



SOYBEAN NEBRASKA

 WINTER 2026

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

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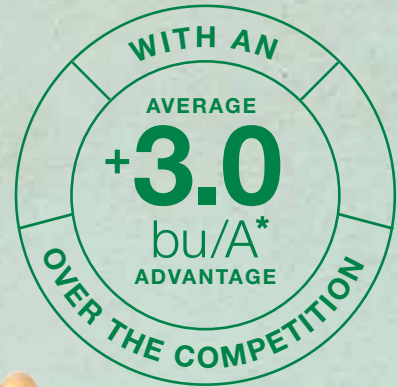
8 | 2026 NSB board elections open for Districts 5, 7 and At-Large.

20-21 | A Q&A on how livestock growth supports soybean farmers.

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SOYBEAN NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA) and the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) are proud to share the FY26 Winter edition of this publication with you—members of our shared community.

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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 Directors

District 1

Anne Meis, Elgin

District 2

Jason Penke, Craig

District 3

Jay Hanson, Mead

District 4

Ray Lindhorst, Lindsay

District 5

Mark Caspers (Chairman), Auburn

District 6

Mike Tomes (Secretary), Utica

District 7

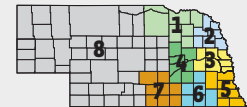
Doug Saathoff, Trumbull

District 8

Blake Johnson (Treasurer), Holdrege

At-Large

Greg Anderson (Vice Chairman), Newman Grove



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Gregg Fujan, Weston

Victor Bohuslavsky, Seward

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Alaina Agnew

Andy Chvatal

Lois Ronhovde

Sophia Svanda

Wesley Wach

Note from the
**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**



By Andy Chvatal

Creating and maintaining mental fortitude is not an easy feat. As I reflect on 2025, the word that continually comes to mind is resiliency. Nebraska is full of resilient soybean growers. I've been on their farms, and I've seen them in our boardroom. Resilient people share a blended set of characteristics that help them adapt, recover and grow when facing adversity. That's what Nebraska soybean farmers did in 2025. They created a production plan, executed it, adapted to mother nature and proceeded to raise one of the highest-yielding soybean crops this state has ever seen.

Earlier this winter, your nine NSB directors were tasked with updating their strategic plan. Strategic planning requires looking through the windshield at the road ahead, while limiting those glances in the rearview mirror. It's hard to know where you want to go if you don't have a sense of where you've been but respecting success is different than dwelling on it.

Just like the nine NSB directors that help manage your checkoff, I challenge each of you to create a mission statement and strategic plan for your own operation. Write it down and hang it up in your office, shop or somewhere you consistently see it. Make sure that it is clear, meaningful and actionable. This is your North Star. In times that require resiliency, like this year, remember why you're doing it. I'm proud to be part of this industry, and you should be too.

Cheers to a VERY productive and successful 2026!

Checking In With The Chairman

**BIOHEAT
BACKGROUND**



By Mark Caspers, NSB Chairman, Auburn

Greetings fellow soybean producers,

As cold weather sets in, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight Bioheat and the role the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) has played in its development.

In June 2010, myself and fellow NSB directors Norm Husa, Duane Lee and Loyd Pointer, along with Greg Anderson, Nebraska's representative to the National Biodiesel Governing Board, and then-Executive Director Victor Bohulslavsky, traveled to Massachusetts, to attend a heating oil conference. There, we met Michael Devine and Paul Nazzaro, two leaders in the liquid fuel heating industry in the northeastern United States.

That collaboration helped lay the foundation for what became known as Bioheat, created by blending soybean oil into traditional fuel oil. At the time, fuel oil faced growing competition from electricity and natural gas. As Michael Devine noted, "Words matter; the competitor's fuel is called natural gas, while ours is called fuel oil." Bioheat offered a new identity and even at low blend levels burned significantly cleaner, resulting in improved air quality and reduced health risks.

For the past 15 years, NSB has played a significant role in promoting Bioheat throughout the northeastern United States, supporting research to ensure it is a true "drop-in" replacement requiring no equipment changes. In December 2025, myself as well as other NSB directors and staff traveled to New York City to see firsthand the industry's progress.

What was virtually nonexistent in 2010 has grown into an industry now utilizing approximately 500 million gallons of soybean oil annually. With New York's upcoming 10% Bioheat blending mandate, the state alone is expected to use nearly 100 million gallons of soybean oil each year.

Nebraska soybean farmers can be proud of NSB's pioneering role in growing bioheat and creating value for farmers.

Wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous 2026.

Soy Action Center

LOOKING BACK AT 2025

By Kent Grotelueschen, NSA President, Octavia



Reflecting on 2025, the soybean industry experienced a busy and productive year.

Challenges persisted, continually reminding us how vital farmer-leaders are in organizations like NSA and ASA to ensure our voices are heard. We celebrate our achievements and anticipate opportunities as we move toward 2026.

Successes:

The industry faced uncertainty from tariffs and a weakening U.S.-China trade relationship. However, thanks to our ongoing discussions with government officials, we achieved new soybean trade agreements. Our efforts continue with China and with finding additional export markets for our products.

We responded quickly to concerning language in the Make American Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission report regarding pesticides and seed oils by engaging with the USDA, EPA and the White House, emphasizing the use of science-based approaches.

Legislation known as the One Big Beautiful Bill included several priorities long supported by soy

growers, such as estate tax exemptions, permanent Section 199A and 179 provisions, biofuels credits, a higher soybean reference price and expanded MAP and FMD export program funding.

2026 Outlook:

In 2026, we aim to grow the biofuels market by finalizing a strong RVO rule, seeking timely 45Z biofuel tax credit guidance from the Treasury and advocating for complete small refinery waivers.

Congress must also pass a five-year Farm Bill by September to ensure continued funding for farm programs. This legislation presents an opportunity to address rising input costs and reinforce federal pesticide labeling standards, preventing state-by-state rules that could disrupt grower access.

Serving as an NSA board member and NSA President, I am grateful for the dedication of NSA and ASA farmer leaders and staff in shaping our industry's future. We look forward to a new year full of promise and the chance to further represent Nebraska soybean growers in 2026.

Kent Grotelueschen



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nesoybeans.org

2025 President

Kent Grotelueschen, Octavia – **District 4**

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Scott Langemeier, Scribner – **District 1**

Lucas Miller, Randolph – **District 2**

Ben Placke, St. Libory – **District 3**

Doug Bartek, Wahoo – **District 5**

Daryl Obermeyer, Brownville – **District 6**

Wade Walters, Shickley – **District 7**

Craig Frenzen, Fullerton – **At Large**

Chandra Blasé, Hordville – **At Large**

Myles Ramsey, Kenesaw – **At Large**



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Dennis Fujan, Prague

Geoff Ruth, Rising City

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The Nebraska Soybean Association has selected Jonathon Meis of Elgin for the 2026 ASA Corteva Agriscience Young Leader Program. Meis farms soybeans, corn, cattle and alfalfa, and is a graduate of Northeast Community College with degrees in agronomy and diesel technology.

In December, Meis joined fellow Young Leader participants for communications training, updates from national soybean organizations and industry tours at Corteva's Global Business Center in Johnston, IA.

The next phase of training will take place Feb. 23-26 in San Antonio during the 2026 Commodity Classic trade show. Founded in 1984, the Young Leader Program continues to set the standard for leadership and development in agriculture.



NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD ANNOUNCES NEW OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) convened its inaugural board meeting for fiscal year 2026 on November 24-25, 2025, in Lincoln. During this meeting, restructuring of the board and committees transpired alongside routine-based board business.

The newly elected officers, chosen to lead the board for a one-year term, are as follows:

Executive Committee: From left to right.

Secretary: Mike Tomes
District 6

Treasurer: Blake Johnson
District 8

Chairman: Mark Caspers
District 5

Vice Chairman: Greg Anderson
At-Large



The Nebraska Soybean Board also has four committees that review and approve projects that fit within the current NSB strategic plan. Each director chooses two committees they wish to sit on during the fiscal year, and the committees elect their chairperson.



Production & Crop Research:

Left to right: Jay Hanson (Chair), Doug Saathoff, Greg Anderson, Mike Tomes, Ray Lindhorst



Farmer Support:

Left to right: Mike Tomes, Jay Hanson, Doug Saathoff (Chair), Ray Lindhorst



Community Engagement:

Left to right: Anne Meis, Mark Caspers, Blake Johnson, Jason Penke (Chair)



Demand & Utilization:

Left to right: Greg Anderson, Anne Meis (Chair), Mark Caspers, Jason Penke, Blake Johnson

What does the board do?

- ▶ Manages and conducts the business of the Nebraska Soybean Board.
- ▶ Upholds the core values of integrity, leadership, collaboration, adaptability and innovation.
- ▶ Attend annual board meetings (typically held in September, November, March and June/July). These meetings are required and are one to two days in length.
- ▶ Participate in trade missions, work with the media, represent NSB at events and meetings and more.
- ▶ Serve on two of four NSB committees each year. These committees lead the staff members' work and provide direction regarding board decisions.

Who serves on the NSB board of directors?

There is one director for each of Nebraska's eight crop reporting districts and one at-large director. Elections for open seats are held during the month of July.

Board members are elected to a three-year term and can serve four consecutive terms.

How can I learn more?

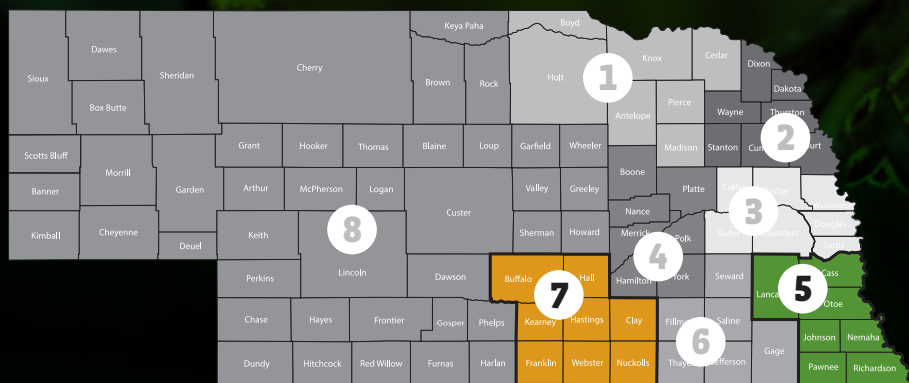
You can talk to any current director, especially the director representing your district, and ask about their experience with the board. You can also contact staff at the Nebraska Soybean Board to discuss your interests and goals within the Nebraska soybean industry.



SOYBEAN FARMERS: YOU ARE THE VOICE OF YOUR DISTRICT.

LET IT BE HEARD DURING THE 2026 BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS.

Districts 5, 7 & At-Large



Nebraska Soybean Board District Map

ELECTION SCHEDULE

2027

Districts 1, 3 & 6

2028

Districts 2, 4 & 8

The election is conducted by mail-in ballot in July for Districts 5, 7 and the At-Large position. Soybean farmers who reside in counties that are up for election in 2026 will receive ballots and candidate information regarding NSB's election process via direct mail.

Election districts and counties are:

- ✓ **District 5:** Counties of Cass, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee and Richardson
- ✓ **District 7:** Counties of Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Kearney, Nuckolls and Webster
- ✓ **At-Large:** All counties in Nebraska

To apply for a candidacy in District 5, 7 or At-Large you must:

- ✓ Obtain a NSB Candidacy Petition by contacting NSB's executive director at (402) 480-1251
- ✓ Complete the petition and collect the signatures of at least 20 soybean farmers in the district
- ✓ Return petition to NSB office on or before April 17, 2026

Nebraska Residents Cast the Deciding Vote

Our shared soybean farmer community determines electoral winners. These voters must be:

- ✓ Nebraska residents
- ✓ District 5 or 7 residents
- ✓ A soybean farmer who owns or shares the ownership and risk of loss for such soybeans, by reason of being a partner in a partnership, or is a shareholder in a corporation, or is a member of a limited liability company, during the current or immediately preceding calendar year.

ELECTION CALENDAR:

DECEMBER, 2025
Candidacy petition period began

APRIL 17, 2026
Candidacy petitions due to NSB office

JULY 2026
Ballots mailed to eligible voters

JULY 31, 2026
Final day to return ballots for consideration

OCTOBER 1, 2026
Newly elected board members' terms begin

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NEW BOARD MEMBER *Spotlight*

Ray Lindhorst | DISTRICT 4

Ray Lindhorst was born and raised in Lindsay, Nebraska, where agriculture has always been a way of life. He and his wife, Cindy, have been married 42 years and have four grown children and 14 grandchildren. He especially enjoys having the grandkids on the farm and attending their activities, and he and Cindy like to travel whenever they can.

Lindhorst works at the Farmers Cooperative in Lindsay and farms alongside his brothers, Mike and Jeff.

Community service has long been important to him. He has served on the Lindsay Fire Department and EMT team for 38 years, including time as fire chief and president. He is also active in church and local school leadership roles.

Lindhorst joined the Nebraska Soybean Board to help strengthen markets and support continued innovation in the industry. He will serve a three-year term representing District 4.



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BRAND	YIELD	LOCATION
3056 E	83.1	Battle Creek, NE
3185 E	81.7	Beemer, NE
2855 E	88.8	Callaway, NE
3605 E	104.2	Cambridge, NE
3056 E	85.4	Columbus, NE
3605 E	89.2	De Witt, NE
2855 E	89.8	Hazard, NE
2855 E	89.1	Oakdale, NE
3185 E	86.7	Odell, NE
3185 E	87.9	Rockville, NE
3185 E	82.7	Rogers, NE

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NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD FUNDING & EXPENDITURES

for Fiscal Year 2025

FUNDING REVENUE

TOTAL REVENUES: \$8,123,306

CHECKOFF ASSESSMENTS \$7,755,298

INTEREST \$292,714

MISCELLANEOUS \$75,294

NET ASSETS

BEGINNING OF YEAR:

\$14,747,667

END OF YEAR:

\$14,124,723

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (\$622,944)

MISSION

Growing value for Nebraska farmers by maximizing their checkoff investments.

VISION

Feeding, fueling and innovating for the future.

EXPENDITURES

TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$8,746,250

ADMINISTRATIVE \$616,539

FARMER SUPPORT \$960,430

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT \$1,038,640

PRODUCTION & CROP RESEARCH \$2,374,518

DEMAND & UTILIZATION \$3,756,123

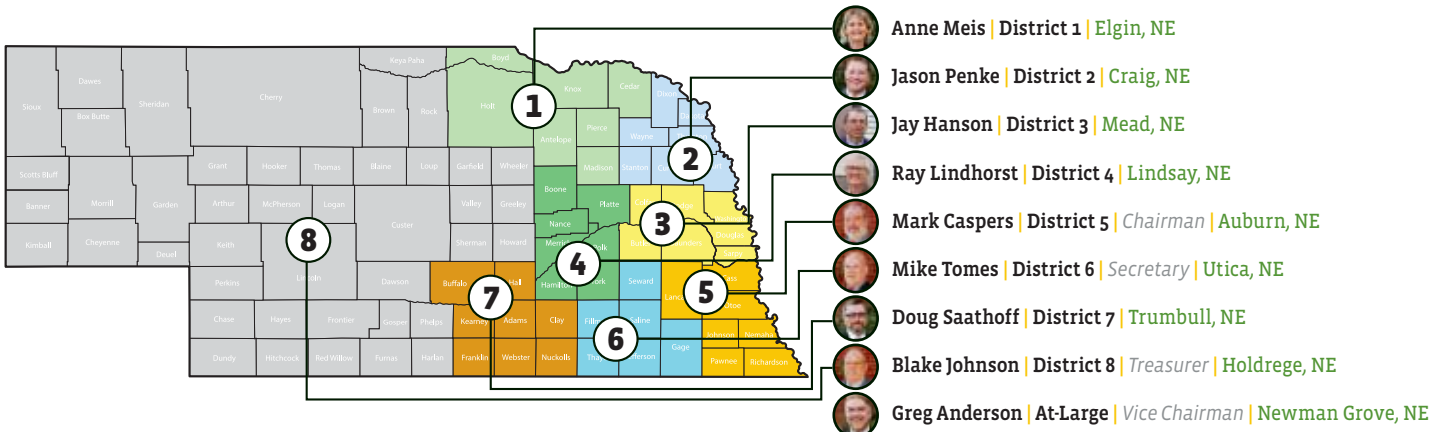
OUR INITIATIVES

Farmer Support: Share ideas and information to support and encourage Nebraska soybean farmers.

Community Engagement: Interact with our local communities to showcase Nebraska soybeans, farms and farmers.

Production & Crop Research: Invest in targeted research to improve Nebraska soy production and quality.

Demand & Utilization: Promote the power, versatility and sustainability of Nebraska soy.



A DECADE OF LEADERSHIP: Ed Lammers Recognized for Service to Nebraska Soybean Farmers



The Nebraska Soybean Board recognizes Ed Lammers of Hartington for his years of dedicated service to Nebraska soybean farmers. Lammers served on the Nebraska Soybean Board from 2009 to 2015 and represented the state on the United Soybean Board from 2016 to 2025.

“The reason I volunteered was to learn and appreciate all the aspects of soybean production, to the needs of end users,” Lammers said. “It has been eye-opening how my perspective has changed from just delivering soybeans to an elevator to being aware of the constant progress and challenges the industry faces.”

During his service, Lammers was elected to the USB Executive Committee, where his focus on innovation and strategic thinking made him a respected voice in guiding national research, education and promotion opportunities. He played a key role in advancing checkoff investments that support new market opportunities,

value-added products and long-term demand for U.S. soybeans.

“Being a voice for Nebraska soybean producers has been an honor for me,” Lammers said. “Another reason is that 40% of my row crop production is soybeans, so it plays a major role in my operation.”

Lammers’ leadership helped ensure Nebraska farmers had a strong and consistent advocate at the national level, while his commitment to collaboration strengthened relationships across the soybean industry. His contributions have left a lasting impact on the soybean checkoff.

Reflecting on key accomplishments during his time of service, Lammers pointed to several initiatives supported through the soybean checkoff. “Some accomplishments include a presidential endowment at UNL used for soybean genetic research, high oleic soybeans, biofuels, bioheat, education outreach from seed genetics, to end users’

needs and sharing unbiased information to soy producers,” he said.

While serving on the United Soybean Board, Lammers also emphasized the importance of strong leadership and in-house expertise. “While at USB, hiring two CEOs and hiring expertise staff on projects that USB funds, instead of relying on contractors, kept the best interest of U.S. soybean production,” Lammers said. “Bringing them in-house allows them to fully understand the vision and wanted outcomes that farmer leaders desire.”

Looking ahead, Lammers plans to remain engaged in agriculture and hopes to see future generations step into leadership roles. “What is next, is that I hope one of my sons get involved with an agricultural board to help them navigate through the challenges and to help them understand that the future in agriculture needs voices at the table to represent us,” he said. “I plan to get more involved at the county level.”

Thank you, Ed Lammers!

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Building connections from Nebraska fields to customers around the world.

16-17 | Farmers in the City

How soybean oil is connecting rural America to urban clean fuel demand.

18 | Nebraska Soybeans Find New Paths to Market

A Pacific Northwest mission highlights export growth and infrastructure.

19 | On-Farm Biodiesel Credits Available

NSB helps offset fuel costs with per-gallon incentives.

20-21 | Building Demand Through Livestock

A Q&A on how livestock growth supports soybean farmers.

22-23 | Strengthening Global Markets for Nebraska Soy

Trade mission builds long-term relationships with Philippine buyers.

25 | How Pork Exports Drive Soybean Value

USMEF study highlights the link between pork trade and soybean demand.



DEMAND & UTILIZATION COMMITTEE

Anne Meis (*chair*) | Greg Anderson | Mark Caspers | Jason Penke | Blake Johnson

FARMERS IN THE *City*

How Soybean Oil is Connecting America





The iconic Staten Island Ferry, responsible for 15% of fleet emissions and transports roughly 16.7 million people annually, now runs on 100% renewable diesel, which uses soybean oil as a feedstock.



Nebraska soybean farmers and NSB staff attended the tour.

Each year, farmers from across the country come together in New York City to witness how their soybeans are impacting lives and infrastructure in the concrete jungle. This tour, hosted by Clean Fuels Alliance America, showcases decades of relationship-building and partnership between rural America and its urban neighbors.

New York City is one of the largest markets for clean fuels, thanks in part to checkoff investments from the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) and other soybean organizations. Notable uses of soy-based biofuels such as biodiesel and renewable diesel have come through a Bioheat B10 mandate (a 10% blend of biodiesel and traditional home heating oil), the city fleet vehicles, the Staten Island Ferry system and other off-road equipment. These conversions help the city meet ambitious carbon reduction goals, including a 50% greenhouse gas reduction by 2030.

Fresh off providing leadership through a weekend snowstorm, Keith Kerman,

Deputy Commissioner and Chief Fleet Officer, spoke of the impact of soy to the group at the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and how they are currently at a 46.5% carbon reduction. The city has converted its 12,000-vehicle diesel fleet to renewable diesel and biodiesel, both of which use soybean oil as a feedstock. Kerman brought up of the reliability of biofuels as a key part in NYC's response to weather events and is part of the reason a half-billion gallons of biofuels have been used in the city since 2005.

"If you're in NYC leadership, you cannot mess up a snowstorm," Kerman said. "We need these products to work, and they do."

Attendees later received an in depth look at the NYC Department of Transportation Staten Island Ferry system. Greg Anderson, a farmer from Newman Grove and NSB vice-chairman, said that seeing biofuels help transport thousands of people to and from work every day was icing on the cake.

"The ferry system uses about 4.5 million gallons of fuel annually," Anderson said. "This is a prime example of the soybean checkoff building domestic demand for soybean oil, which is a primary feedstock for renewable diesel."

After completing meetings with the city, the group visited John Browne High School, a public high school with a specialized career and technical education program in agriculture, one of the only one of its kind in New York City. More than 500 students are enrolled in the Animal, Plant and Agriscience Institute, and they also have a vibrant FFA program. One student was able to talk about the use of biodiesel in the school-owned tractor with the farmers from Nebraska.

From farming discussions to fleet conversions, marine fuels and urban agriculture, this tour demonstrates how America's largest cities are benefiting from the exceptional vision of America's soybean farmers.

Soybean farmers and QSSB staff from around the country met with prominent leaders in the New York City Transportation sector.



Nebraska Soybeans Find New Paths to Market Through Pacific Northwest Mission

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) convened in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) in November for a mission bringing together more than 125 U.S. soybean farmers, regional exporters and processors, and soy buyers from key growth markets in Northeast, South and Southeast Asia.

Including representatives from the Nebraska Soybean Board, the group spent four days networking, learning about the U.S. Soy Advantage in value and quality, and hearing how significant investments in rail, processing and port infrastructure have positioned the PNW as a key strategic export gateway for Pacific Rim destinations.

NEBRASKA FARMER SPEAKS TO GENERATIONAL FARMING, LEGACY AND THE FUTURE

Nebraska Soybean Board chairman Mark Caspers sat on a grower leader panel during the mission, sharing with a roomful of potential new international soybean buyers about the importance of infrastructure connecting Nebraska with PNW port destinations and his commitment to sustainability and passing on a strong agricultural legacy.

“From Nebraska, there’s a lot of the rail coming out this way (the PNW).” Caspers said. “I talked to a grower last night that sits on the Nebraska Soybean Board with me. He’s fairly close to Hastings, Nebraska, and the AGP facility. He said he had the best yields that he’s ever had, and I think that pretty well carries out through Nebraska.”

MISSION CONNECTS FARM TO PORT

Already the second largest export gateway for U.S. Soy after the U.S. Gulf, the PNW represents new diversification for U.S.

Soy exports in key growth markets across the Pacific Ocean, including regions like Vietnam, Thailand and Bangladesh. In 2024, 21% of the U.S. soybeans and soybean meal exports were moved through the PNW’s 10 regional ports located in Washington and Oregon states^[1].

Sessions during the mission included presentations on the extensive infrastructure serving the PNW region, such as a rail system that quickly and reliably transports soy produced in northern states such as Nebraska to port facilities in Oregon and Washington; as well as global market trends and new research quantifying U.S. Soy’s significant quality advantages in soybean meal programs.

Caspers was joined at the mission in representing Nebraska’s interests with Wesley Wach, NSB Demand and Utilization Coordinator.

“What stuck out to me the most was the smaller setting. It was really nice to be able to ask questions interactively, to talk and build trust in a setting where farmers

and international buyers can be in the same room, talking about what’s going on in our industry,” Wach said.

NEBRASKA’S ROLE IN EXPANDED SOYBEAN MARKETS

By building confidence in the quality, value, sustainability and reliability of the U.S. Soy supply and infrastructure serving PNW export destinations, USSEC’s PNW Exploratory Mission laid the foundation for new capacity and diversified export markets for key U.S. soy-growing regions like Nebraska. As soybean consumption continues to grow globally, Nebraska soy farmers should see a return on this investment with increased demand and higher confidence in U.S. Soy’s ability to serve key Pacific Rim export markets.

By connecting farmers like Caspers directly with international buyers and showcasing the infrastructure that connects Nebraska farms to global markets, USSEC is helping ensure that Nebraska soybean farmers remain competitive on the world stage.



NSB Chairman Mark Caspers with Jeff Chen and Nick Suri, who have purchased and moved soybeans from Nebraska.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ON-FARM BIODIESEL CREDIT PROGRAM

THE NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD IS HELPING SUPPORT AG OPERATIONS BY OFFERING FUEL CREDITS FOR BIODIESEL PURCHASES MADE FOR ON-FARM TANKS

EARN

\$0.25
per gallon
for B5-B19 blends

\$0.50
per gallon
for B20 and higher

Up to
\$500
back!

To qualify, submit an application along with a paid fuel invoice that includes:

- Fuel type and blend percentage
- Gallons purchased
- Name and address
- Zero balance due

Receipts must be from Fiscal Year 2026 (Oct. 1, 2025 – Sept. 18, 2026). One submission per fiscal year. Applications can be completed online or printed and mailed.

Apply Here



Call 402-441-3240 or email info@nebraskasoybeans.org with questions.



Jay Hanson, a farmer and Nebraska Soybean Board director near Mead, Nebraska, refuels his tractor during the 2025 planting season.

GROWING LIVESTOCK, SUPPORTING SOYBEAN FARMERS

Q&A with Steve Martin, Executive Director,
Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska



Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB): How would you describe the current landscape of livestock development in Nebraska?

Steve Martin (SM): It is a golden opportunity. For as much livestock as we currently have in the state, there is still room for significant growth. We have the water to support consistent crop production as well as livestock needs, communities with the resources for processing companies to expand and soils that would benefit from added organic nutrients. Most importantly, we have the people to make it happen.

NSB: How critical is the state's livestock industry to creating and sustaining demand for soybeans and soybean meal?

SM: Livestock is an everyday consumer of soybean meal. This consistent usage creates steady, reliable demand for soybeans and soybean meal. As we have seen, international markets can be volatile but livestock has to eat every day. That consistent demand serves as the backbone of the industry, allowing soybean farmers to have a dependable market while also looking for other opportunities to expand production and sell to other high-value markets.

NSB: AFAN works closely with commodity groups including the Nebraska Soybean Board—how is that partnership mutually beneficial?

SM: AFAN is a nonprofit organization, and we don't charge for any of the work that we do. This allows all farmers and ranchers to utilize our services to help them achieve the livestock growth that benefits their operation. NSB supports us financially, which we are very thankful for, and also by connecting us with soybean growers statewide. That network gives us access to people in communities across Nebraska who can help when support is needed.

NSB benefits from AFAN's work because livestock growth creates steady demand for soybeans and soybean meal. With increased demand, prices should be

supported, if not increased, which helps improve profitability and ultimately drives demand for more soybean acres.

NSB: What challenges still hold back expansion, and how is AFAN helping producers navigate those challenges?

SM: Most of the challenges are local. County zoning processes and public sentiment can be significant obstacles. A producer may choose not to pursue a project after witnessing a contentious public hearing for another operation. Others may face an uphill battle in the court of public opinion, even when the county approval process should be based on established regulations.

AFAN supports farmers and ranchers by connecting them with professionals who can help prepare materials for hearings,





explain county requirements and help bring additional local supporters to the table.

One area where agriculture can improve is supporting other agricultural projects. Everyone is busy, and it can feel like someone else's fight, but standing up for new livestock facilities should be on the radar for everyone in agriculture. This is another area where AFAN can help by coordinating support and helping people understand what needs to be done.

NSB: Where are the greatest opportunities right now for livestock growth in Nebraska?

SM: There are strong opportunities in poultry and dairy. On the poultry side, there are opportunities to raise broilers for Smart Chicken and potentially for Lincoln Premium Poultry, as well as to raise hens for egg operations.

In dairy, there are multiple dairy farmers that want to move to Nebraska. Row crop farmers can partner with dairies to supply silage, which reduces harvest costs, provides a nearby feed market and returns

manure to fields. It is a win-win-win for both operations.

Dairy farms also often outsource calf raising and replacement heifer operations. While these require more management than a traditional feedlot, they present opportunities for producers willing to take on that additional responsibility.

There is potential for expansion in the swine industry, along with opportunities in beef. The beef opportunities may include confinement structures that allow more animals in a smaller footprint, such as finishing in a deep pit or utilizing a bed back for calving. With pasture land in short supply, buildings can serve as a bridge to move cattle off pasture and onto crop residue. There is a great deal of flexibility.

NSB: What motivates you personally in the work you do at AFAN, and what keeps you optimistic about the future of Nebraska agriculture?

SM: I am motivated by seeing farmers and ranchers succeed. Adding enterprises creates long-term viability for operations

and opens the door for the next generation to return. That viability supports rural economies and communities.

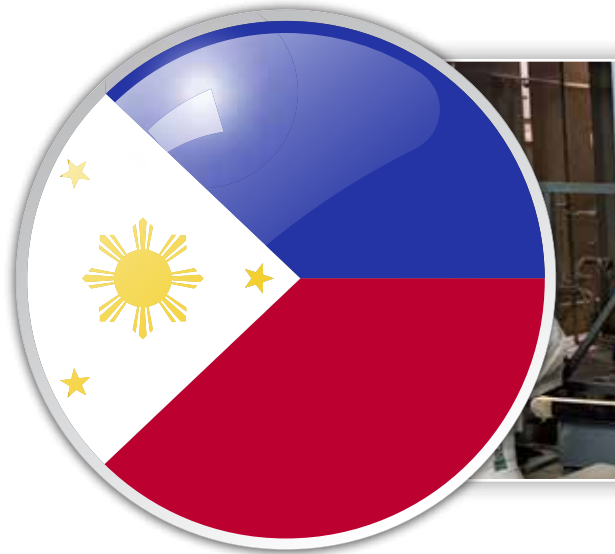
I am optimistic about Nebraska agriculture because we have world-class feed and water resources, great people who want to grow and companies interested in bringing good-paying jobs to the state. There is endless opportunity for growth in rural Nebraska.

I believe AFAN's mission is well aligned with helping bring that growth to reality. We are a nonprofit, we don't charge for our services and are supported by our board and our members.



Those interested in learning more about AFAN membership can visit becomeafan.org.

Nebraska Soybean Leaders Strengthen Trade Ties with Philippine Buyers



Article & Photos courtesy of Ritz Ag Consulting, Inc.

In early December, District 1 Director Anne Meis of Elgin and District 7 Director Doug Saathoff of Trumbull participated in a trade mission to the Philippines. Trade missions provide Nebraska farmers an opportunity to strengthen relationships with international buyers, demonstrate the value of Nebraska soy products, and gain firsthand insight into global market trends. Supported by Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) checkoff investments, this annual trade mission focuses on promoting Nebraska soybean meal shipped through the Pacific Northwest (PNW).

The Philippines remains a strong market for U.S. soybean meal. In 2024, the country

imported 2.47 million metric tons valued at \$1.01 billion. Continued growth in the Philippines' livestock industry, along with expanded soybean crush capacity in Nebraska, amplifies the importance of this trade mission to maintain and expand long-term trade relationships.

Meis and Saathoff, along with soybean farmers from Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota, were advocates of Midwest soy and focused on strengthening business relationships with key customers. Representatives from Ag Processing Inc. (AGP) also participated in the trade mission. AGP operates soybean crush facilities in Hastings and David City,

which together ship approximately 20 unit trains monthly, equivalent to 10 million bushels of soybeans to the company's export terminal in Aberdeen, Washington, destined for Southeast Asia.

The import cycle of the supply chain begins at a marine terminal, where vessels of soymeal from the U.S. arrive and are discharged. The NSB directors visited the Port of Subic Bay—NSD Marine Terminal—which is one of the busiest, largest, historical, and most important ports in the Philippines. The port handles around one million metric tons of soymeal imported into the Philippines each year. Most bulk-imported soymeal is bagged at

Meis and Saathoff standing in front of U.S. soymeal while touring Subic Port.





Production line of finished feed at UNAHCO feed mill, which includes U.S. soymeal.



U.S. soymeal being moved by payloader into a bin for loading of 50kg bags for delivery to customers.

the port, and during the visit, the directors witnessed the bagging process of U.S. soymeal and the loading for delivery to a customer. On average, the terminal can load 800 bags, each weighing 110 pounds, onto a single truck in just 45 minutes. Meis said, “It is valuable to understand the full journey of a soybean—from our farms to crushing facilities, then by rail to the Pacific Northwest and onto ships overseas. Seeing the large vessels, warehouses and the unloading and bagging process brought the entire system full circle.”

The directors toured a feed mill owned by UNAHCO, Inc., which produces feed for swine, poultry, game fowl and the aquaculture sector. The U.S. soymeal from the PNW is transported from Subic Port in bags to the facility. While touring the feed mill, they saw feed being produced, which included Nebraska soybean meal. Reflecting on the visit, Saathoff said, “It’s special to see soybean meal—likely from Hastings—being used halfway across the world in the Philippines. We plant the soybeans, nurture them through the growing season, harvest them and deliver them to the plant, often without knowing where they ultimately end up. This trade mission completed the circle by allowing us to see firsthand how U.S. soybeans are being used.”

Throughout their weeklong visit, NSB directors also engaged in various meetings with customers. These meetings provided customers with updates on the harvest from their farms and emphasized the

crucial role of the market in Nebraska’s economy. Meis noted, “The Philippines is a critically important market for U.S. soybean meal and will become even more valuable as Nebraska and neighboring states continue to expand soybean crush capacity.”

Nebraska farmers and Philippine buyers share a unique, family-centered connection, as many Philippine buyers operate multi-generational family businesses, much like the 81% of Nebraska’s 44,479 farms that are family or individually run, according to the 2024 Nebraska census. This shared foundation has strengthened relationships for more than a decade, with the Nebraska Soybean Board leveraging soybean checkoff investments to host delegations

of Philippine buyers on Nebraska farms during harvest, allowing them to experience firsthand the family driven values, production practices and quality standards behind U.S. agriculture. These checkoff-supported trade missions are a strategic investment in market development, helping build trust with key international customers, differentiate Nebraska soy in a competitive global marketplace and reinforce the reliability of the U.S. supply chain. By connecting buyers directly with farmers who grow their soybeans, these efforts help secure long-term market access, create opportunities to add value to Nebraska’s production and position the state’s soy sector for sustained growth and global competitiveness.



Meis and Saathoff, along with other Midwest soybean farmers, are strengthening trade ties of U.S. soy in the Philippines.

Fueling America's Farms, Fleets and Future

*Clean fuel production supports
\$42.4 billion in economic activity.*



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



Clean Fuels
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The benefits keep growing.

cleanfuels.org

Exporting Nebraska Soybeans Through U.S. Pork

Article by U.S. Meat Export Federation

Exporting Nebraska soybeans through export sales of U.S. pork benefits growers by \$77.25 million, according to a study in 2025 conducted by The Juday Group and commissioned by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

The study, based on 2024 soybean production and pork export data, found that pork exports accounted for 100.7 million bushels of U.S. soybean usage. Nebraska's share of that was just under seven million bushels. For the U.S. as a whole, soybeans consumed by pork exports were valued in 2024 at \$1.12 billion.

Pork exports generated 13.2% of bushel value, or about \$1.46 per bushel, according to the study.

Through the support of organizations like the National Pork Board, the United Soybean Board and the Nebraska Soybean Board, USMEF is able to build global demand for U.S. pork and maximize value for the entire hog carcass. Pork export volume was a record 51.5 pounds per head slaughtered in 2024, or just over 30% of production, much of it comprising loins, hams and variety meats. Just over 10 pounds per head slaughtered was exported as variety meats, cuts not typically consumed or valued in the United States, growing the value of pork exports to a record \$67 per head slaughtered.

“Domestic feed usage is critical to our industries and the continued growth in red meat exports is encouraging.

A significant share of the soybeans we grow locally is ultimately exported through pork,” says USMEF Chair-Elect Dave Bruntz, who raises corn, soybeans and fed cattle in south-central Nebraska. “This study demonstrates how pork exports drive value directly back to producers.”

While full-year data for 2025 has not yet been compiled, pork exports remain high, just three percent off the record pace set the previous year for both value and volume. A significant drop in U.S. pork sales to China amid high tariffs has been nearly offset by record-large exports to Mexico and Central America and a strong performance in Colombia, the Caribbean, the Philippines and Vietnam.



The USMEF study on the impact of pork exports on U.S. soybeans will be updated in the spring once full 2025 data on crops and exports is available. For more information, please visit www.usmef.org.

NEBRASKA SOYBEAN BOARD

See For Yourself Program



2025-26 See for Yourself Program Participants

Travis Runge

Farmer & Agronomist,
Redstar, LLC
Schuyler, NE

Ryan Nickerson

Location Manager, CPI Coop
Doniphan, NE

Kelsey Franzluebbbers

Grain Origination/Account
Manager, ADM
Dodge, NE

Brain Schwartz

CES Regional Sales Manager,
CHS Inc.
Norfolk, NE

Seth Robeson

Farmer & Ag Advisor,
Frontier Cooperative
David City, NE

Michelle Bose

Farmer & Closing Agent,
Dvoracek Title
Arcadia, NE



The Nebraska Soybean Board has launched its See for Yourself program, welcoming six participants from across the state who are interested in learning more about Nebraska’s soybean industry and the role of the soybean checkoff. The program is designed to give farmers and industry professionals a firsthand look at how checkoff investments support research, market development and partnerships around the world.

Steve Martin, executive director of the Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska (AFAN), also joined the group to discuss the connection between livestock development and soybean demand. Martin highlighted how Nebraska’s livestock sector remains a major customer for soybean meal and a key partner in adding value to soybeans grown in the state.

Over the next several months, participants will take part in sessions that showcase the reach and impact of the Nebraska Soybean Board. They will learn about NSB’s research investments, explore efforts to develop and expand domestic and international markets, and see how soybean-based products help feed and fuel the world.

By the end of the program, participants are expected to gain a deeper understanding of the soybean industry and the checkoff’s role in its success. The Nebraska Soybean Board looks forward to the conversations and insights this new class will bring as the program continues.



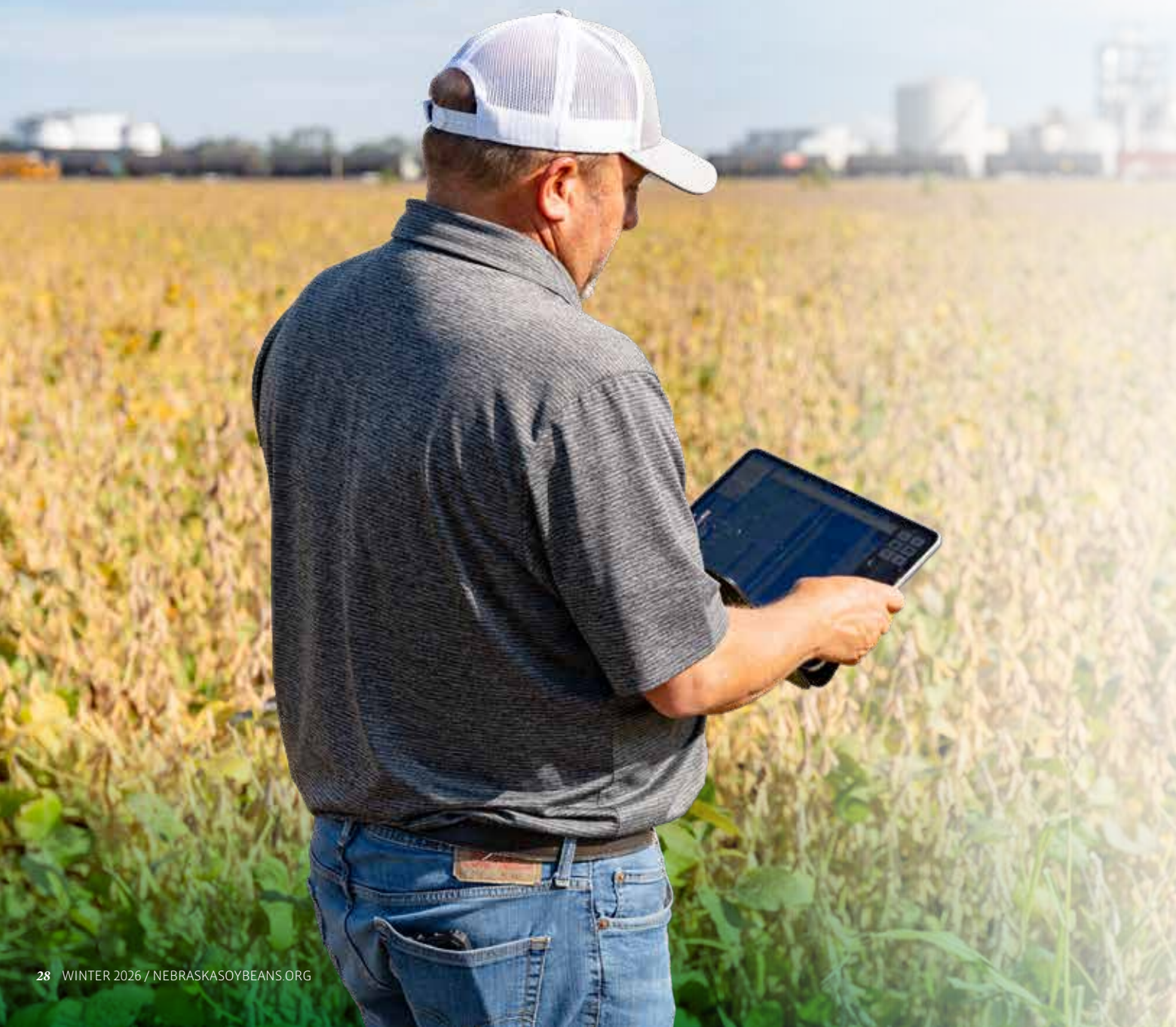
The 2025 class began its program on December 15th, with an introductory session focused on how the Nebraska Soybean Board operates, how checkoff dollars are invested and how strategic priorities guide funding decisions. Participants also heard from Tony Johanson, a past board member of the Nebraska Soybean Board and Nebraska representative to the United Soybean Board. Johanson shared his experiences serving in leadership roles, emphasizing the value of the checkoff, the importance of farmer involvement and the lasting relationships built through service.



Brian, Ryan, & Travis simulating the decision-making process behind allocating soybean checkoff dollars.

Harvest 2025

**A STRONG SEASON WITH LESSONS
FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**



Mild weather, solid yields & lower disease pressure shaped a positive soybean harvest statewide.

Many Nebraska growers wrapped up their soybean harvest feeling pleasantly surprised. Despite an unpredictable season, soybeans came out of the field in good shape, with yields meeting—and often exceeding—expectations.

Brandon Hamer, Director of Research & Development at Aurora Cooperative and a member of the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) Research Advisory Team, said harvest stayed timely and overall crop quality was strong across much of the state.

“We were seeing yields five to ten percent higher than what most growers were expecting this year,” Hamer noted. Some beans came out at slightly higher moisture, but nothing that slowed progress. The biggest contributor, he said, was weather that worked in the crop’s favor. A mild August prevented late-season heat from shutting down seed fill, giving beans time to size up. That led to fuller seed, better weight and a noticeable bump in yield potential.

Disease pressure was also lighter. Steady airflow through the canopy reduced white mold, and early concerns never materialized into widespread issues. A few pockets in northeast Nebraska saw sudden death syndrome alongside persistent nematode pressure, but most growers avoided large-scale setbacks.

Even areas that received heavy early rainfall, such as around Central City, saw soybeans hold steady.

Palmer amaranth and herbicide resistance remain challenges, yet several management trends stood out. Many growers continue to see strong results from early planting, particularly mid-April fields. Wider maturity spreads are helping farmers stagger workload and reduce risk. Improvements in planter technology are also making an impact, delivering better spacing and singulation while allowing lower populations without sacrificing yield.

Hamer emphasized that research remains essential. “Nematodes remain the biggest yield-robber in soybeans, which is why ongoing research is so important for growers,” he said. NSB’s investments in nematode management, trait development and emerging pest research—including soybean gall midge and *Dectes* stem borer—are helping farmers prepare for threats that don’t yet have clear solutions.

Looking toward 2026, the takeaway is simple: thoughtful soybean management pays off. With new markets strengthening demand in Nebraska and research-backed tools on the horizon, growers are well positioned to build on this year’s momentum.

WHAT WORKED IN 2025



- ▶ **Planting early**, especially mid-April fields
- ▶ **Spreading maturities** more widely across operations
- ▶ **Improving spacing & singulation** with planter technology improvements
- ▶ **Achieving stronger seed fill** thanks to mild late-summer weather

“

We continue to see growers getting good results from early planting and a wider spread of maturities. Those practices are really paying off.

— **BRANDON HAMER, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT, AURORA COOPERATIVE & NSB RESEARCH ADVISORY TEAM MEMBER**

”

Bringing Grain Bin Rescue Resources Home to Rural

Nebraska

Working Together When Every Choice Matters

On most rural farms, grain bins fade into the backdrop—steady, familiar, predictable. Until the moment they're not. When grain stops flowing, frustration rises fast. It's easy to step inside without thinking twice, and in an instant, a routine task becomes life-threatening.

Grain bin entrapments remain one of agriculture's most unpredictable hazards, affecting farmers regardless of experience or caution. And when they happen, volunteer fire departments are the first to respond. They're neighbors helping neighbors, often with limited budgets and limited equipment.

That's why Nationwide invests in both Grain Bin Safety Week—an annual education and awareness effort—and a separate rescue tube and training program that equips rural fire departments for skilled entrapment response. Together, these efforts have placed 450+ rescue tubes in 35 states and contributed to 15 confirmed lives saved.

"These are real people who walked out of a grain bin because the right tools and training were there," said Derek Hommer, Nationwide Risk Management Consultant, Agronomy & Grain Bin Safety. "That's a pretty big deal for us."

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS BRINGING TOOLS HOME

The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) and Nebraska Corn Board (NCB) have supported the program for several years, helping ensure Nebraska's volunteer departments stay equipped.

Through the 2025 Nominate Your Fire Department initiative, three local departments received support:

- ▶ **Nemaha Rural Fire Department:** rescue tube and hands-on training
- ▶ **Upland Rural Fire Department:** rescue tube and hands-on training
- ▶ **Axtell Volunteer Fire & Rescue:** retraining session

"These grain bin tools would never have been purchased without the sponsorship," said Mike Hall, Fire Chief, Nemaha Rural Fire Department. "This equipment is now one of only two serving four rural counties."

TRAINING THAT PREPARES RESCUERS FOR REAL CONDITIONS

A grain bin rescue requires much more than a tube. Responders need harnesses, atmospheric monitors, rope systems, communication gear and at least two trained rescuers inside the bin. To prepare crews, Nationwide partners with the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) and its mobile grain entrapment simulator. Firefighters are safely submerged to their waist in real grain and taught how to rescue one another.

GRAIN BIN SAFETY STARTS WITH PREVENTION

- ▶ Monitor moisture and temperature regularly
- ▶ Sample grain often for early signs of spoilage
- ▶ Keep equipment maintained and functioning properly
- ▶ Adopt a zero-entry mindset whenever possible
- ▶ If entry is unavoidable, never enter alone

"Giving someone a grain rescue tube without training is like handing them a chainsaw and never teaching them how to start it," Hommer said. "We stay until every firefighter has had a hands-on rotation. That's how to keep those who are entrapped and the rescuers safe."

He also emphasized prevention. "Grain that goes out of condition is the top reason people end up inside a bin," Hommer said. "Keeping grain in condition—and staying out of the bin—is the best way to avoid entrapment."



Nationwide hosts **Grain Bin Safety Week** each February, offering tools, education and resources focused on prevention. Scan the QR code to explore materials.

UNVEILING ON-FARM RESEARCH INSIGHTS

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE 2026 ON-FARM RESEARCH RESULTS UPDATE MEETINGS!

The Nebraska On-Farm Research Network is pleased to announce the On-Farm Research Results Update Meetings for 2026, providing Nebraska soybean farmers with current and reliable research-based insights.

WHY ATTEND?

Accessing cutting-edge, on-farm research is key to making informed decisions that can boost your operation's success. This year's meetings will provide valuable insights and practical knowledge, helping you stay ahead in the ever-changing world of production agriculture.

DATES

FEB. 17, 2026
Holthus Convention Center
York

FEB. 18, 2026
ENREEC
Mead

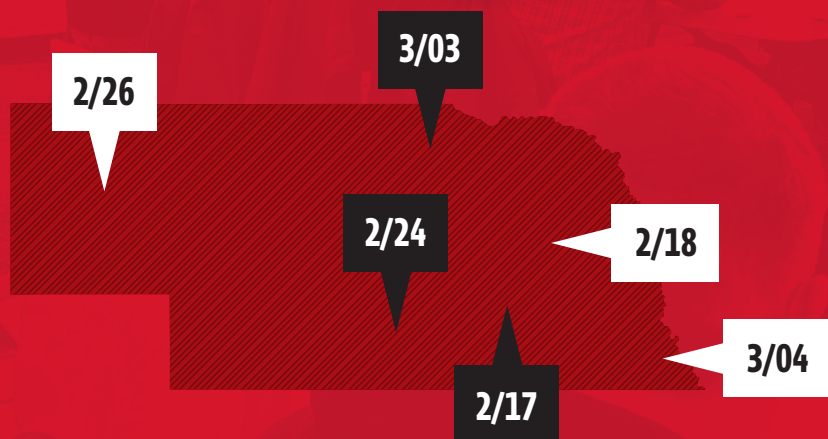
FEB. 24, 2026
Buffalo County Extension Office
Kearney

FEB. 26, 2026
Knight Museum & Sandhills Center
Alliance

MAR. 3, 2026
Holt County Extension Office
O'Neill

MAR. 04, 2026
Kimmel Orchard
Nebraska City

All meetings will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude by 3 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be provided at each location. Check-in and refreshments will be available 30 minutes prior to the start of each meeting.



REGISTRATION

Pre-registration is **REQUIRED** for all attendees. Secure your spot to ensure you don't miss out on this invaluable opportunity.

HOW TO REGISTER

Visit our website and register for the location that suits you best. Free attendance is sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board.

CCA CREDITS

We have applied for CCA credits, and approval is pending. Earn credits while staying abreast of the latest advancements in on-farm research.

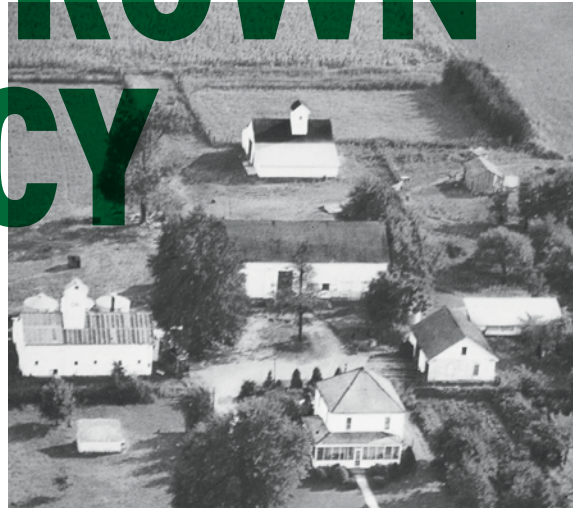


SCAN TO REGISTER

Join us at the 2026 On-Farm Research Results Update Meetings. Getting started with on-farm research doesn't have to be hard and the data you collect and learn about can benefit your operation for years to come!



A HOME-GROWN LEGACY



A legacy of faith. A tradition of farming. A future rooted in both.