting with 12 different varieties being chosen from six different seed companies and seeding rates ranging from 110,000 seeds per acre up to 180,000 seeds per acre.

The integration of the soybean TAPS competition promises to bring even more useful information and discussion that we look forward to sharing during Soybean Management Field Days!



Join us the week of August 13th through the 16th to learn more about the soybean TAPS plot planted near Mead, NE on April 24th.

# New Soybean Plant Set to Begin Operations Fall 2024

Norfolk Crush, a new soybean crushing plant in Madison County near Norfolk, Nebraska, is set to complete construction this summer and commence operations in fall 2024. The facility is expected to crush 38.5 million bushels of soybeans annually, offering farmers in the area access to expanding national and global markets, including renewable diesel. Norfolk Crush has already hired 40 employees and plans to fill remaining positions this summer. Utilizing modern technology and improved

logistics, Norfolk Crush aims to enhance the role of northeast Nebraska, Madison County, and surrounding areas in the global food and fuel supply chain. The soybean crushing plant is currently posting soybean bids for June/July delivery and the 2024 harvest, with plans to begin unloading soybeans in July. For more information, to view grain bids or to inquire about career opportunities, contact Norfolk Crush at 402-370-4910 or visit [norfolkcrush.com](http://norfolkcrush.com).

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# PRIORITIZING HEALTH AND WELLNESS ON THE FARM

Nebraska's farmers and ranchers have some of the most important jobs in the world. But as rewarding as those jobs can be, they can also be physically and mentally demanding. In this issue of *Soybean Nebraska*, we're putting the spotlight on health and wellness. Because when you and your family are thriving, so is your operation.

## Safeguarding Your Mental Health

From bad weather and drought to shifting commodity prices, farming and ranching can be stressful. Michelle Soll knows as well as anyone: As Farm Project Manager for Legal Aid of Nebraska and a farmer's wife, she's spent over 30 years working with and helping rural residents who've experienced struggles.

"The stress of agriculture is different from a lot of other occupations because there's so much you can't control," Soll said. "You can have a rough season, or if there's a flood or a tornado, you can watch everything you've worked for disappear in a minute."

Add that uncertainty to the challenges of running a business, navigating the economy and possibly supporting a family, and it's no surprise that mental health concerns like depression and anxiety are not uncommon in the farming and ranching community.

Soll wants any rural resident who might be experiencing these or other issues to know one thing: They're not alone. Legal

Aid of Nebraska specializes in helping people overcome the problems and stressors impacting their well-being. Soll leads the Rural Response Hotline, which has been helping farmers and ranchers address their legal, financial and mental health needs since 1984. She fields hundreds of calls per month from people in need of support; that could mean help solving a land dispute or support for dealing with suicidal thoughts.

The Rural Response Hotline's most used service, she says, is its counseling program. It allows people who call to receive up to five free sessions with a licensed mental health therapist who is pre-screened and has knowledge of the agricultural industry.

"Anyone can call the Hotline. We'll visit and talk through your situation, and then go from there and see what options are available, even if they don't want to see a licensed mental health therapist at the start," Soll said. "We understand what farming is like. We know the highs and the lows, the ups and the downs. If you or a loved one need someone to talk to, we'd love to hear from you."



To reach the Rural Response Hotline, call 1-800-464-0258. Your call is free and confidential. To learn more about Legal Aid of Nebraska and its services, visit [legallaidofnebraska.org](https://legallaidofnebraska.org).



## Focusing on Grain Bin Safety

Grain storage is a crucial part of life on the farm. But grain bin accidents are all too common—and they're almost 100% preventable. In 2022 alone, at least 42 grain bin entrapments were reported in Nebraska. Consider the following reminders and tips to keep you and your employees safe while working near stored grain.

### SAFETY REMINDERS

The most common cause of death for grain bin workers is grain engulfment. Total engulfment can occur in 22 seconds, and 92% of people do not survive. By the time grain reaches the knees, it becomes physically impossible for a person to free themselves without assistance.

Flowing grain, grain bridge collapse and vertical grain wall collapse are the most common causes of entrapment. Nearly 80% of engulfment occurs while a bin is being unloaded.

**Flowing grain engulfment:** Often happens when an employee enters the bin while the unloading equipment is left running (for example, to examine a flow interruption). Once the grain begins to flow, the worker is pulled in.

**Grain bridge collapse:** Wet and moldy grain sticks together and can form what seems like a solid surface. When a worker walks on this surface, they break through.

**Vertical grain wall collapse:** Wet grain cakes to the side of the bin. When it is disturbed, it collapses and a worker becomes trapped.

### TIPS FOR PREVENTING GRAIN BIN ACCIDENTS

The only true way to help reduce the risk of grain entrapment on your farm or facility is to strongly discourage people from entering a bin unless it's absolutely necessary. If necessary, follow these steps aimed at grain bin safety.

- 1 Ensure all equipment and power sources for grain handling equipment have been shut off, secured or properly locked.
- 2 The person entering the grain bin must wear a safety harness and lifeline attached and properly secured, or be seated in a boatswain chair—a device that allows a person to suspend from a rope to perform work in high places.
- 3 Wear an appropriate dust mask or respirator when entering grain bins. Grain bins contain substantial amounts of dust and/or mold and present a hazard to workers.
- 4 Never enter a grain bin alone.
- 5 There must be an observer located outside of the grain bin who is able to monitor the person inside the bin.
- 6 Ensure the observer and person in the bin can easily communicate.
- 7 Ensure that rescue resources are available in case the person does become entrapped.

*\*The information in this piece was compiled from a variety of sources and is intended to provide helpful tips only.*

# IMPROVING THE FUTURE

Explore future opportunities for Nebraska soybeans, their global market impact and the efforts to boost profitability, demand and sustainability.

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NSB's Anne Meis attended the U.S.-Cuba Agriculture Business Conference in Havana.

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The fight to eliminate forever chemicals.

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NSB funds major B20 effort in the state's capital city.

**25 | The Pacific Northwest**

A key to profitability and resiliency for Nebraska soybean farmers.



## DEMAND & UTILIZATION COMMITTEE:

Mark Caspers (Chair) | Eugene Goering | Anne Meis | Greg Anderson | Blake Johnson

# Boosting Opportunity FOR U.S. SOY IN CUBA



In May, Anne Meis, Vice Chair of the Nebraska Soybean Board from Elgin, Nebraska, attended the U.S.-Cuba Agriculture Business Conference in Havana. Representing the United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Meis focused on promoting U.S. soy and the Soy Excellence Centers (SECs) at this pivotal event.

The U.S.-Cuba Agriculture Business Conference, organized annually by the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, serves as a crucial platform for fostering agricultural trade between the two nations. Currently, Cuba faces significant agricultural and economic challenges, including a dramatic decline in agricultural production, insufficient inputs and fuel, frequent blackouts and widespread debt. The centralized economy has proven ineffective and there have been severe reductions in pork, dairy and beef production, with pork production down by 90%. Cuba's economic crisis is also fueling a mass migration—over the past two years, five to 10% of the population has left the country. In response, the government is shifting toward supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which, along with the entire private sector, now employ a third of Cubans. This shift, alongside the engagement of young entrepreneurs, represents a significant change in Cuba's food landscape.

Despite these challenges, the conference highlighted opportunities for the U.S. and USSEC to collaborate with Cuba to address these issues and improve food security.

During the conference, Meis and other attendees engaged with key figures from Cuban enterprises and farm cooperatives, exploring agricultural trade, investment and production opportunities. The agenda included field visits to local farms, cooperatives and food industry facilities, offering a firsthand look at the state of Cuban agriculture and strategies to boost output and attract foreign direct investments.

A highlight of the conference was the B2B roundtable discussions, where Meis, alongside U.S. exporters and investors, met with Cuban buyers, producers and logistics companies. These discussions are essential for exploring specific investment opportunities and understanding the current agricultural and economic relations between the U.S. and Cuba.

Representing USSEC, Meis emphasized the promotion of Soy Excellence Centers (SECs), a workforce and capacity development program under USSEC that trains young individuals, both college-educated and non-college-educated, employed in animal feed and protein companies across the region.

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While in Cuba, I met with Cuban officials and local agricultural associations to discuss SEC training opportunities for Cubans in poultry, swine and feed production. Although U.S. and Cuban trade is currently limited, the conference was a chance to meet with officials and look for opportunities to provide this training to Cubans in the protein industry. We hope this opportunity opens doors that could benefit the Cuban workers and the U.S. Soy industry in the future.

— ANNE MEIS, VICE CHAIR OF THE NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD

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Throughout the conference, participants gained valuable insights into the possibilities for new markets and growth opportunities. Meis's participation in the conference underscores the importance of international collaboration in the agricultural sector. Her efforts to promote U.S. Soy and the SECs highlight the ongoing commitment of the Nebraska Soybean Board and USSEC to build demand and support sustainable agriculture worldwide.



Anne Meis standing with (left to right) National Pork Producers Council representative, Farm Cooperative Director and a Cuban farmer.



Congressman Rick Crawford from Arkansas speaks at the U.S.-Cuba Agriculture Conference.



Moises Huerta, USSEC SEC Americas Center Lead, and Anne Meis at the market.

# Soy Checkoff Partners With DEWALT®

## To Produce a Soy-Based Bar and Chain Oil



What's the newest use for U.S. Soy? Try a biobased oil for chainsaws because the innovation isn't slowing down—or bogging down in this case. Through a soy checkoff research and development investment, U.S. soybean farmers, in partnership with DEWALT® and Dynamic Green Products (DGP), introduced a groundbreaking sustainable solution: DEWALT's soy-based Bar & Chain Biodegradable Oil, now available at Home Depot stores nationwide. With over 1,300 Home Depot locations, as well as online platforms including Bomgaars, Mac Tools, Grainger and Amazon, among others, consumers and farmers alike have easy access to this environmentally friendly product.

"It's exciting to see the checkoff investment in this bar and chain oil pay dividends as it becomes widely available to more farmers as well as the professionals who care for parks, forests and more," said Steve Reinhard, United Soybean Board chair and soybean farmer

from Ohio. "This oil is yet another example of U.S. Soy delivering performance and sustainability benefits."

This USB initiative in partnership with DGP is part of a strategic collaboration with the Airable Research Lab, a division of the Ohio Soybean Council dedicated to bringing sustainable soy solutions to the market in 2024. Fifth-generation farmer Bret Davis, who grows soybeans, corn and wheat in Delaware County, Ohio, describes his eagerness to be an early adopter of the product.

"It's really pretty simple: If you grow it, you should use it," said Davis. "I'm proud to be part of the Ohio Soybean Council, which invested in the development of this high-performing, sustainable bar and chain oil that I'm now using on my farm. It works great in my battery-powered chain saw, which I use to clear downed trees and for general cleanup around the farm and fields. It lasts a long time and has excellent lubricating properties."

The soy-based bar and chain oil has gained widespread acclaim among professionals, highlighting its high performance as a sustainable option. Buckin' Billy Ray Smith, known for his adventures on the History Channel's "Ax Men" series and YouTube, said that after he gave it a trial, the 30-year-old veteran of logging and tree falling was instantly impressed with the soy-based bar and chain oil.

"I found the soy-based oil so clean and easy to work with, and it has just the right amount of tack," said Smith, who has tested almost every bar and chain oil on the market. "Now it's the only thing I use, including in my vintage saws. It's also better for the environment, especially in sensitive areas around watersheds and for workers who get the oil on their hands and breathe it in."

"I'm concerned about the environment, what's on my body and what's left behind. It's a wonderful option that's more sustainable and better for workers," Smith shares.



More information about soy-based products can be found at [soybiobased.org](https://soybiobased.org). To find the oil at Home Depot, search these product numbers: DXCC1200 (16oz), DXCC1201 (32oz) and DXCC1202 (1gal).

**WISHH leverages partnerships**  
*for U.S. Soy to help meet the protein*  
*needs of 8 billion consumers*



[wishh.org](http://wishh.org)

# Connecting with Latin American Soybean Customers

By Lyndsey Erb, Director of Industry Affairs, U.S. Soybean Export Council

Nebraska soybean farmers play a key role in meeting the needs of customers throughout Latin America. Just more than 800 miles north of Mexico, Nebraska connects to infrastructure, carrying soybeans directly into that country or to ports in the Gulf of Mexico and on the West Coast.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) works closely with U.S. Soy customers in what we call the Americas region, including stable markets in Mexico and growth markets in Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. Nebraska Soybean Board representatives including Mark Caspers, farmer and District 5 Director, experienced the potential of this region firsthand during a recent learning mission and the 2024 Americas Agricultural Cooperators Conference in Bogotá, Colombia.

Colombia is the third-largest importer of U.S. soybean meal. Prior to the conference, Caspers and the rest of the team visited Solla, a large feed manufacturer that utilizes U.S. soybean meal and takes advantage of USSEC's Soy Excellence Center to train and develop employees. They also met with representatives of the growing poultry, pork and aquaculture industries and learned how the Colombian bakery industry is using soy flour, and more.

“Colombia prefers U.S. soybean meal for its intrinsic value and quality,” Caspers shares. “However, new policies and fluctuating currency value contributes to uncertainty. They face real challenges, and USSEC is working to find solutions.”

USSEC co-hosted the 2024 Americas Agricultural Cooperators Conference with the U.S. Grains Council, U.S. Wheat

Associates and USA Rice Federation. Customers from countries throughout the region gathered to learn about U.S. crop conditions, market trends and pressures, sustainability and much more. The conference aimed to promote U.S. agricultural products and share the latest global market and industry information.

“One of my personal takeaways, based on the sessions and conversations with customers, is that U.S. Soy has established strong partnerships and trust with all industry sectors in Colombia, so we have to do our part as farmers to continue producing high-quality soybeans,” Caspers says. “Colombia has exciting potential for growth in consumption of animal protein; our industry investments in Colombia represent value for our customers there and opportunities for U.S. soybean farmers.”

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In addition to meeting with key customers and industry representatives in Colombia, I connected with decision-makers from Central and South America. I have a better understanding of the dynamics that drive U.S. soybean meal exports to Colombia, and how our customers there can benefit from our expanding crush capacity.

— MARK CASPERS, FARMER,  
NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD DISTRICT DIRECTOR

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# ON THE Move



## A discussion with Sherry Vinton, Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

As NDA Director, Vinton oversees all programs of the agency including animal disease traceability programs, regulatory programs for plants and animals, food safety and consumer protection programs, and the promotion of Nebraska agriculture and ag products. Vinton is a fifth-generation rancher on a family ranch south of Whitman in the Sandhills of Nebraska. She shares with us her outlook on soybean exports, renewable fuels and the increase of soybean processing in Nebraska.

### NEBRASKA SOYBEAN EXPORTS

**Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB):**

How have Nebraska's soybean exports been vital to our agricultural economy?

**Sherry Vinton (SV):** The export of soybeans and soybean products, like soybean oil and soybean meal, constituted 32.9% of all of Nebraska's agricultural exports in 2022, so they are of tremendous importance to Nebraska's agricultural economy. Countries around the world rely on Nebraska soybeans to provide livestock feed and cooking oil for their own domestic needs. Nebraska's position as the westernmost major soybean-producing state gives us a key role in providing these products to major markets in the Asia-Pacific region.

**NSB:** From your perspective, are there any emerging markets that Nebraska soybean farmers should be paying attention to?

**SV:** Since 2020, U.S. exports of whole soybeans have grown from \$25.5 billion to \$27.9 billion. The biggest drivers of that growth have been sustained increases in exports to the European Union, Mexico and Japan, the latter two of which Nebraska

is particularly suited to the exporting market. Exports to China have also recovered since their low in 2018, with 2022 being a record year of U.S. soybean exports to China. Over that same period, soybean meal exports have increased from \$4.7 billion to \$7.4 billion, with growth coming from Southeast Asia, the Americas and the European Union. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture is engaging in all of these regions to make sure that Nebraska is the first thought of purchasers as they look to buy soybeans and soybean products in the years to come.

**NSB:** What are the primary logistical challenges facing Nebraska soybean exports today?

**SV:** While Nebraska's position as the westernmost major soybean-producing state and our excellent rail infrastructure give us good avenues into markets in the Asia-Pacific region and the Americas, Nebraska struggles, compared with other soybean-producing states, with river access. The European Union has been a major growth market lately, and Nebraska's potential for barge traffic to ports on the Gulf Coast makes it difficult for us to

engage in that market.

**NSB:** What are some customers around the world looking for when it comes to Nebraska soybeans, soybean meal and soybean oil?

**SV:** Something that Nebraska soybeans can offer when compared with other states and countries is the consistency of production, and that is in large part due to our extensive use of irrigation. Other soybean states, like Iowa and Illinois, and international competitors like Brazil and Argentina are very dependent on dryland farming for their soybean production, so Nebraska's greater utilization of irrigation gives us a unique competitive advantage when it comes to building business relationships with soybean customers around the world.

### RENEWABLE FUELS DEVELOPMENT

**NSB:** With the growing emphasis on renewable fuels, how is Nebraska positioned to become a leader in the production of biofuels, and how can we become a bigger user ourselves?



**SV:** With our growing capacity for crush, we are on our way; this will entail a need for more acres to be planted in soybeans and increased yields if we want to lead. However, farmers must be clear with consumers and policymakers, that this is not a food or fuel debate. It is food and fuel. Renewable diesel is a cleaner burning drop-in replacement for petroleum-based diesel. Nebraska's livestock industry turns soybeans and soybean byproducts into the best-tasting and most nutrient-dense protein to feed a hungry world.

**NSB:** How is the renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) market creating opportunities for Nebraska farmers?

**SV:** Low carbon fuel standards are creating demand for cleaner burning fuels. Renewable diesel and SAF are transportation fuels that will be used in the trucking and aviation industry and will not be replaced by electric for quite some time, providing long-term market opportunity. With high demand and limited supply, farmers will respond to favorable price signals.

## INCREASING CRUSH CAPACITY

**NSB:** Increasing crush capacity is a significant focus for the soybean industry. How is Nebraska advancing in this area, and what benefits does this bring to our farmers?

**SV:** Increasing crush capacity is a significant focus for the soybean industry. Nebraska farmers should see increased competition for their soybeans and a tighter basis due to two new crush facilities coming online and another in the planning stages near North Platte. These facilities should also provide for rural revitalization, bringing new jobs and economic development to the surrounding areas. More money in farmers' pockets has always benefitted rural hometowns.

**NSB:** What opportunities do you see for livestock development in the state with the increase in soy processing?

**SV:** Nebraska is uniquely positioned with our livestock and processing industry to use more soybean meal. We are and will continue to leverage this competitive advantage. Clean burning fuel and great-tasting protein from our livestock segments are the basis for playing such an important

role in national food security.

**NSB:** Looking ahead, what do you see as the biggest opportunities and challenges for Nebraska's soybean industry over the next five to ten years? How can the Nebraska Department of Agriculture play a role and assist farmers?

**SV:** With SAF production, the sky is literally the limit. And with renewable diesel, the rubber really hits the road, as soybeans are a component of our tires too. Growing enough beans, providing housing and workforce needs and growing our livestock sectors are the challenges that come with opportunities. Nebraska is the epicenter of the bioeconomy. NDA promotes our livestock industry and our feed grain industry domestically and around the world. We will continue to work with long-time customers and continue to explore new emerging markets.

**NSB:** Anything else you would like to add?

**SV:** In Nebraska, we are fortunate to have a team of people and agencies working together for one Nebraska, promoting our bioeconomy and the unique expertise and advantages Nebraska brings to anyone's table.

# FARMERS & FIREFIGHTERS

## Join Forces to Eliminate Forever Chemicals

A new fire suppressant made with soy flour is now available to protect firefighters and communities from harmful chemicals. Supported by the soy checkoff, SoyFoam™ TF 1122 offers a safer and cost-effective solution for Nebraska’s 17,218 firefighters and 478 departments, which provide vital services to the citizens of Nebraska.

Firefighters face numerous risks navigating hazardous environments filled with smoke and carcinogens. Traditional firefighting foams often expose them to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These harmful chemicals contaminate many communities in the United States. However, thanks to the innovative company partnering with the soy checkoff, SoyFoam is available to eliminate this exposure.

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We all depend on our fire departments. By eliminating forever chemicals through soy-based products, farmers are creating a real impact. We can contribute to the safety of first responders, maintain the integrity of local communities’ soil health, air quality and drinking water. This product drives demand for soybean meal too!

— **JASON PENKE,**  
NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD CHAIRMAN,  
CRAIG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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The United Soybean Board has partnered with Cross Plains Solutions, manufacturer of SoyFoam, to do research, testing and promotion of the product. The company estimates the current applications of SoyFoam TF 1122 have the potential to use the protein from 12 million bushels of soybeans, and new uses are on the horizon. Each gallon of SoyFoam TF 1122 is made with 1.66 pounds of soy flour. Therefore, 8.3 pounds of soy flour is used per 5-gallon pail, 91.3 pounds of soy flour, per 55-gallon drum and 415 pounds of soy flour per 250-gallon tote. One bushel of soybeans yields 39 pounds of soy flour so a 5-gallon pail of SoyFoam TF 1122 uses the bushel equivalent of about ¼ of a bushel, a 55-gallon drum uses the bushel equivalent of 10.6 bushels and a 250-gallon tote uses

the bushel equivalent of 48 bushels.

“We are proud to partner with U.S. Soy to launch this breakthrough firefighting foam for use by fire departments across the nation,” said Cross Plains Solutions’ Managing Partner Alan Snipes. “Our manufacturing plant in Georgia is producing SoyFoam now, so fire departments can request it. We also see demand for numerous additional applications, ranging from canisters to sprinkler systems.”

Heiman Fire Equipment is the supplier for SoyFoam in Nebraska, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Colorado and Montana. <https://www.heimanfireequipment.com/>





## Environmental Benefits for Nebraska

EPA reports that PFAS are found in water, air, fish and soil at locations across the nation and the globe. Exposure is linked to several adverse health effects, including certain cancers, thyroid dysfunction, changes in cholesterol and small reductions in birth weight.

SoyFoam™ is the first and only firefighting foam GreenScreen Certified® at the Gold level. GreenScreen Certified is an independent certification program owned by the nonprofit Clean Production Action, which promotes the use of PFAS-free and preferred chemicals in materials, products and manufacturing. SoyFoam is 100% free of intentionally added per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and contains no fluorines. It's also certified readily biodegradable by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development and is certified as 84% biobased through the U.S. Department of Agriculture BioPreferred® program.

EPA Region 7 has supported Nebraska environmental agencies with technical and/or financial assistance to help assess the PFAS contamination at a few sites. These efforts are part of a nationwide EPA initiative to help states, tribes and local communities target PFAS reductions and protect public health. Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue was part of the evaluation.

In April 2024, the Air Force committed \$8.55 million to purchase more than 270,000 gallons of fluorine-free foams for nationwide use. Department of the Air Force installation fire departments are replacing current stocks of aqueous film forming foam, or AFFF, in fire and emergency services vehicles with a fluorine-free formulation as part of a Defense Department-wide effort to remove PFAS from firefighting activities.

USB is supporting the product to go through the demanding testing required by the Department of Defense prior to adoption of any product for the military. SoyFoam has completed nine tests required by the Department of Defense on Jet A and gasoline fuels and is in the 18-month process of becoming fully certified. Cross Plains is also working closely with the EPA, Naval Research Laboratory and Federal Aviation Administration to expedite the testing process.

The U.S. Forest Service's Wildland Fire Chemicals Systems division is conducting testing and certification too. This process takes 18-24 months but is necessary for the product to be added to the Quality Product List.

Soybean farmers can provide information to their local fire departments about SoyFoam, not only to protect their firefighters but to safeguard their communities as well. To learn more about the product, visit [crossplainsolutions.com](http://crossplainsolutions.com).

### SOURCES:

[sfn.nebraska.gov/fire-departments/general-information](http://sfn.nebraska.gov/fire-departments/general-information)

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# LINCOLN'S BIODIESEL INITIATIVE



These diesel engines, as part of the City of Lincoln's fleet, will begin incorporating B20 biodiesel as a fuel source this year.

From local governments to the top companies in the world, there has been a collective effort to reduce greenhouse gases for decades. Many of these efforts have become more prevalent in recent years. In Lincoln, Nebraska, a Climate Action Plan was created in 2021, containing a goal to reduce the capital city's net greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by the year 2050. It's an ambitious goal, one that the city has looked to Nebraska's soybean farmers to help meet.

In May of 2024, the Nebraska Soybean Board provided funding to the city of Lincoln to begin incorporating B20 biodiesel in the municipal fleet, which will replace 215,000 gallons of petroleum diesel in nearly 130 fleet vehicles. Biodiesel is a clean-burning alternative fuel made from renewable sources, with soybean oil being the primary feedstock. B20 refers to the 20% blended percentage

of biodiesel in a gallon of fuel. As a drop-in replacement, B20 can be incorporated into the city's fleet immediately without any changes to existing equipment or infrastructure.

"We are grateful to the Nebraska Soybean Board for selecting Lincoln as a recipient of these funds," said Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird. "Incorporating biodiesel into our fleet helps the city reduce our carbon footprint and advance our sustainability goals."

Kim Morrow, Chief Sustainability Officer with the city of Lincoln, said studies have shown that the lifecycle emissions of pure biodiesel are 74% lower than those of regular diesel and that this is an important step in reaching Lincoln's Climate Action Plan goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050. Another goal is to transition

its fleet vehicles to 100% electric or alternatively fueled by 2040.

In addition to reducing emissions, the transformation of soybean oil feedstocks into biodiesel plays a crucial role in Nebraska's agricultural sector, contributing approximately 13% to the price per bushel of soybeans and lowering the price of soybean meal. It also helps save consumers money at the pump, decrease America's dependence on foreign oil, boost our nation's economy and support thousands of jobs in rural communities.

"This partnership is a win-win for the city of Lincoln and Nebraska's soybean farmers," said Wesley Wach, NSB Demand and Utilization Coordinator. "It is great that our state's capital city is turning to a homegrown, value-added product to help meet their goals."



To learn more about biodiesel, visit [nebraskasoybeans.org](https://nebraskasoybeans.org) and [biodieselNE.com](https://biodieselNE.com).

# the Pacific NORTHWEST

## A Key to Profitability and Resiliency for Nebraska Soybean Farmers

By Mike Steenhoek, Executive Director, Soy Transportation Coalition

One of the cardinal rules of supply chains is to “not put all of your eggs in one basket.” The more supply chain options that are available, the more resilient an industry or overall economy will be. Over the past couple of years, U.S. agriculture has been negatively impacted by restrictions on low water conditions on the Mississippi River, capacity limits at the Panama Canal due to drought and an essential closure of access to the Suez Canal due to the terrorist attacks at the Bab El Mandeb Strait. At a time when soybean exports are experiencing some headwinds, it is necessary to have our supply chain be a facilitator of profitability, rather than an obstacle.

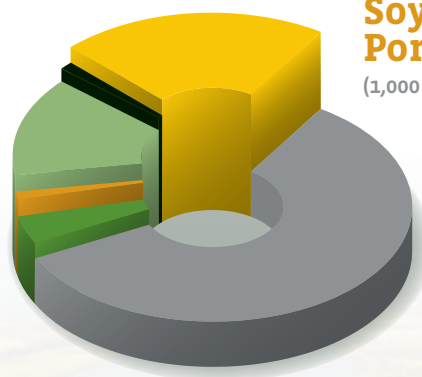
“For soybean farmers to be profitable, we obviously need to grow a quality crop, and we need to have domestic and international demand for it,” says Doug Saathoff, a soybean farmer from

Trumbull, Nebraska, and Director on the Nebraska Soybean Board and Soy Transportation Coalition. “However, we also need to make sure we have a transportation system that can connect the two. That’s the important third leg that many neglect but is critical if we hope to be competitive in the future.”

In the midst of the recent challenges, U.S. and Nebraska soybean farmers are fortunate that the Pacific Northwest (PNW) remains a viable supply chain option. As the following graph highlights, 22% of U.S. soybean exports departed from PNW terminals in 2023—the second-leading export region. Over the years, freight railroads and soybean and grain shippers have invested millions of dollars to create the infrastructure that connects farmers in the middle of the country with these export terminals (see graph). It is approximately 1,700 miles

from Lincoln, Nebraska, to Tacoma, Washington. Given this geographic disparity, it is reasonable to assume that Nebraska soybean farmers would struggle to participate in the international marketplace. However, because of years of investment by shippers, rail companies and exporters, a Nebraska farmer can be among the most international of entrepreneurs.

The Soy Transportation Coalition continues to have an “all of the above” emphasis on improving our nation’s supply chain for soybean farmers. The focus remains on enhancing rural roads and bridges, highways and interstates, freight railroads, inland waterways and ports. The PNW export region will continue to remain a key priority as Nebraska and U.S. soybean farmers continue to compete in an increasingly complex global marketplace.



# CULTIVATING KNOWLEDGE

## The Nebraska Soybean Agronomy Update Series

There's a new way to stay informed in the field—and it's right at your fingertips.

Check out the new Nebraska Soybean Agronomy Update video series, brought to you by the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB)! This biweekly series on YouTube aims to keep Nebraska farmers up-to-date with the latest agronomy insights from around the state.

The series features a variety of experts, including agronomists, university scientists, CCAs, input suppliers and local co-op representatives, who will discuss current field conditions, share expert knowledge and provide practical solutions to common

challenges growers face in a given season.

The Nebraska Soybean Agronomy Update covers a wide range of topics that matter to Nebraska farmers, including timely planting advice, the latest management best practices and pest and disease control.

The videos are released promptly after filming to ensure farmers stay in-the-know about the latest developments throughout the state, such as weed infestations, pest outbreaks and soil conditions. The series aims to be a valuable resource, providing biweekly updates to help farmers anticipate and address issues, leading to healthier crops and a better harvest.

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The Nebraska Soybean Board is always on a mission to support the success of our farmers and ranchers throughout the state. We created the Nebraska Soybean Agronomy Update series to empower you with expert-backed knowledge to make informed decisions, optimize resources and, ultimately, increase yields.

— TOM HOXMEIER,  
NSB DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

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Scan to play series

To follow the Nebraska Soybean Agronomy Update, visit the Nebraska Soybean Board YouTube channel—and don't forget to subscribe for regular updates. NSB is excited to journey with you into the fields through this exciting new informational series!



# Summer Soybean Institute *Grows* to Two Locations

**A**fter several years dormant, the Summer Soybean Institute (SSI) expanded to two locations across Nebraska. K-12 educators from the North Platte area and Lincoln area attended two days of the five-day workshop during the last week of May to explore the question: *Why do we grow so many soybeans in Nebraska?*

During the first two days of the institute, participants learned about soybeans, brainstormed, collaborated and developed soybean lesson outlines for their classrooms. The 21 educators who applied to attend the institute came with energy, curiosity, excitement and passion for incorporating soybeans into their classrooms so their students could become more aware and have an increased appreciation for agriculture. With the help of Agronomy and Horticulture professors, CASNR's Education and Career Pathways team,

University of Nebraska Extension, industry and research personnel, the teachers were able to find soybean connections to mathematics, social studies, biology, STEM, physics, food and animal sciences, chemistry, economics and career pathways.

The final three days of the institute will take place in July, where teachers will be able to complete field experiences at the teachers' corresponding research center (West Central Research Extension and Education Center-North Platte, NE, and Eastern Nebraska Research Extension and Education Center-Mead, NE). The teachers will document their experiences with pictures, videos and interviews with the farmers and UNL soybean systems experts and then work as a team to integrate these field stories into their lessons. By the fifth day of the institute, teachers will be able to share their lessons with each other, receive feedback,

## FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS:

**"You have me excited about adding some new hands-on activities for next year."**

**"Lots of great information that will help me teach plant science and middle school classes more effectively."**

then finalize their plans that will be incorporated into their classroom the following school year. These vetted lesson plans will be made available through the Plant and Soil Science eLibrary, [passel2.unl.edu](http://passel2.unl.edu), housed by the College of Agricultural and Sciences Agronomy and Horticulture department for future accessibility and use by teachers across the state.



SSI participant, Jennifer Jones, investigates a soybean plant and its roots as Nicolas Cafaro La Menza explains soybean development and nitrogen fixation.



SSI participant, Lyle Ziems, explains how he would use the soybean station in his classroom.

# Soybean Inoculation and Nitrogen Fixation

By Nicolas Cafaro La Menza

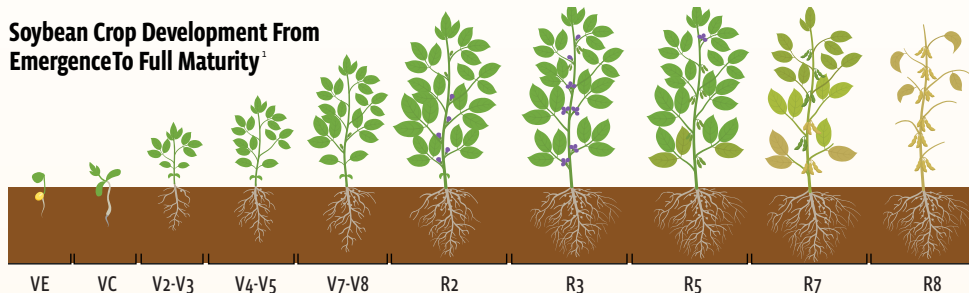
## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Soybeans require 3-4x nitrogen (N) per bushel than cereal crops such as corn, wheat, or rice.
- ▶ Biological N-fixation generally provides 40-70% of total soybean N requirement.
- ▶ Inoculum (*Bradyrhizobium japonicum*) may be necessary in fields not recently planted with soybeans.
- ▶ Well-nodulated roots with active nodules are foundational for soybean growth and yield potential.

## Why Nitrogen Matters

Although the atmosphere has 78% N<sub>2</sub> gas, plants cannot use it directly. Soybean is a legume that forms a symbiotic relationship with the bacteria *Bradyrhizobium japonicum* to transform the atmospheric N<sub>2</sub> into plant-available N. The N-fixing bacteria can be introduced through seed or in-furrow inoculation in the form of powders, liquids, or granular. N-fixing bacteria colonize root hairs to form nodules. If nodulation and N-fixation fail, a 50-bu soybean crop would require 100-175 lbs N per acre in addition to the N supply from the soil.

### Soybean Crop Development From Emergence To Full Maturity<sup>1</sup>



Soybean plants showing signs of Nitrogen deficiency (left) vs. adequate Nitrogen (right)



Nodulation on a soybean root.

Soybean nodules typically begin to appear and start fixing nitrogen at low levels 2-3 weeks after encountering rhizobia, but they reach their maximum size and nitrogen-fixing potential around 4 weeks after emergence. These nodules start to decline when they are 7-8 weeks old. The number of nodules per root and the nodule size will increase as the plant develops. The N-fixing bacteria will infect new roots, develop new nodules, and fix more N<sub>2</sub>. In soybean rotational systems, an adequate level of N-fixing bacteria can survive in the soil for several years until the next soybean crop.

Factors that may compromise nodulation and N-fixation are low or high temperatures, low or high soil pH, salinity, dry or excessive water conditions, nutrient deficiency, and high soil N level.

To determine successful nodulation and N-fixation: 1) Scout for the presence of nodules after plants have three leaves, 2) carefully dig up plants in several locations of the field without removing nodules, and 3) wash the roots in a bucket of water. If nodules are present, but they are green or white, they are not fixing N. An active N-fixing nodule has a pink interior.



The full article from the Science for Success team can be found at: [soybeanresearchinfo.com/science-for-success/crop-planning/](https://soybeanresearchinfo.com/science-for-success/crop-planning/)

## Navigating Generational Shifts

# TRANSITION PLANNING ON FARMS



By First State Bank Nebraska

Transitioning a farm from one generation to the next is a complex process fraught with challenges. Whether it involves bringing a child back to the farm or planning for succession, there are numerous considerations that farmers must address. From financial hurdles to emotional dynamics, the journey of passing the torch can be both rewarding and daunting.

One of the primary challenges in transition planning is managing the financial aspects. Establishing a viable financial plan that ensures the sustainability of the farm while accommodating the needs of both the retiring and incoming generations can be difficult. The costs associated with transferring ownership, purchasing equipment and expanding operations can place a strain on the family's finances.

Fortunately, there are several programs offered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) that provide vital support to mitigate the transition process. Each program offers unique opportunities to assist in various aspects of the process.

The FSA offers two programs that can facilitate a smooth generational transition. The Direct Down Payment Farm Ownership Program, exclusively designed for beginning farmers, offers a

pathway to farm ownership with favorable terms. Additionally, the Joint Financing Program presents another avenue for farm ownership. This program can be utilized for purchasing a farm and for constructing or improving farm buildings and implementing soil and water conservation measures, providing comprehensive support for farmers aiming to establish themselves in agriculture.

The Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) offers specialized support for farm transitions, providing lower interest rates for first-time producers and loans of up to \$649,400 with a 30-year term. Collaborating directly with borrowers and lenders, NIFA facilitates smooth transitions and supplements capital through partnerships with the FSA. To qualify, applicants must have land in Nebraska, a net worth under \$1,000,000, and active involvement in production agriculture, fostering accessibility and inclusivity in the farming community. NIFA's initiatives empower farmers, ensuring sustainability and growth in Nebraska's agricultural sector.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers a suite of loan programs designed to meet the diverse needs of small businesses, including farms, during periods of transition. With an SBA loan, aspiring and established farmers alike can access crucial capital for expansion, diversification and succession planning. By providing flexible financing options, an SBA loan empowers

farm owners to navigate the complexities of transition with confidence, ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of their operations.

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We've witnessed remarkable success through the strategic utilization of these programs to facilitate seamless generational transitions for our farm customers. By leveraging initiatives like those from the FSA, NIFA and SBA, we've empowered aspiring and established farmers alike to secure their legacies and ensure the continuity of their family operations.

— JEFF KANGER, PRESIDENT OF  
FIRST STATE BANK NEBRASKA

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Transition planning on a farm presents a unique set of challenges, but with careful planning and the support of programs like FSA, NIFA and SBA, the process can be made smoother and more manageable. By addressing financial constraints, fostering open communication, embracing innovation and leveraging available resources, farmers can ensure a successful transition that preserves the legacy of their operations for generations to come.

# MEET THE MAKERS AND THE FARMERS

The Nebraska Soybean Board continues to collect the stories of the farmers and businesses leading our industry generation after generation. By and large, they are stories of passion, innovation and partnerships.



## ADM | Nebraska, Global Est. 1902

- ▶ Human and animal nutrition
- ▶ Sustainability
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Innovation

ADM partners with growers across Nebraska to process soybeans into products like animal feed and vegetable oil at their Lincoln facility. They also discuss the use of soybean oil in renewable diesel. Nebraska farmers, like the Neujahrs, play a vital role in this partnership, helping to transform soybeans and sustain the global food and fuel industry. Together, ADM and local Nebraska soybean farmers are providing value to those around the world.



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## On-Farm Research | Nebraska

- ▶ Pioneering research
- ▶ Crop resilience
- ▶ Yield enhancement
- ▶ Farmer network

Nebraska farmers and partners like Nebraska Extension are conducting on-farm research to reimagine production research. Through studies conducted on farmers' fields, they're experimenting with new practices and products, such as nutrient management and plant populations, to boost yields and improve their bottom lines. This collaborative research aims to help farmers make informed decisions and overcome challenges, ultimately pushing the boundaries in yield and what's possible in agriculture.



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# Local Soybean Farmers & the Businesses That Bind Us

Subscribe to the @NESoybeanBoard YouTube channel, where you'll find these stories and more!



## Zobel Family Farms | Bancroft, Nebraska Est. 1880

- ▶ Fifth-generation
- ▶ Soybeans, corn, alfalfa, hay, cover crops
- ▶ Beef, pork

The Zobel family, a fifth-generation farming family in Nebraska, showed resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing direct-to-consumer meat sales. Their operation is committed to providing high-quality and affordable beef and pork. They also prioritize stewardship and sustainability while feeding their livestock with homegrown crops. This dedication ensures the best products for their customers and preserves the land for future generations.



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## Larson Farms | Creston, NE Est. 1918

- ▶ Fourth-generation
- ▶ Robotic dairy
- ▶ Soybeans, corn, cover crops

At Larson Farms near Creston, Nebraska, Bob Larson combines tradition with cutting-edge technology, running one of four robotic dairies in Nebraska. The farm uses advanced data analysis, robotic milking and nutrient-dense soybean meal to ensure the health of their cows and the freshness of their milk. Larson Farms is dedicated to sustainability, serves as a significant economic driver in the community and carries on the proud legacy of dairy farms in Nebraska.



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FOR WE LIVE BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT.

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