



SOYBEAN NEBRASKA

WINTER 2024

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

FROM THE GROUND UP



12-13 | Navigating Dectes stem borer and white mold in soybeans.

28-29 | A discussion on the importance of biodiesel, including tips for winter performance.



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SOYBEAN NEBRASKA

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

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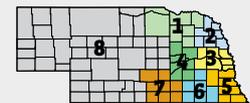


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The Nebraska Soybean Board is a private, nonprofit checkoff board responsible for the research and promotion of soybeans in an effort to increase the profitability of the state's 22,000 soybean producers.

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



United Soybean Board Members

- Greg Greving, Chapman
- Tony Johanson, Oakland
- Ed Lammers, Hartington
- Victor Bohuslavsky, Seward

Nebraska Soybean Board Staff

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- Lois Ronhovde
- Wesley Wach
- Teri Zimmerman

On The Cover

NSB Chairman, Jason Penke, surveying his fields in mid-November.

Photo credit: Thomas Hoxmeier

Note from the
**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**



By Andy Chvatal

As my oldest daughter likes to remind me, “just another trip around the sun!”

Is variability the word of the year? From the conversations I’ve had with growers over the last few months, it seems as though every precinct in the state experienced its own specific growing season and weather pattern.

Growing a crop is a tough game, but it’s really only part of the battle. Nebraska’s soybean producers are the best in the world at what they do. However, you can’t just close the book there. At this past board meeting, I challenged our NSB directors to create a mission statement for their own operation. I would challenge you to do the same. Every soybean producer has a story, and every story needs to be told. Don’t be afraid to tell it.

Through the community engagement pillar of the strategic plan, NSB aims to interact with our local communities to showcase Nebraska soybeans, farms, and farmers. NSB interacts with consumers in a variety of ways, specifically through our FFA chapters, soy education in our grade schools, and with consumers via social media, television and radio advertising. As we embark on 2024, NSB will continue to shine the light on the soybeans we produce and add focus to our great farmers who raise it!

Wishing you the best in 2024.

Checking In With The Chairman

NEW YEAR’S OUTLOOK



By Jason Penke, NSB Chairman, Craig

Hopefully, everyone is getting used to writing ‘2024’ on their checks by now. It will probably take me a few more months, but I can turn a ‘3’ into a ‘4’ pretty well! I’d like to introduce myself to those of you who are reading the first edition of “Checking In With The Chairman.” My name is Jason Penke, and I’ll be serving as your Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) chairman this year. I live near Craig, Nebraska, with my wife Kylie, who is the Ag Instructor at Oakland-Craig Public Schools, and our three boys: Tate, Tye, and Travis.

Between farming, seed sales, FFA contests, sporting events, church group meetings, volunteer fire and rescue calls, and county fair boards, the days seem to fly by for our family. All of these activities remind me of a core area within the Nebraska Soybean Board called community engagement. Whether your community has a population of 20 or over 200,000, we want to be involved. By connecting with the community through diverse initiatives, the board aims to not only showcase agriculture, but also to build relationships and partnerships that contribute to the overall well-being of the community. This engagement ensures that we demonstrate the positive impact and value that soy can bring to your community.

With the new fiscal year, we held our reorganization meeting, officer elections, and committee selection. I’m pleased to have Anne Meis as our vice chair, Mike Tomes as secretary, and Blake Johnson as treasurer to round out the executive committee. On the national level, congratulations to Ed Lammers on being elected as vice chairman of the United Soybean Board and Greg Greving for his reappointment. We welcomed a past director back to the board seat in district 5 where Mark Caspers was recently elected. He brings a vast array of knowledge and experience to NSB, and we are glad to have him. I also want to thank Doug Saathoff for his leadership serving as chairman the past two years. You showed us how life can change in an instant, and we are all very thankful to have you continue as a director on NSB.

In closing, I want to wish you all a blessed new year and thank you for your continued support of the Nebraska Soybean Board!

Soy Action Center

ISSUES WORTH WATCHING



By Doug Bartek, NSA President, Wahoo

This will be my final column as President of the Nebraska Soybean Association as my term has been fulfilled. I have served as President of NSA for the past two years and it has been an honor to work on your behalf.

Following our annual meeting in January I will move on to serve as Chairman of the NSA board and Kent Grotelueschen of Octavia will assume the duties of President. Over the past two years as president, we have advocated on many issues facing the soy industry.

Looking back to 2023, each day was different when it comes to policy issues affecting agriculture and our action. Our involvement in 2024 continues to push for a new Farm Bill. We began back in 2022 pushing for an on-time 2023 Farm Bill that included protecting crop insurance. We remain committed to communicating soy's top priority asks to Congress for a Farm Bill completion in 2024.

Checkoff: We continue to raise awareness about the value of the Soy Checkoff with members of Congress. The value it brings to our farmers and the need for the federal checkoff program.

Defending our industry when it comes to the many issues hinging on EPA and their plans to implement the Endangered Species Act within its pesticide program. The most recent proposals released, the Vulnerable Species Pilot Project and the Herbicide Strategy, are not science based and are basically impossible to implement on the farm.

Biofuels and Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF): With the soybean crush plant expansions taking shape

in Nebraska and across the U.S., we are pleased with the guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury on the Sustainable Aviation Fuel Credit. ASA and others in the biofuels industry have pushed for the use of the Agronne National Laboratory-GREET model to determine the eligibility for the SAF credit. The EPA will work with other agencies to develop a new GREET methodology that incorporates all aspects of a feedstock including Climate Smart Agriculture Practices. With this guidance supporting soy and other plant-based feedstocks going into sustainable aviation fuel the opportunities are favorable for soy and Nebraska to be a big player in this space.

We will continue working with Congress in 2024 to provide long-term resources for trade promotion programs that benefit our industry such as the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) in the new Farm Bill.

There is no better time than 2024 for farmers to engage and make a difference. I challenge every soybean producer to engage in conversation with your State Senators and Nebraska's Congressional delegation. Every conversation makes a difference and is time well spent. Providing a first-hand perspective to our elected leaders on the issues and how they impact your farm makes a difference.

It has been a rewarding opportunity to represent my fellow Nebraska soybean growers on these issues and I look forward to a prosperous new year for the soybean industry.



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2023 President

Doug Bartek, Wahoo – District 5

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- Lucas Miller, Randolph – District 2
- Clint Hostler, Grand Island – District 3
- Kent Grotelueschen, Octavia – District 4
- Doug Bartek, Wahoo – District 5
- Daryl Obermeyer, Brownville – District 6
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- Craig Frenzen, Fullerton – At Large
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- Myles Ramsey, Kenesaw – At Large



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American Soybean Association Directors

- Dennis Fujan, Prague
- Ken Boswell, Shickley

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The 108th Legislature, Second Session convened January 3, 2024

Visit the official web site of the Nebraska Legislature at nebraskalegislature.gov to contact your State Senator or subscribe to the Unicameral News Update.

MEET YOUR 2024 LEADERSHIP

Learn about your board officers and committees for the current fiscal year.

Executive Committee:

From left to right.

Chairman: Jason Penke | District 2

Vice Chair: Anne Meis | District 1

Treasurer: Blake Johnson | District 8

Secretary: Mike Tomes | District 6



The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) convened its inaugural board meeting for fiscal year 2024 on November 20–21, 2023, in Lincoln. During this meeting, restructuring of both the board and committees transpired alongside routine board business.

The newly elected officers above will lead the board for a one-year term. In addition to the executive committee appointments, committee chairs and members were also announced:

Farmer Support:

Ruth Ready (*chair*), Jason Penke, Mike Tomes, Doug Saathoff

Production & Crop Research:

Doug Saathoff (*chair*), Eugene Goering, Blake Johnson, Mike Tomes, Greg Anderson

Community Engagement:

Mark Caspers (*chair*), Jason Penke, Anne Meis, Ruth Ready

Demand & Utilization:

Mark Caspers (*chair*), Eugene Goering, Anne Meis, Blake Johnson, Greg Anderson

Andy Chvatal, NSB executive director, expressed confidence in the newly appointed officers and committee members, stating, “These dedicated individuals will be working tirelessly on behalf of Nebraska’s soybean farmers. Throughout the upcoming year, they will continue to make strategic decisions to effectively invest and leverage soybean checkoff resources. Their focus will be on growing value for Nebraska farmers by maximizing their checkoff investments.”

NSB looks forward to a productive and prosperous year ahead under the guidance of its newly elected leadership team and ongoing strategic plan.

Nebraska Farmers Greg Greving and Ed Lammers Elevate Leadership on the United Soybean Board

Greg Greving (Merrick County) and Ed Lammers (Cedar County) continue to play pivotal roles on the United Soybean Board (USB). Recently reappointed, Greg Greving stands as a dedicated contributor, bringing his wealth of experience to USB. Simultaneously, Ed Lammers has been elected vice chair, reflecting the trust and confidence the board places in his leadership. As Nebraska representatives, Greving and Lammers showcase the state’s commitment to the soybean industry and the broader agricultural community. Their active roles on USB underscore their dedication to advancing the interests and innovations within the industry.

Learn more at unitedsoybean.org.



Greg Greving



Ed Lammers



SOYBEAN FARMERS: MAKE YOUR IMPACT

RUN FOR NSB ELECTIONS AND LET YOUR VOICE LEAD.

Election Schedule



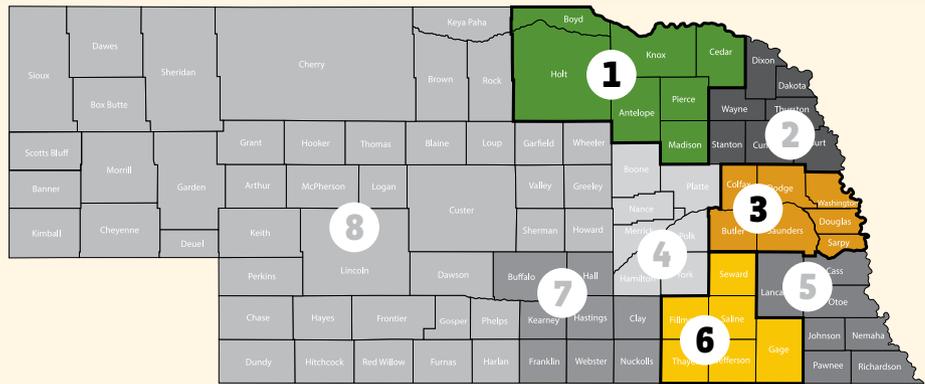
Districts
1 3 6



**Districts 5, 7
& At-Large**



Districts 2, 4 & 8



Nebraska Soybean Board District Map

The election is conducted by mail-in ballot in July for Districts 1, 3 and 6. Soybean farmers who reside in counties that are up for election in 2024 will receive ballots and candidate information regarding NSB’s election process via direct mail.

Election districts and counties are:

- ✓ District 1: Counties of Antelope, Boyd, Cedar, Holt, Knox, Madison and Pierce
- ✓ District 3: Counties of Butler, Colfax, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders and Washington
- ✓ District 6: Counties of Filmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline, Seward and Thayer

To apply for a candidacy in District 1, 3 or 6 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 15, 2024

Nebraska Residents Cast the Deciding Vote

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

- ✓ Nebraska residents
- ✓ District 1, 3 or 6 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 1, 2023
Candidacy petition period began

APRIL 15, 2024
Candidacy petitions due to NSB office

JULY 2024
Ballots mailed to eligible voters

JULY 31, 2024
Final day to return ballots for consideration

OCTOBER 1, 2024
Newly elected board members' terms begin

**Reach out to the NSB team
for more information at
402-441-3240.**

NEBRASKA LEADERS PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The 40th anniversary class of American Soybean Association Corteva Agriscience™ Young Leaders began its leadership journey at Corteva’s Global Business Center in Johnston, Iowa, Nov 27-29, 2023.

While in Johnston, the Young Leaders heard from soybean grower leaders Josh Gackle (ND), ASA president; Tim Bardole (IA), USB director; and Jeff Jorgenson (IA), USSEC director. The group participated in DiSC® and communications training, toured the Corteva greenhouses, and received updates on soybean industry advancements. The Young Leaders also toured the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates. The second phase of training will take place Feb. 27-March 2 in Houston in conjunction with Commodity Classic.

The 2024 Class of Young Leaders is comprised of thirty-nine leaders from soybean producing states and includes Nebraska leaders Justin and Samantha Fiala of Ulysses and Derek and Nicole Van Heek of Crofton.

The Young Leaders program was founded in 1984 and continues to set the bar for leadership training in agriculture and to serve as the voice of the American farmer.



Justin and Samantha Fiala



Derek and Nicole Van Heek

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Plan on joining us to learn from a variety of speakers and vendors about important topics for corn and soybean production in 2024.



CONTACT AARON NYGREN
(402)624-8030 / ANYGREN2@UNL.EDU
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PREPARED FOR *Takeoff*

Soybeans are Fueling a Sustainable Future in Aviation

In the global quest for cleaner, more sustainable energy, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) is taking flight—and Nebraska-grown soybeans are helping to power liftoff.

A sustainable alternative to petroleum-based jet fuel, SAF promises a 40-90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, plus lower air-pollution-causing particulate matter (think contrails). That underscores the critical role of SAF as an essential component in addressing environmental challenges.

At the forefront of this movement? Soybean farmers.

Veronica Bradley, Environmental Science Director for Clean Fuels Alliance America, explains that around 98% of present-day SAF production uses renewable oil, such as soybean oil. That's because the process and technology used to convert soybean oil to jet fuel closely mimic the decades-old process used to convert petroleum.

“By substituting soybean oil for petroleum, you're not extracting carbon

from underground that returns to the atmosphere when fuel combusts—which we know contributes to manmade climate change. Since soybeans absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide as they grow, soybean oil is essentially a way to recycle the carbon in the atmosphere.”

By engaging with stakeholders, Bradley and her colleagues at Clean Fuels are helping to pave the way not just for increased adoption of SAF but the proliferation of other alternative fuels, like soy biodiesel. Despite its data-driven benefits, for example, SAF still accounts for less than 0.1% of all fuels used in aviation.

Yet that number will almost certainly change—in a big way. Bradley says the industry-side demand for alternative fuels is poised to keep growing. For example, while industries like transportation pursue breakthroughs in battery power, the laws of physics place a different set of constraints on the aviation sector, making liquid fuel the only viable option (at least for now).

“A colleague of mine once said, and this still holds true, that you could power a 737 with batteries—but the entire interior of the plane would have to be packed with batteries. Not only that, you'd have to essentially throw the spent batteries out the window as you flew to stay in the air. That's opposed to liquid fuel, which lightens the aircraft when consumed,” Bradley said.

So as the ground in aviation and other industries shifts further away from fossil fuels, the humble soybean will be ready to soar. And soybean farmers will be at the crest of the wave.

“

When we talk about climate change, we need to think globally. But when we're talking about solutions, we have to look locally. And in the United States, part of that means turning to our strong agricultural sector.

— VERONICA BRADLEY

”

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BATTLING CHALLENGES

Dectes Stem Borer

By Justin McMechan, UNL Crop Protection and Cropping Systems Specialist



Over the past several years, Nebraska soybean farmers in eastern and central parts of the state have noticed an increase in the presence and abundance of *Dectes* stem borer in soybean fields. Unlike other soybean pests, *Dectes* has a unique feeding behavior that makes it difficult to determine if significant yield losses can occur from feeding alone. *Dectes* losses are primarily due to the plants lodging just before harvest due to a weakened stem created by the larvae as they make an overwintering chamber at the base of the plant.

Adults of *Dectes* stem borer were first detected from last year's soybean fields on June 11th in eastern Nebraska. About two weeks after emerging, eggs are laid into a corky area of the petiole called the pith. The larvae feed within that petiole for about a week before moving into the mainstem. Larval feeding within the mainstem creates a lot of concern for soybean farmers. From 2007 to 2011, studies were conducted in the southern U.S. with fipronil as a seed treatment. Although this product is not legal for use on soybean, it provided evidence that even with an exceptional level of control (90-97% reduction) of *Dectes*, there was almost no difference in yield. This highlights the limited contribution that the pith has on soybean yield. In contrast, soybean gall midge feeds on the xylem and phloem, an area just outside the pith, which can result in plant death.

In 2023, eastern Nebraska and western Iowa reported that soybean gall midge used egg-laying sites from *Dectes* stem borer to gain access to the plant. This interaction could increase the pest potential of *Dectes* stem borer. For growers with *Dectes* pressure, tactics that limit lodging are likely to be most beneficial, such as scouting in August to prioritize high-risk fields for harvest. Growers should also avoid a combination of early planted and early maturing varieties. Management of ragweed and cocklebur is also recommended. Foliar insecticides are generally not recommended due to the duration of adult activity, the larvae being hidden within the stem, and the inconsistencies between tunneling and yield losses.



Photo credit: Jim Kalisch

The *Dectes* stem borer (*Dectes texus*) is a longhorn beetle that, at larval stage feeding, can cause a significant number of soybean plants to lodge.

Navigating Dectes Stem Borer and White Mold in Soybeans

Soybean White Mold

By Dylan Mangel, UNL Extension Plant Pathologist

White mold was a significant challenge in 2023. Spring was dry and plants were stressed, leading to late closing canopies in many areas of the state. These conditions hinted that we might have less white mold pressure during the summer. Unfortunately, other variables acted in favor of white mold, which ultimately led to a year of high pressure from the disease.

The first of these variables was rainfall that showed up just as beans began to flower. While this was necessary rainfall for the soybeans, it also encouraged white mold. The disease survives in the soil and with water sprouted mushroom-like structures called apothecia. With a few wet mornings, spores had spread from apothecia onto the plants where it infects through flowers. The second factor that increased white mold severity in some parts of the state was early irrigation. Many growers were irrigating earlier than typical, some irrigating through early flowering growth stages. This moisture supported white mold development in the same way rain does.

White mold can survive in the soil for extended periods, outlasting several rotations. Once it is in a field, it will persist. The most effective in-season management tool is foliar fungicide application. However, foliar applied products are only effective during flowering, before the plants are infected. In fields with a history of high white mold pressure, applications around R2, or slightly earlier if the canopy closes faster, have been shown to be most effective. If a favorable disease environment persists, a second application as late as R4 may also be economically effective. Variety selection is also important. Place varieties with the highest ratings in fields with a history of the disease. Another tool is changing row spacing, many growers have seen a positive impact by widening rows from 15 to 30-inch rows. This will increase airflow and delay or prevent the conditions required for white mold development.

With white mold, field history is the best predictor of future pressure from the disease. If you experienced high pressure in the past, scout soybeans for apothecia starting at R1 and be prepared to manage if favorable disease conditions are present.



Cool, wet conditions are best for white mold infection. Temperatures around 75°F are ideal. However, the disease can spread in temperatures up to 90°F. Irrigated fields often have sufficient moisture to provide good conditions for the disease to spread.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FROM THE GROUND UP

The Nebraska Soybean Board continues to spotlight agriculture, soybean production and the dedicated farmers that make it all possible.

15 | In the Grocery Aisle

Learn how sustainability and health are driving decisions at the grocery store.

16-17 | Rooted in Common Ground

The new CommonGround Nebraska coordinator discusses the national movement of farm women and the organization's goals.

19 | Food and Our Future

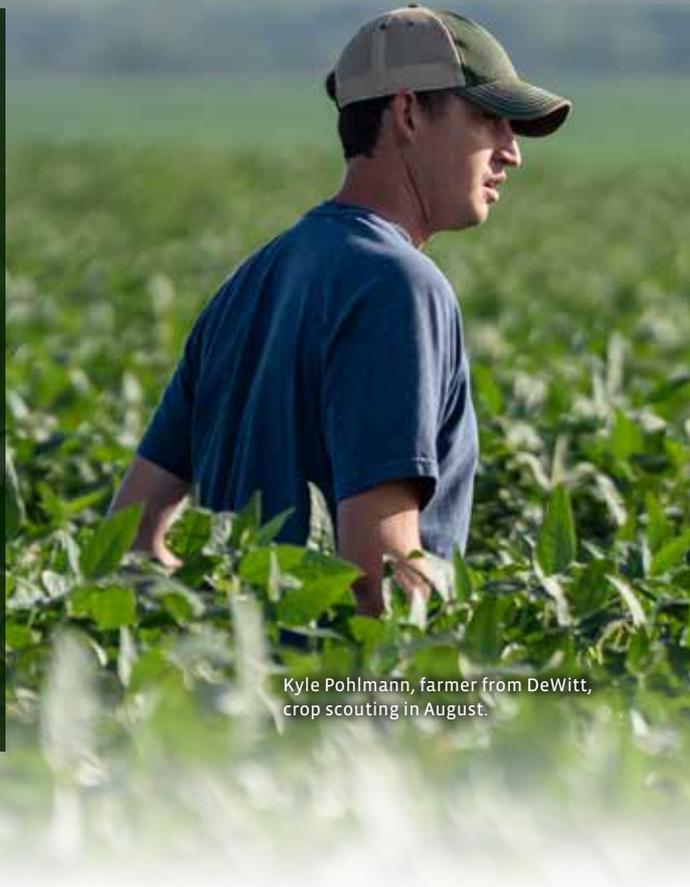
Nebraska's Ag Sack Lunch Program nurtures 14 years of educational impact.

20-21 | Spotlight on Soy Snacks

Embracing the benefits of soy for tasty and healthy snacks.

23 | Celebrating Success

Hilary Miracle named 2023 AgCeptional Woman of the Year.



Kyle Pohlmann, farmer from DeWitt, crop scouting in August.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Mark Caspers (chair) | Jason Penke | Anne Meis | Ruth Ready

Sustainability and Health Driving Decisions IN THE GROCERY AISLE

By Mickie French, Executive Director, The Center for Food Integrity

Are there antibiotics in my meat? Should I be afraid of GMOs? How is food production impacting the environment?

Consumers today are asking more questions about their food; that includes how it will impact their health and the environment.

The evolving preferences for sustainably produced and healthier food, especially among younger generations, are influencing choices in the grocery aisle that increasingly impact how food is grown and raised on the farm. The Center for Food Integrity (CFI) recently conducted Illuminate™ studies, using online digital ethnography to observe millions of consumers in real time, revealing insights on demographics, attitudes, behaviors and motivations specifically related to food production and transparency.

Sustainability and Transparency Trends

Consumers aged 18 to 54, educated and middle-to-upper-class without children are driving the trend toward sustainable and transparent food production.

Key trends include:

- ▶ **Transparent Protein:** A demand for clearer information about the sustainability of ethical protein sources.
- ▶ **Local and Traceable:** Support for small-scale and traceable food production to ensure sustainable eating.
- ▶ **Ag Innovation:** Excitement about innovative sustainable farming practices.

While not yet mainstream, the overall trend for sustainability and transparency is on the rise.

Health and Transparency Trends

Single consumers and couples without children, aged 18-20 and 35-54, are influencing trends in health and transparency. These consumers express concerns about the power of corporations in food production and fear profit-driven motives.

Key trends include:

- ▶ **Price of Food and Equitable Access:** Demands for transparency in response to rising food prices.
- ▶ **Nutrients for Optimizing Health:** A desire for companies to highlight key nutrients for better diet planning.
- ▶ **Exposing Processing:** A need for information on processed ingredients to avoid health issues.

Implications for Farmers

The growing focus on sustainable and healthy food requires farmers to actively and transparently engage with consumers. Whether through conversations, media, social media or public speaking engagements, farmers are urged to showcase on-farm technology driving sustainable food production. Regardless of farm size, emphasizing values that prioritize people, animals and the planet helps overcome biases associated with “big ag” and builds trust.



In today's dynamic environment, addressing misinformation about agriculture and meeting rapidly shifting consumer demands is crucial. For more information, visit www.foodintegrity.org or contact CFI at learnmore@foodintegrity.org.



Rooted in COMMON GROUND

By Amanda Fairley, Entrepreneur and CommonGround Nebraska Coordinator

Growing up on a family farm, I discovered my passion for agriculture. The daily chores, the ever-changing seasons, and the work ethic instilled in me all played crucial roles in shaping the person I am today.

My name is Amanda Fairley, and my husband, Dustin, and I reside just ten miles north of Fairbury, NE, with our two children, Bo and Ellie. We raise corn, soybeans, wheat, and black Angus South Poll cattle. We have also reintroduced native grasses and adopted rotational grazing practices. Dustin is instrumental in our custom farming business and balances his roles as an aerial applicator and machinist. Our operation is not just a business; it embodies our shared dreams, hard work, and commitment to each other and the agriculture industry.

My passion for agriculture deepened significantly during my years of involvement in 4-H and FFA. These organizations provided more than just extracurricular activities; they became invaluable platforms for personal growth and leadership development. I earned my bachelor's degree in agriculture and psychology from Delaware State University in 2010. In my senior year of college, the opportunity to move to Nebraska presented itself; initially planned as a temporary move, but God had other plans. The concept of owning my own

business was never part of the narrative I heard growing up. Like many other young adults, I was guided to pursue higher education and secure a degree, with the expectation of entering the workforce. After devoting nearly a decade to teaching in higher education, I made the decision to step away and start my own business supporting women as a career coach and assisting businesses and organizations as a leadership facilitator.

My overarching goal has consistently been to create a meaningful impact. Now, I am privileged to do that as the coordinator for CommonGround Nebraska. In this role I am able to make an impact in an organization deeply connected to my agricultural roots and aligned with my dedication to supporting women. As the Coordinator for CommonGround Nebraska, I support our volunteers as they work to bridge the gap between consumers and the agricultural community.

CommonGround is a national movement of farm women fostering open conversations about farming and ranching practices, sustainability, and the journey of food from our fields to tables across the nation. While we may come from diverse backgrounds and experiences, we share a common passion for agriculture. CommonGround Nebraska symbolizes unity and strength within

the agriculture community and is supported by the Nebraska Soybean Board.

My vision as the new coordinator is to honor the legacy of this organization and the women in agriculture as we move forward. We will continue to provide a platform for women to connect, learn, share experiences and influence the agricultural narrative. Our organization is committed to supporting farm and ranch women across this state with the resources they need to share their stories.

In the coming months and years, CommonGround Nebraska will launch exciting initiatives and events tailored to the needs of our consumers. Our commitment to open dialogue, fact-based information and respectful conversations will remain unwavering. We recognize the diverse perspectives and encourage a space where all voices are valued. Through these discussions, we will forge a common ground that honors our shared values while embracing our unique experiences.

CommonGround is an exceptional organization with tremendous support. From conferences to events, I eagerly anticipate the opportunities for connection and learning in this role. I am enthusiastic about engaging with this remarkable state's farm and ranch women, and I anticipate many more meaningful connections in the future.



Our volunteers contribute blogs and share recipes, featured in our newsletter "Finding Our CommonGround," which you can subscribe to on our website. If you're a woman engaged in farming or ranching in Nebraska and want to volunteer, you can register at www.commongroundnebraska.com. Join us on Facebook or Instagram, where our volunteers consistently share their stories and kitchen creations.



CommonGround volunteers from around the country (five from Nebraska) gathered at the 2023 national conference in Savannah, GA.



Nebraska volunteer Molly Aden visits with attendees of the Nebraska Women In Ag Conference about the CommonGround program.



Youth and adults alike visited the CommonGround Nebraska booth at the Douglas County Fair to learn more about food choices.



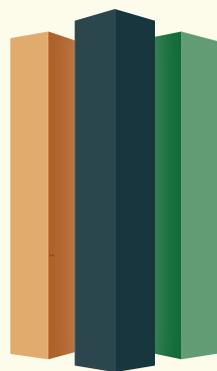
Amanda Fairley and her husband, Dustin, with their children, Bo and Ellie.



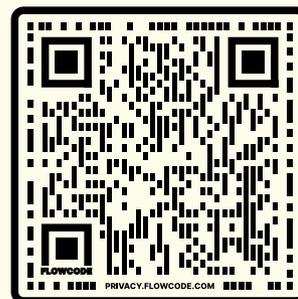
Make Moves with U.S. Soy

Our founding farmers took action **22 years ago** to launch ASA's World Initiative for Soy in Human Health so WISHH could grow new markets for U.S. Soy. Today, WISHH is working with strategic partners that use soy for food or feed in **28 countries** across Asia and Latin America to sub-Saharan Africa.

Find out how WISHH's three pillars of trade, development and food security cultivate new markets for U.S. Soy protein.



Trade. Development. Food Security.



FOOD AND *Our Future*

Nebraska's Ag Sack Lunch Program Nurtures 14 Years of Educational Impact

For the 14th year, the Nebraska Ag Sack Lunch Program continues to offer a fun and educational experience to Nebraska fourth-grade students. The program is offered both in-person and virtually. The in-person program provides students with a free lunch consisting of Nebraska-produced food items. The lesson covers the important role agriculture plays in Nebraska's economy and facts about the crops and livestock species that are raised in the state. Students will also receive a deck of cards containing agriculture facts. Many fourth-grade classes visit the Nebraska State Capitol each year, and the Ag Sack Lunch Program fits nicely into their day. "It's a great opportunity to be in front of young Nebraskans and teach them about the agriculture industry and how it impacts their everyday lives, from the clothes they wear to the food they eat," said Ag Ambassador Jady Fleischmann.

There are currently eight Ag Ambassadors who work with the program. Each

ambassador is an agriculture major at the University of Nebraska and knows firsthand the importance of the industry. Ag Ambassador Sam Oborny said, "Many of the students don't have a direct connection to someone who works in agriculture so finding ways to make those connections is important. It's fun to watch them realize just how much agriculture is involved in their daily lives."

New to the program this year is program manager, Ginger Jelinek. "It's been a great start to the year with having served over 700 students the past few months," said Jelinek. "Things will start to get busy after the first of the year; we have requests to present to over 4,300 students by the end of May." There are still some spots available, and Jelinek would encourage any fourth-grade class that is interested in participating to sign up soon. Visit www.agsacklunchprogram.com to submit your reservation. "If you know a 4th grade teacher who's interested in providing a valuable experience to their



Ag Ambassador Sam Oborny sharing facts in October about the beef industry to a group of students from Omaha.

classrooms, please let them know about the program," Jelinek adds. "Every year we hear from teachers who loved the experience and cannot wait to bring their classes back next year."

The virtual program is also a fun interactive experience and Jelinek would like to expand the number of students that participate in this option with hopes of reaching an even wider audience. "Students receive the opportunity to learn a little more about the agriculture industry in our state," Jelinek said. "They will also receive a deck of playing cards that contain great facts that can be shared with their families as they play fun games like Crazy Soybeans and Old Corn Maid."

The Ag Sack Lunch Program is sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board, Nebraska Corn Board, Nebraska Beef Council, Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Nebraska Cattlemen, Nebraska Poultry Industries, Nebraska Wheat Board and Midwest Dairy.

Ag Ambassador Jady Fleischmann presents to a group of students from Lincoln in September.

Spotlight on SOY SNACKS



Chocolate Soybean Energy Bites

If you're like most Americans, you probably eat a few snacks during the day. Millennials in particular take snacking seriously, opting for snacks instead of meals more than six times a week.

So, if you're feeling peckish, make the most of your snack break by choosing snacks made with soy. These days, it's easier than ever to find snacks made with soy protein and snacks made with soybean oil in your local grocery store. And for good reason! Not only is soy versatile and sustainable, it's also a complete source of protein and can offer heart healthy fats.

Soy protein is found in many common snack foods. As the name implies, soy protein is protein isolated from the rest of the soybean. One ounce of soy protein isolate contains 25 grams of high-quality protein and all of the nine essential amino acids.

Some of the most common snacks made with soy protein are nut butters, snack bars, breakfast cereals, smoothies and protein shakes.

Types of Soy Protein

- ▶ **Soy flour:** moistens baked goods and serves as a base for some soy milks and textured vegetable protein.
- ▶ **Textured soy protein:** can be used alone or with meats to create a variety of products.
- ▶ **Soy protein isolate:** dry powder commonly used to enhance protein bars, baked goods, soups, and sauces.
- ▶ **Soy protein concentrate:** high protein, yet maintains soybeans' natural dietary fiber; soy protein concentrate can be found in baked goods and plant-based meat alternatives.
- ▶ **Soy fiber:** manufacturers extract fiber from soybeans for use in nutrition bars, cereals, beverages, and baked goods.
- ▶ **Soy lecithin:** an emulsifier or stabilizer; soy lecithin is often found in processed foods.



Health benefits of soy protein



Soy protein has been found to have a positive impact on muscle mass and strength when consumed as part of a healthy lifestyle, complete with resistance exercise. Soy also is the only plant protein that carries the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) heart health claim. Making soy a complete protein that is comparable in quality to that of animal proteins.

Conventional soybean oil



Conventional, or commodity soybean oil, is a variety of vegetable oil derived from the soybean plant. Soybean oil has a wide range of health benefits and applications. Soybean oil is a source of vitamin E6, which is important for healthy vision and reproduction as well as blood, brain, and skin health.

Soybean oil is also high in vitamin K,2 which promotes healing and bone health. Nutrient rich soybean oil has a mild flavor, making it a versatile substitution for other vegetable oils in a variety of recipes. It is often found in dressings and dips.

High Oleic soybean oil



Compared to conventional soybean oil, high oleic soybean oil, or HOSoy, has a higher concentration of monosaturated fatty acids and a lower concentration of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA).9 HOSoy offers food manufacturers benefits, including high heat stability10, and is found in many common snack foods, including chips, crackers, popcorn, and baked goods.

HOSoy contains less saturated fat than some other vegetable oils. There is also a reduced risk of coronary heart disease when HOSoy is used as a replacement for oils higher in saturated fats, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

DIY: MAKE YOUR OWN ROOT VEGETABLE CHIPS



Ingredients

- 6 cups soybean oil
- 1 pound Yukon gold potatoes, peeled
- 1-pound purple potatoes, peeled
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled
- 4 medium beets, peeled
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Directions

1. Preheat soybean oil to 360° F in a heavy frying pan or small deep fryer.
2. Slice root vegetables into very thin rounds, less than 1/8 inch thick, using a hand slicer or mandolin. Separate vegetable slices into individual slices.
3. Fry in small batches, one to two minutes per batch, turning as needed until just crisp*. Drain in single layer on paper towels; sprinkle with salt.
4. Cool completely before serving or storing.

Serves 16.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE SOY-BASED RECIPES

Looking for more soy recipes to try out for yourself?



Soy ingredients are commonly found in snack foods because they are:

- ▶ **Affordable:** soybeans are abundant; production and processing is cost-effective.
- ▶ **Sustainable:** since 1980, U.S. Soy farmers have made significant operational improvements that have allowed them to increase soy production by 130% using roughly the same amount of land.
- ▶ **Versatile:** with a neutral flavor profile and texture and many applications, soy protein and soybean oil continue to find their way into more of our favorite snacks!

DIY: MAKE A SOY PROTEIN PACKED SHAKE



Ingredients

- 1 cup vanilla soy milk
- 1/2 cup ice cubes
- 1 banana
- 1 tablespoon creamy peanut butter

Directions

1. Slice the banana and place the slices in the freezer for approximately one hour.
2. Place frozen banana slices, soy milk, ice cubes and peanut butter in the blender and blend for 30 seconds or until smooth.

Serves one.

*1 cup of soy milk contains approximately 7 grams of protein†



Both soy protein and soybean oil are used to enhance our snacks. Knowing how each supports our health is key to making smarter snacking decisions. To learn more about the soy ingredients in your snacks, visit <https://ussoy.org/soy-ingredient-index/>



MAINTAINING OUR REPUTATION TO DELIVER

Whether shipping by river, road or rail, the soy checkoff is committed to ensuring America's infrastructure is a significant advantage for U.S. soybean farmers. We're looking inside the bean, beyond the bushel and around the world to keep preference for U.S. soy strong. And it's helping make a valuable impact for soybean farmers like you.

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



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Hilary Maricle named 2023 AgCeptional Woman of the Year

Hilary (Esch) Maricle received the esteemed title of the 2023 AgCeptional Woman of the Year at Northeast Community College's AgCeptional Women's Conference back in November. Maricle expressed that the award truly belonged to the women in the room, emphasizing their daily contributions to farming.

Despite her parents owning a grocery store in Spalding, Maricle pursued a farming career, inspired by her grandparents. She met Brian Maricle at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, both studying agricultural majors. With a bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences and a master's degree in leadership education from UNL, she and Brian now operate Maricle Family Farms on the homestead farm, a family legacy since 1871.

Maricle's extensive contributions include roles as an agriculture education instructor/FFA adviser, agribusiness instructor, and associate dean of agriculture, math, and science at Northeast. Recognizing her expertise and education, she was appointed Nebraska's Deputy Director of Agriculture last January.

In her new role, Maricle is enthusiastic about sharing her deep-rooted passion for agriculture and contributing to Nebraska's position as a leading agricultural state. Sherry Vinton, Nebraska Department of Agriculture

director, said, "With her extensive knowledge and background, Hilary understands agriculture and how important ag is to growing Nebraska's economy. I can't think of a better person to promote and support Nebraska's ag industry."

Nominated by Mary Pat Hoag, a pioneering figure in agricultural reporting, Maricle is celebrated for her advocacy work, utilizing social media to connect with consumers and championing family farms on a national level. Her involvement extends to community service, parish activities at St. Michael's in Albion, and four years as an elected Boone County commissioner.

The AgCeptional Women's Conference, drawing over 400 women annually, stands as northeast Nebraska's premier event for women in agriculture. The Nebraska Soybean Board was one of four, top "Homestead" sponsors of the conference. This year's conference featured speakers addressing various agricultural topics, providing networking, professional development, and personal growth opportunities.

When Maricle thinks of a successful future for the U.S. agricultural industry, she thinks of her five children.

"I want to make sure the seventh generation (of Maricles) gets to farm," she said.



Tara Smydra (left), dean of science, technology, agriculture, and math at Northeast Community College, presents Hilary (Esch) Maricle, with the 2023 AgCeptional Woman of the Year award during the college's AgCeptional Women's Conference in Norfolk.

“

I have a deep-rooted passion for agriculture that I want to share with others, and I'm excited to be a part of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture in my home state where agriculture is our number one industry.

— HILARY MARICLE

”





LEADING by Example

A conversation with Terry Hejny, Director of the Nebraska LEAD Program since September 2007.

Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB): Tell us a little about the Nebraska LEAD Program and some of its objectives.

Terry Hejny (TH): The Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council founded the Nebraska LEAD (Leadership Education/ Action Development) Program in 1981 in cooperation with Agricultural Builders of Nebraska, Inc. and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. All had recognized the need for a nonpartisan, nonpolitical organization to promote and develop future agricultural leadership. The council's overall mission remains “to prepare and motivate men and women in agriculture for more effective leadership.”

NSB: What inspired you to join the Nebraska LEAD Program as its third director?

TH: The position as Director of the Nebraska LEAD Program was an opportunity that opened up for me and my family at the right moment. The founding LEAD Program Director was Dr. Jim Horner, who also happened to be my college advisor in the Ag Education Department here at UNL. The second director, Dr. Allen Blezek who served as director for 23 years was one of my college professors. So, the three of us were connected for several years before LEAD got off the ground in 1981. Both men had a profound effect on my professional and personal life. Also, Dr.

Blezek was my LEAD Director when I was in LEAD XX (20) from 2000-2002. Doc was my mentor, colleague, and friend.

NSB: What do you think are the top characteristics of a good leader in agriculture?

TH: Here are my top 5 - **Integrity:** Leaders in agriculture must be reliable and trustworthy. They inspire trust in others, instill a sense of ethics, fairness, and equality, and must ensure transparency. **Motivating and Inspiring:** Leaders must model the behaviors that they want to encourage and always represent themselves and the organization they are representing well. Leaders “walk the talk”. Leaders set standards and expectations, measure outcomes, and reflect, reflect, and reflect. They also reward and celebrate successes. **Communication:** Strong communication skills means having the ability to listen, to be sensitive to the needs of others, to provide support and advice and to motivate and negotiate. **Vision:** Leaders in agriculture must focus on the vision, the long-term perspectives and what needs to be accomplished in the future. They must lead change. **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Leaders challenge processes to produce the best solution. They must ask “why” and look for different ways of doing things. They must also possess knowledge, decision making skills, be collaborative, be innovative, and be committed to the cause or organization.

NSB: What has been one of the most eye-opening and impactful experience during your time with the LEAD Program?

TH: There have been so many, but when we travel internationally, we typically visit at least one developing country, in fact many of those countries we visit that are considered “developed” are way behind our country in terms of development. It's an eye-opening experience for my LEAD Fellows to interact with the citizens of these countries, who don't have much and for us to see how happy they are. Material things really don't matter in the scheme of things. These experiences make the LEAD Fellows very grateful for what they and we do have here at home.

NSB: What role do you believe leadership plays in advocating for Nebraska agriculture?

TH: Today and in the future, leadership will be playing an even more important role in advocating for our industry. The challenges facing our world are food, water, climate change, population, energy, and human health and are all closely related to agriculture. Our industry can and must LEAD the way. Nebraska agriculture must prepare leaders with a strong knowledge base, relevant exposures and experiences, and important leadership and social skills necessary to respond to these major challenges. This is exactly what the Nebraska LEAD Program is designed to do.

NSB: What do you see as the most pressing leadership challenge facing the agricultural sector?

TH: In the next 5-10 years, our industry will see an increase in the number of those retiring from production and agribusiness careers. This means that there will be numerous leadership opportunities available. It is so very important that we prepare the next generation to step into these leadership roles. The next generation cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. They need to become active in their respective grower associations and commodity boards at the grassroots, state, and national levels. They need to begin preparing themselves for positions of leadership and that is why they need to participate in the Nebraska LEAD Program.

NSB: What are some good examples of agricultural leadership in Nebraska, and what roles can one partake in to utilize their certain skills?

TH: First, Nebraska agriculture has great leadership! Just look at our grower associations, commodity boards, NRD boards, school boards, etc. I see so many of our LEAD graduates who have stepped up and have utilized or are currently putting their LEAD experiences to work. However, there is still a demand for leadership at all levels. There is truly something for everyone, so I suggest that one does a deep dive within themselves, determine what they are passionate about, then pursue a leadership role within an organization that matches up with their passion.

NSB: As you approach retirement later this year, what advice would you give to future leaders entering the agricultural industry?

TH: Get involved in your industry. It's much more than growing or raising; it's about becoming an advocate. Become informed about public policy, trade policy, rules, and regulations. Get to know your customer, both here and abroad. Become a transformational servant leader for your

industry, for our state, for our country. William Penn once said, "Right is right, even if everyone is against it, and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it." I would like to twist it a little and share that "Wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it, and right is right even if you are the only one doing it." Know what you stand for. It's much more than doing things right, as a leader you must always do the right thing.

NSB: Is there anything else you would like to add?

TH: I've had a great ride and I have loved every minute of it. The past 44 years have flown by! I've had so much support and assistance along the way, so many have touched my life and made it so much better. I have been blessed to have my wife, Pam supporting for 40 of those years. Much appreciation to the Nebraska Soybean Board for your support during my entire career. I may be riding off into the sunset on June 30, 2024, but rest assured that I am getting ready for the next big challenge. Thank you and LEAD on!

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When you use Farmers for Soil Health, you get a clear picture of how cover crops work best for your acres.

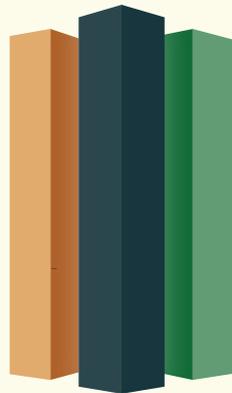
Get the full picture of where cover crops can take you at www.FarmersForSoilHealth.org



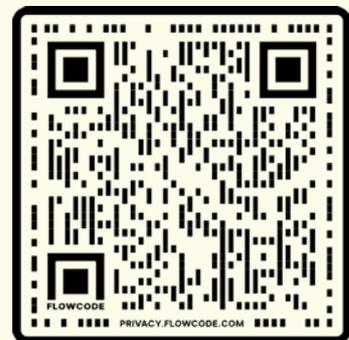
Make Moves with U.S. Soy

WISHH connects Trade, Development & Food Security in Cambodia where **fish account for 61% of households' animal protein** intake. We cultivate trade with Cambodian feed mills that are buying U.S. soybean meal for the growing aquaculture industry that WISHH is developing. Our trade and development work makes protein more available in the country where **45% of Cambodians live in moderate or severe food insecurity**.

Find out how WISHH's three pillars of trade, development and food security cultivate new markets for U.S. Soy protein.



Trade. Development. Food Security.



Mark Caspers, a longtime proponent of biodiesel, fuels up his tractor. (2012)



NAVIGATING ALL SEASONS WITH BIODIESEL



Nebraska’s Mark Caspers, a fourth-generation farmer and District Five Director for the Nebraska Soybean Board, has witnessed the evolution of soybean-based biodiesel production. This evolution has opened new opportunities for farmers and ranchers alike.

“Biodiesel has put money back into farmers’ pockets,” Caspers says.

Biodiesel, a cleaner-burning, renewable, and sustainable fuel, is transforming the alternative fuel industry and reshaping agriculture. The global appeal of this green fuel has surged, largely due to research and promotion by the soybean checkoff. This has led to an increased demand for soybeans and their oil, driving profits. In 2022, domestic biodiesel accounted for more than a quarter of all soybean oil use in the U.S. Lisa Pedderson, Director of Operations at MEG Corp, notes that biodiesel currently enhances the value of each soybean bushel by 13%. In addition, the majority of original equipment manufacturers that sell diesel vehicles and equipment in the U.S. support biodiesel blends up to 20% (B20).

Caspers adds that the benefits extend beyond soybean farmers. “Soybean oil was once the byproduct, now the soybean meal is. This shift has effectively decreased the cost of soybean meal for livestock producers as well,” he says. In 2022, that cost reduction amounted to about \$42 a ton, according to United Soybean Board data.

A long-term user of biodiesel, Caspers has been utilizing the fuel on his farm for nearly two decades, reporting only positive experiences. He initially used a five percent blend, but soon transitioned to B20 (20 percent biodiesel). He prizes the sustainability and superior performance of biodiesel as a fuel.

“Biodiesel outperforms petroleum diesel in terms of lubricity, resulting in less engine wear over time,” he asserts.

Despite the lack of biodiesel mandates in Nebraska, Caspers sees no need for further reasons to support a product that is cultivated on his own land and benefits his industry.



This is an excellent product. It’s made from something we grow on our own farms, and it supports our industry and our livelihoods. As soybean farmers, we should be the biggest advocates of this product. Ask for it, and use it.

— MARK CASPERS



Mark Caspers and other NSB Directors explore the market for clean fuels, like biodiesel, in a trip to New York City. (2023)



Find more information and locations for biodiesel at biodieselNE.com.

Tips for Optimizing Winter Biodiesel Performance

Biodiesel boasts unique advantages over traditional petroleum-based diesel fuel in performance and sustainability. The U.S. Department of Energy Alternative Fuels Data Center states that even at levels as low as 2%, biodiesel can enhance fuel lubricity, helping to prevent premature engine wear. Moreover, increasing the use of U.S.-grown soybeans to fuel our transportation sector lessens our dependence on foreign energy sources, while improving our local environment.

However, like petroleum diesel fuel, biodiesel blends have limitations in the winter months. Fortunately, this can be addressed by using the right blend of biodiesel and petroleum diesel—along with following a few tips.

Diesel expert Lisa Pedderson from MEG Corp shares how to maximize the performance of diesel and biodiesel blends in colder weather. As a general guideline, remember: biodiesel blends up to B5 behave the same as No. 2 petroleum diesel and may be treated the same way with winter diesel additives and use of No.1 diesel. Blends between B6 and B20 will require additional winterization strategies.

If you have questions, encounter a fuel-related problem or need help troubleshooting the cause of filter plugging, call the helpline at **800-929-3437** or email info@megcorpnmn.com.



Keep Tanks Full

Prevent condensation, oxidation, and fuel degradation by keeping bulk fuel and equipment tanks as full as possible. Regardless of the season, refill your equipment tanks after use, especially if they won't be used for several weeks or months.

Check Your Filters

To accommodate the increased thickness of the fuel in winter, install a new 30-micron dispenser filter on a storage tank. Any fuel issue will be more noticeable in the winter when the fuel is thicker. Avoid using water-absorbing filters as they can become saturated with water and freeze at 32-degrees or below.

Remove Water

Fuel gelling at around 32F usually indicates the presence of water. Fuel doesn't gel at 32F, but water freezes at this temperature. Fuel with a higher water content will slow down and have difficulty passing through a filter, just like water-saturated filters will freeze. Before the onset of cold weather, visually check the tank for free water by obtaining a tank bottom sample. Check again in the spring.

Have a Winterization Plan

Don't rely on weather predictions. Your diesel fuel should be winterized for the worst conditions you might encounter and still need to operate. Collaborate with your fuel supplier to provide the blend of additives and No. 1 diesel that will ensure the operability your farm operation requires.



(YOU)

Who's the No. 1 protein source in chicken feed?
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All soybean farmers, including you, are really big in poultry and livestock feed. How? By pooling your resources through your soy checkoff. Learn how your soy checkoff is bringing tangible returns back to you and your operation at unitedsoybean.org/hopper.



Moving Soy Forward.
Moving You Forward.



UNVEILING ON-FARM RESEARCH RESULTS INSIGHTS



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE 2024 ON-FARM RESEARCH RESULTS UPDATE MEETINGS!

The Nebraska On-Farm Research Network is pleased to announce the On-Farm Research Results Update Meetings for 2024, providing Nebraska soybean farmers with current and reliable research-based insights.

WHY ATTEND?

Gaining access to cutting-edge, on-farm research results is pivotal for making informed decisions that can significantly impact the success on your operation. The meetings this year promise to deliver unparalleled insights and practical knowledge, offering a unique opportunity to stay ahead in an ever-evolving agricultural landscape.



DATES

FEB. 20, 2024
Eastern Nebraska
Research, Extension,
and Education Center
(ENREEC)

Mead

FEB. 21, 2024
Holiday Inn

Beatrice

FEB. 21, 2024
Knight Museum &
Sandhills Center
Alliance

FEB. 27, 2024
Holthus Convention
Center
York

FEB. 28, 2024
Buffalo County
Extension Office
Kearney

*Meetings commence at
9 a.m. local time. Check-in
and refreshments
will be available
30 minutes prior.*



Join us at the 2024 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!

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. Attendance is free of charge, but seats are limited, so act now to secure your spot!

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.



BELIEVE YOU CAN.

FOR WE LIVE BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT.

II CORINTHIANS 5:7