LINCOLN, Neb. (3/1/12) – The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) will help third graders across the state celebrate National Ag Week in a big way again this year. For the second consecutive year, the NSB will be distributing their “ABCs of Farming” coloring books and soy crayons to every third grader in the state.

National Ag Week will be celebrated from March 4-10 across the country. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture has chosen the theme of “Nebraska Agriculture: Feed My Family” for this year’s celebration. The goal of this year’s theme is to remind us all that Nebraska farmers and ranchers work hard to put an abundance of safe and affordable food on our tables, while maintaining the utmost care and respect for the land and animals.

The project, which began last year as a way to help Nebraska elementary students gain a better understanding of the state’s number one industry—agriculture, is a part of NSB’s educational initiative. NSB wants to increase ag education in order to provide students across the state with facts and information about the importance of agriculture to our state, and the coloring books and soy crayons are back by popular demand.

The coloring books are filled with facts about soybeans, livestock and farm facts from A-Z. Each page features a letter of the alphabet with a corresponding fact beginning with that letter. For example, “I is for Ice Cream that tastes great and is good for us. The fat and calcium in ice cream and other dairy products help our bodies and minds develop and stay strong.” Each student is also provided with a package of soy crayons to fill in their book.

Mrs. Schultze, a third-grade teacher at Osmond Elementary had this to say about NSB’s sponsorship of the coloring books and crayons for Ag Week, “We would like to thank you for sharing the coloring books and crayons with us! We were pleased to receive them. It fills us with pride, as many of our families are involved with Farming in Nebraska!”

Mrs. Bunner, a third-grade teacher at Bridgeport Elementary said, “Thanks so much for the awesome coloring books and soy crayons. We loved them!”

Lisa Lunz, Nebraska Soybean Board director from Wakefield and Research Committee chairman, thinks the ABCs of Farming project provides an excellent opportunity to educate children and their parents on the link between farmers and where their food comes from. “With the average consumer being two or three generations removed from the farm, it is more important than ever to help them make the connection that their food is coming from a farm or a ranch,” Lunz said. “This project has twofold benefits—it provides students with a fun educational tool to learn about Nebraska agriculture, and it helps farmers share their stories about the vitality of a strong agricultural industry by starting conversations about food.

The Nebraska Soybean Board encourages you to find ways that you can celebrate National Ag Week in your area. It can be as simple as thinking about where your food came from the next time you’re at the
grocery store, or simply taking the time to thank a Nebraska farmer or rancher for providing you with the safest, most abundant food supply in the world.

The nine-member Nebraska Soybean Board collects and disburses the Nebraska share of funds generated by the one half of one percent times the net sales price per bushel of soybeans sold. Nebraska soybean checkoff funds are invested in research, education, domestic and foreign markets, including new uses for soybeans and soybean products.

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