As spring planting is just around the corner, consider the following **Biodiesel Facts and Figures:**

- Biodiesel levels as low as one percent can provide up to a 65% increase in lubricity.
- Studies conducted by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Energy show that biodiesel can reduce life-cycle greenhouse gases by 78 percent, which helps fight global warming.
- For every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 5.4 units of energy are gained. This takes into account planting, harvesting, fuel production and fuel transportation to the end user.
- Biodiesel can be used in most exiting diesel engines in blends up to 20% with no change to the operating performance.
The only direction to look is up when Pioneer® brand Y Series soybeans are in your crop plans. They continue to elevate yield expectations with good reason. Developed with our exclusive Accelerated Yield Technology (AYT™) system, Y Series soybeans are delivering strong agronomic and defensive traits along with top-end yield potential. And Pioneer Premium Seed Treatment offers additional protection options to help maximize your returns. For Y-high yields, see your Pioneer sales professional about the right Y Series varieties for your acres. Or go to pioneer.com/soybeans
The Nebraska Soybean Board kicked off another year of its See for Yourself program this past fall. The See for Yourself program is designed to give Nebraska soybean farmers the opportunity to learn more about their checkoff. Farmers and industry leaders selected to take part in the program will have the opportunity to attend checkoff-sponsored activities in an attempt to gain a better understanding of how checkoff dollars are being invested to build demand and increase profitability.

Scott Haller, petroleum manager at Country Partner’s Coop, recently attended the National Biodiesel Conference in Orlando, Florida. Haller was one of three fuel managers who attended the conference in order to learn more about biodiesel. Haller said the trip definitely changed his perceptions of the soybean checkoff.

“Before the trip, I thought the checkoff was OK for the industry but didn’t really know to what extent it was used for. After going, I learned that it is a major necessity for the soybean industry to compete globally and promote great uses like biodiesel.”

Haller also said that he definitely benefited from taking part in the See for Yourself program.

“It was a great opportunity to make connections and meet the leaders of the industry. It was also very valuable to be able to learn the history of the industry, the challenges it faces and what needs to happen in the future to grow the use of soy biodiesel. I would definitely recommend taking part in the program; it was well worth my time!”

The Nebraska Soybean Board is committed to increasing the profitability of your soybeans and wants to give you the opportunity to gain a better understanding of checkoff activities. To get involved or learn more about the program, please contact the Nebraska Soybean Board office at 402-441-3240. Thank you for your support of the Nebraska Soybean Board and this exciting program, and we hope to see you at our next event!
Another planting season is quickly approaching. Soon we will be dusting off the planters, and tractors will slowly begin to rumble back into the field to get another year’s crop into the ground.

As we look forward to the bright future of soybean production and processing, I think it’s important to look back on where we started.

This past December, the national soybean checkoff celebrated its 20th anniversary in St. Louis. The United Soybean Board and Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) have played a part in many achievements in the soybean industry over the past 20 years. Two specific examples that come to mind are the successes of the biodiesel and bio-based products industries.

Through checkoff investments and allied partners, the biodiesel industry reached a record-setting level of production in 2011. With over one billion gallons of biodiesel produced, the industry was able to easily surpass projections while supporting over 39,000 jobs. That’s coming a long way from the two million gallons produced in 2000.

I recently attended the National Biodiesel Conference in Orlando and was happy to see the biodiesel industry’s excitement and upbeat attitude after the record production of 2011. The industry is also looking forward to another big year in 2012 with the help of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) 2. I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that if you are not currently using biodiesel, make sure to ask your fuel supplier to have it added into your diesel fuel.

Recently, the bio-based products industry has also seen a large increase. Soybeans have found their way into thousands of bio-based products today. From seat foam in automobiles and furniture, to printer toner and skin care products, choosing bio-based alternatives is a better choice for the environment, while also supporting Nebraska’s farmers and the local economy. Both John Deere and Case IH have stepped up their commitment to agriculture by incorporating bioplastics on their combines and tractors.

I also had the pleasure of helping work NSB’s booth at the Home & Garden Show in Lincoln. It featured a 40’x 20’ room in a mock-house that displayed bio-based products. The show saw nearly 16,000 attendees over the four days. Whether it was the soy carpet backing, the soy foam in the furniture or the soy paints and stains, attendees were generally surprised and excited by the amount of bio-based products they can now incorporate into their homes.

Finding new uses for our soybean meal and oil has been, and will continue to be, a priority of the soybean checkoff. As you can see, the future is definitely bright for soybeans and soybean farmers.

Wishing you a safe and successful planting season,

Greg
One thing to be certain of—“uncertainty”

— by Geoffrey T. Ruth, Rising City, NSA President

As I transition over to president of the Nebraska Soybean Association, there is one thing to be certain of—“uncertainty.” We begin 2012 not knowing what the year holds. Yes, we know market volatility will be at all-time highs, weather will be unpredictable, and that farm policy will be hard to come by in an election year. However, there is one other known certainty, the Nebraska Soybean Association will be monitoring and influencing agricultural policy all the way from the farm to the Capitol on behalf of Nebraska’s soybean growers. I would like to take a moment and look down the road at what faces your association this year.

At the state level, we will be monitoring and weighing in on numerous bills before the unicameral this 60 day session. There will be opportunities to work on legislation to lower property taxes, a reduction in the inheritance tax, as well as exempting soil sampling and placement of soil moisture probes from the Diggers Hotline (One-Call) Requirement.

Nationally, we have a steep hill to climb. 2012 is supposed to be the year we get a new farm bill. ASA has been very active in submitting ideas that would create a strong safety net for soybean growers. We will also be working very hard to renew the Biodiesel tax credit, as well as submitting comments as to where the biodiesel levels should be within the Renewable Fuels Standard. With fellow Nebraskan Steve Wellman acting as ASA President I think we can all feel confident that ASA will be well positioned on any issue that arises on the national scene.

Finally, NSA and ASA have worked hard to make sure that the EPA and USDA understand the concerns soybean producers have with regulations that affect our business and our families. Child labor laws, pesticide permitting, and fuel containment requirements continue to be front and center issues that NSA and ASA address on a continual basis.

We appreciate your involvement in the Nebraska Soybean Association and want to encourage you to make your stories and voices heard. I would like to say how excited and honored I am to serve as your president in 2012.
Nebraska Soybean Board

Call for Candidates in Districts 1, 3 and 6

There are three district seats on the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) eligible for election this year. Soybean producers in Districts 1, 3 and 6 are invited to run for election to the Nebraska Soybean Board by filing a candidacy petition by the April 15, 2012 deadline. The election of board members will be conducted via direct-mail ballots and candidate information will be provided to all producers residing within the district in which an election is to be held.

NSB Board Members receive no salary but are reimbursed for expenses incurred while carrying out Board business and will serve a three-year term that begins October 1, 2012.

District seats open 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 Fillmore, Jefferson, Gage, Saline, Seward and Thayer.

Candidates for the NSB seats must be:

- A Resident of Nebraska
- 21 years of age or older
- Soybean producer in Nebraska for at least five previous years

Prospective candidates must collect the signatures of 50 soybean producers in their district using an official Nebraska Soybean Board Candidacy Petition and return such petition to the Nebraska Soybean Board office on or before April 15, 2012, to be eligible for placement on the ballot. To obtain a candidacy petition, contact Victor Bohuslavsky at the Nebraska Soybean Board by calling 402-432-5720.

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.

The ABCs of Farming Coloring Book once again found its way into third grade classrooms throughout Nebraska. This was the second year that soybean checkoff funding provided third grade students and their teachers The ABCs of Farming Coloring Book and soy crayons.

The coloring books and soy crayons are one way for the Nebraska soybean producers to thank teachers for their involvement in agriculture education. These educational materials were sent at the end of February, as a way to Celebrate AG Week in Nebraska, the week of March 4-10. Agriculture is the largest industry in the state, and one in every three jobs can be tied to agriculture in Nebraska. The coloring books feature facts about agriculture and provide educational opportunities for third grade classrooms. They are a fun way to help students learn about the vital role that agriculture plays in their everyday lives.
In 2011, Nebraska soybean farmers produced a total of 258,405,000 bushels of soybeans. Success in today’s market takes more than just a good harvest; increasing demand for Nebraska’s soybeans is an essential part of helping to make soybean production profitable. The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) is led by a nine-member volunteer board of farmer-leaders acting on behalf of Nebraska soybean farmers. These farmer-leaders help facilitate a strong future for Nebraska’s soybean market growth. Checkoff funds are invested in Promotion/International Marketing, Research, Communication/Production, and Domestic Marketing. These investments help expand, develop, and increase markets for Nebraska Soybeans and are an important part soybean farmers success.

FUNDING and EXPENDITURES

TOTAL FUNDING
Checkoff Assessments ........................................ $ 7,145,295
Interest ................................................................. 59,247
Miscellaneous ....................................................... 64,567
Total Revenues .................................................... $ 7,269,109

TOTAL EXPENDITURES
Promotion/International ........................................ $ 1,089,187
Research ................................................................. 1,271,975
Communication/Production .................................. 1,732,570
Domestic Marketing .............................................. 2,023,039
Administrative ....................................................... 278,486
Total Expenses ................................................... $ 6,395,257

Guided by Farmers – Driven by Results
The Nebraska Soybean Board is taking a proactive role in educating future diesel mechanics about biodiesel. Diesel fuel has changed over the last 10 years with the transition to Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) and introduction of biodiesel occurring simultaneously. Many have attributed some of the challenges associated with ULSD to the use of the biodiesel. The Nebraska Soybean Board has utilized MEG Corp fuel experts to conduct educational workshops for diesel mechanic students at Nebraska technical and community colleges since 2008, with the intention of presenting the correct information about diesel and biodiesel. Diesel mechanics are an important audience for biodiesel education since they have influence over their customers and are in the position to spread information. The Nebraska Soybean Board wants to make sure it is the correct information.

Since 2008, hundreds of students at Central Community College in Hastings, Metropolitan Community College in Omaha, Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte, Northeast Community College in Norfolk and Southeast Community College in Milford have learned about the history of diesel and biodiesel. The workshops help students understand that biodiesel is an important part of U.S. energy independence when they see increasing production levels, improvements to biodiesel quality and the increase in state incentives that are put in place to encourage biodiesel use. Technical information is presented in a way that students can understand why biodiesel is compatible with petroleum diesel. Students learn how diesel has changed in the last 10 years and how biodiesel fits into our national fuel supply chain. Most importantly, workshops cover common fuel-related issues so future mechanics can detect and offer advice to prevent fuel-related problems. The goal is to have students hear the information twice, once as first-year students and again as second-year students.

This program should have the students fully prepared to enter the workforce with the knowledge to accurately diagnose filter plugging issues, give recommendations to customers about proper handling and use practices and advance the image of biodiesel by providing the correct information about biodiesel to co-workers and customers. Luke Klingbeil, an instructor with the Diesel Technology program at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha, says that the training provided by MEG Corp “brings the latest information to the students and instructors.” Klingbeil also said that Hoon Ge, chemical engineer from MEG Corp, “is so knowledgeable on the subject and presents the information with humor to keep the students engaged.” The program is beneficial to students and instructors alike.
The onset of warmer temperatures and snow melt means that planting season is right around the corner, and you are all excited to get out there. Take a few moments to perform some routine maintenance of your fuel tanks, equipment and filters to make sure you don’t have any future down time. Spring is also a great time to begin using B20. Biodiesel can be used in most existing diesel engines and fuel injection equipment in blends up to 20 percent with no change in performance. Biodiesel adds much needed lubricity to today’s Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel, protecting wear and tear on engine parts. With current diesel and biodiesel prices, you should be able to purchase B20 from your fuel distributor comparable to the cost of straight No. 2 diesel.

Regardless of whether or not you use biodiesel, routine maintenance is the key to avoiding fuel related problems. Take a few moments to run through the following checklist.

**Routine Maintenance Tips for Your Fuel Equipment**

- It is best to check for water and sediment in tanks PRIOR to fuel delivery. Remove any free water, otherwise it will get stirred up into your fresh fuel.
- Check all hoses, caps, gaskets and vents for leaks. Make sure everything is in proper working order.
- Install a dispenser filter on a storage tank. You want to capture any contaminants with a dispenser filter to keep them from getting into the vehicle tanks.
- If you have a dispenser filter, check it and change if necessary. Better yet, change it before every planting season and again before every harvest. Make it part of your routine.
- Check vehicle fuel filters and change if necessary. Follow OEM specifications.
- Check vehicle fuel caps to make sure they are secured tightly.
- If you have a water separator, monitor and drain if it contains water.
- Fill your vehicle and storage tanks with fuel after the planting season is over. If you keep fuel tanks full, it reduces the amount of air in the tank. Air is the number one source for water in fuel tanks and can also lead to oxidation and degradation of fuel.

Work closely with your fuel distributor to ensure that you are receiving a quality product and to minimize potential fuel problems. If using biodiesel, ask your supplier if the fuel meets ASTM specifications. You can’t control the weather, but if you follow these tips you can make sure what’s keeping you from hitting the fields isn’t your fuel.
New Yorkers will soon see their heating oil evolve, thanks in part to Nebraska soybean farmers. That evolution will lead to even greater demand for soybean oil throughout New York City. Representatives from the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) and other soybean checkoff boards recently visited New York to learn more about the soybean oil market within the nation’s largest metropolitan area.

Beginning in October, all Big Apple residents will make the switch from their petroleum-based heating source to Bioheat®, a renewable heating oil made by blending biodiesel and home heating oil. A city law requires that all heating oil used in New York City contain at least 2 percent biodiesel, or a B2 blend of Bioheat. The entire home heating oil market holds huge potential for biodiesel, as well as the soybean oil that can be used to produce it.

NSB took the initial steps to invest in growing the Bioheat market throughout the Northeast. The board continues to partner with the industry today.

“We weren’t sure what the market held when we first invested in Bioheat,” says Loyd Pointer, soybean farmer from Sargent, Neb. “We had to find another use for our soybean oil because it was starting to drag our price.” Heating oil marketers have embraced biofuels as part of their industry’s future and to help protect their market from natural gas. They helped bring the 2 percent requirement in New York City to fruition, and many already offer Bioheat to residential customers.

Oilheat industry research shows that their customers share farmer’s desires for freedom from foreign oil and to help embrace biofuels where they can be implemented. The heating oil industry also set an aggressive goal to completely replace petroleum-based heating oil with a B100 blend of Bioheat by 2050. The industry notes its favorable opinion of soy biodiesel because of its consistent quality and cold-flow properties.

“New York is such a big city,” adds Pointer. “They see biodiesel and Bioheat as a way to clean up their exhaust and make their city even greener.” Just as biodiesel requires no engine modifications, conventional oil-burning furnaces can run Bioheat blends up to 20 percent. So New Yorkers can embrace the evolution without changing their existing habits or equipment. In fact, some marketers jumped ahead of the requirement and already provide their customers with Bioheat blends.

The nation’s largest city also uses Bioheat throughout its municipal operations. The parks department uses B20 Bioheat to heat buildings throughout its grounds. It fills 186 fuel oil tanks each day and has operated with Bioheat year-round for more than two years. With more than 8.5 million homes in the United States using home heating oil, New York’s Bioheat requirement will set the pace for the rest of the country to adopt the renewable, clean-burning fuel.
Come to our House and Browse Around.

You’re invited to snoop around our interactive house on nebraskasoybeans.org to see what you can find.

HERE’S A HINT: You’ll find a lot of products we all use everyday around the house to polish, clean, paint, decorate, and much more.

You’ll learn that these products can be made from Nebraska-grown soybeans!

AMAZING EXAMPLE: If every household in America replaced one box of laundry detergent with a soy-based alternative, we’d cut oil-dependency by 96,000 barrels a year – enough to heat and cool over 5,000 homes.

So visit our interactive house at nebraskasoybeans.org by clicking on the bio-based products tab to learn how you can be part of this earth-friendly solution.

(our address is nebraskasoybeans.org)
INVESTING CHECKOFF DOLLARS

Biodiesel Turns Heads in the Big Apple – by Jenna Higgins Rose

New York, N.Y. As the saying goes, if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere. To the delight of the biodiesel industry and all its champions, biodiesel has made it there – big time.

In December, a group of farmer leaders visited New York City, which some consider to be a jewel among biodiesel success stories. The National Biodiesel Board hosted about 20 farmers representing QSSBs and the United Soybean Board, as well as staff members, on a biodiesel and Bioheat® tour of the city. Nebraska soybean producers Greg Anderson, Terry Horky, Norm Husa, Mike Korth, Ed Lammers, Loyd Pointer and staff members, Andy Chvatal and Drew Guiney, were among them, on behalf of the Nebraska Soybean Board.

“New York City is a major financial center and sets the price for much of the energy that is used in the U.S. and the world,” said Director of Development for the National Biodiesel Board, Tom Verry. “High volumes of biodiesel are used there, too, which makes it the perfect place to show soybean farmers how their long-term vision for biodiesel and Bioheat has become a reality.”

The group’s agenda included a Bioheat workshop in the New York Mercantile Exchange building. The group also toured JFK International Airport, getting an up-close look at how the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is using biodiesel in airport operations and beyond. The chief fleet manager for the City of New York also addressed the group about its highly visible use of biodiesel and Bioheat citywide.

Steven Levy of Sprague Energy, a leading biodiesel supplier in the area, says the city agencies use about 11 million gallons of biodiesel blends a year, ranging from 5 – 50 percent biodiesel (B5 – B50).

“It was a pleasure to help the agricultural community experience firsthand the use of biodiesel and Bioheat in the City of New York and surrounding areas, as a direct result of their efforts,” said Levy, who helped organize the event. Levy is chairman of NBB’s Marketing Committee.

Terry Horky, a farmer representing the Nebraska Soybean Board, said the enthusiasm for biodiesel in the region is quite striking.

“New York City has made a remarkable commitment to biodiesel, and I see no change for the future. This will be a huge market for years to come,” he said.

NYPD Blue/NYC Green

New York City runs the most famous city fleet in the world. You can’t turn on primetime television without seeing the New York Police Department (NYPD) or New York Fire Department vehicles in action. In any toy store, you will see toy vehicles from the NYC municipal fleet holding their own in the race to reach consumers’ wallets.

In this prominent fleet, more than 4,300 city diesel vehicles run on biodiesel blends.

Keith Kerman is a long-time biodiesel champion. He started out in the Parks Department and was recently promoted to Chief Fleet Officer for New York City, which will undoubtedly result in even more biodiesel usage. He spoke to the visiting farmers about the city’s biodiesel program the only way New Yorkers know how – with passion and conviction.

“Biodiesel is – and will be – a big part of what we do in the city to reduce greenhouse gases,” Kerman said. “In fact, there is nothing I see in the next few years that will move the needle more than biodiesel on the transportation side.”

The statistics are impressive. The City:

• Manages 27,000 vehicles, the largest city fleet in the nation
• Procures 75 million gallons of fuel a year
• Has 9,271 vehicles that use alternative energy, including biodiesel, natural gas, electrics and hybrids

The vehicles that run on biodiesel include the city’s sanitation trucks, which serve as snow plows during harsh winter months. Kerman also noted that the Department of Parks and Recreation has more than 800 vehicles and equipment that run on B20 year-round. Other agencies use B5, but Kerman says they will be “upping their blends in 2012.”

“Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s goal is to decrease greenhouse gases in the city by 30 percent, and biodiesel offers major potential for GHG reductions,” Kerman said. “We’re also partial to biodiesel for the domestic argument – it creates jobs and reduces dependence on foreign oil.”

Kerman serves as a Biodiesel Ambassador, a volunteer outreach program run by NBB.

“We are proud to be a high-profile, early adopter of biodiesel,” Kerman notes of the famous city.

Indeed, his efforts to spread the biodiesel word are likely to have a serious impact on others in the Northeast, and nationwide, for years to come.

Biodiesel now makes up almost a quarter of all city heating oil and the fleet’s diesel fuel, but they aren’t stopping there and plan to expand the program in 2012.

Brooklyn: A biodiesel mega-metropolis?

You might expect the nation’s largest biodiesel plant to reside in the Midwest, but not so. When it’s complete, the METRO Energy facility in Brooklyn will hold that honor, with a staggering 110 million gallon annual capacity.

Gene V. Pullo, President of METRO Terminals, gave farmer leaders a tour of the state-of-the-art facility. But what enthralled them the most seemed to be the whole-hearted commitment from Pullo and his brother, Paul.

When asked what drives his passion for biodiesel, Gene Pullo’s answer left the group of about 40 visitors uncharacteristically quiet.

“My grandmother was one in a family of 12, and they were in the coal business,” he said. “As a businesswoman, she moved away from coal to oilheat, recognizing it as cleaner, and seeing it as the fuel of the future. She turned out to be right, at the time.

Representing the Nebraska Soybean Board – Terry Horky, Sargent, NE.
“My brother and I share that vision and complete that vision with biodiesel. We think she would be proud.”

Greg Anderson attended on behalf of the Nebraska Soybean Board. Anderson said hearing the story of the Pullo brothers’ journey from oilheat distributors to building the largest biodiesel plant in the country was quite remarkable.

“They have invested their own livelihoods in this plant, and their passion and commitment is energizing,” Anderson said. “Even though they are thousands of miles away from the soybean heartland, they said very clearly that they need farmers.”

Naturally, the plant will use an abundant resource from the restaurant haven — used cooking oil — but that will only go so far. METRO plans on using a significant amount of soybean oil in its multi-feedstock plant.

“We were honored to host the National Biodiesel Board, United Soybean Board, and soybean farmers,” Pullo said. “We share a common goal of using renewable, sustainable products for biofuels, and are proud to help them see the results of their hard work and dedication.”

Asked by Nebraska’s National Biodiesel Board representative, Greg Anderson, what the year ahead holds for METRO with the expiration of the federal tax incentive, Pullo said they are firm believers.

“We have confidence in biodiesel’s future because the market is more mature today,” he said. “The federal RFS-2 is in place, as well as state policies, and New York City’s Bioheat requirement begins in 2012. Those things help stabilize the market and send signals of confidence.”

The Green Zone:
At JFK International, failure is not an option

For many people on the Big Apple tour, the highlight was visiting JFK International Airport — and not for the trip home. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey hosted the group at the airport, which is one of their most vital charges. All of the diesel vehicles there run on B20.

“Our group had a blast checking out the heavy duty vehicles running on B20 at JFK,” Verry said. “Farmers were comparing their tractors back home with the super duty snow movers at JFK. I think it brought out the kid in all of us.”

Yet the work of the Port Authority is anything but child’s play. Its mission is, quite simply, to keep the region moving. It builds, operates and maintains infrastructure critical to the New York/New Jersey region’s trade and transportation network. These facilities include America’s busiest airport system, marine terminals and ports, the PATH rail transit system, six tunnels and bridges between New York and New Jersey, the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan and the World Trade Center.

In a pioneering move for a public agency, the Port Authority is committed to reducing emissions from operations by 80 percent by 2050 (from 2006 levels). To achieve this goal, they must reduce greenhouse gas emissions 5 percent a year through 2050.

The majority of the Port Authority’s vehicle fleet is green, powered by hybrid-electric, plug-in electric, compressed natural gas (CNG) or E-85 ethanol. All of their diesel vehicles use B20 biodiesel. Biodiesel is now available at all in-house fueling facilities.

Loyd Pointer, a farmer-leader with the United Soybean Board representing Nebraska, said he was struck by how the Port Authority has embraced B20 — with no excuses.

“The airport routinely deals with snow emergencies where they have to keep the runways clear,” Pointer said. “I sometimes hear complaints in Nebraska about winter use of B20, and the misconception that you shouldn’t use it in winter. Now I can point those people to a place where failure REALLY is not an option. If they can use it successfully there, anyone can.”

Jenna Higgins Rose is an independent communications contractor and attended the New York City event on behalf of the National Biodiesel Board. She served as NRB’s Director of Communications for almost 10 years.

Spring 2012

Spring Planting in Nebraska

Spring planting is just around the corner, as Nebraska Farmers prepare their fuel tanks they might consider the following Biodiesel Facts and Figures, good reasons for using a soy biodiesel additive of B-5 or higher for their planting needs.

Biodiesel Facts and Figures

- Biodiesel is registered as a fuel and fuel additive with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Studies conducted by the U.S. departments of Agriculture and Energy show that biodiesel can reduce life-cycle greenhouse gases by 78 percent, which helps fight global warming.
- For every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 5.4 units of energy are gained. This takes into account planting, harvesting, fuel production and fuel transportation to the end user.
- A National Biodiesel Board study shows that the U.S. biodiesel industry creates green-collar jobs and offers positive contributions to our economy. In 2009, these contributions included:
  - 23,000 jobs in all sectors of the U.S. economy
  - $4.1 billion added to the nation’s gross domestic product
  - $445 million of tax revenue added to the federal treasury and $383 million to state and local governments.

To find the nearest soy biodiesel distributors in your area go to www.nebraskasoybeans.org click on Industry Links, click on Nebraska Biodiesel Distributors.
The Nebraska Soybean Board’s “Bean Team” is entering its 15th year of soyfoods promotions across the state of Nebraska. The Bean Team, which features a trained group of college students, provides consumers with information about the many health benefits of adding soy to their diets.

The program, which began in 1997 as a grassroots marketing effort, is designed to increase soyfood awareness and utilization at the retail level through live demonstrations featuring delicious soyfood samples and recipes.

Soyfoods are an important part of a healthy diet and fit well into the USDA’s new MyPlate guidelines. Most soyfoods contain no cholesterol, little or no saturated fat, high quality protein and dietary fiber. Many soyfoods also provide essential vitamins and minerals; including vitamins A, B and D, calcium, iron and potassium.

The Executive Director of the Nebraska Soybean Board, Victor Bohuslavsky, says that he has definitely seen a change in attitudes regarding soyfoods.

“Over the last fourteen years we have seen many changes in the consumer attitudes toward soyfoods, as well as their buying habits. We have seen these changes in grocer attitudes as well. There are more products now available within mainstream grocery outlets than we ever would have imagined back in 1997. At that time we were working with stores to make sure that they had tofu on their shelves. Now we have complete sections of soy products proudly displayed in stores.”

The Bean Team kicked off the 2012 program in early January with events scheduled in three of the priority consumer markets – Grand Island, Lincoln and Omaha.

The Bean Team will also be featured in community events in Grand Island, Hastings, Lincoln and Omaha.

This year, the Bean Team will conduct 72 in-store demonstrations and participate in over 10 community events. Events provide the Bean Team the opportunity to reach large groups of interested consumers at one time. Based on estimates from Bean Team summaries, the 2011 Consumer Linkage Program reached nearly 20,000 consumers in Nebraska communities over the three-and-one half month program – a number we would like to see increase in 2012.

For more information on the Bean Team, and for a list of events they will be attending, please visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/beanteam.

You can also find tasty, easy soyfoods recipes at: www.nebraskasoybeans.org/soyfoods/recipes or visit our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/NESoybeanBoard

The Nebraska Soybean Board’s Bean Team Celebrates 15 Years of Reaching Consumers

– by Drew Guiney
More than seven billion people inhabit planet Earth, and about two billion more will join within 40 years, according to the United Nations Population Division. While many decision makers express concern about sustaining the population, often they forget to ask an important question: Are U.S. farmers ready to produce the food needed to feed the growing population?

The United Soybean Board (USB) and soybean checkoff has responded with a resounding ‘yes,’ by funding soybean production research designed to help U.S. farmers grow as much as possible with as few resources needed.

“Soybean farmers must stay in tune with what is going on in the United States in order to stay ahead of any problems, such as the growing population,” said Mike Thede, a soybean farmer from Palmer, Nebraska, and USB director. “Finding ways to figure out how to get everything out of our soybeans in order to have the best yield is crucial for success.”

In order to stay ahead of the curve, much of the research USB funds focuses on creating new U.S. soybean varieties more resistant to the pressures from pests and diseases that decrease yield.

“Every year, we do a major production research project in each region that allows us to figure out the No. 1 yield robber,” says Thede. “Whether it is finding out how to resist pests, like aphids, stink bugs or soybean cyst nematodes, or determining drought tolerance, checkoff-funded research is intended to locate the problem, and then is shared with farmers across the United States.”

To help get this research into farmers’ hands, USB has established a program to help state soybean checkoff boards, land-grant universities and local extension service staff share checkoff-funded research results with those who need it most. To date, twelve states participate in the program.

“But informing U.S. soybean farmers is only one part of the equation. Making sure consumers are informed about the process is important too,” says Thede.
Freedom to Operate Forum Creates a Buzz

— by Andy Chvatal

Freedom to operate. Freedom to farm. Freedom to vaccinate a sick calf. Freedom to irrigate crops. Farmers have freedoms, some of them sound blatantly obvious. But how quickly can those freedoms disappear? On January 24th, a group of 35 industry representatives met at UNL’s ARDC near Ithaca, NE. The topic at hand - Freedom to Operate.

The purpose of the day was three-fold: identify local issues, identify target audiences and formulate messaging so that farmers can communicate their concerns on those issues to the identified targeted audiences. A presentation was given by Dr. David Ash, who also moderated the discussion throughout the day.

The Issues

The large group of representatives broke up into smaller working groups and came up with their own sets of issues. What started out as a list of 24 issues, was cut in half, then cut in half again. After a few hours, a list was finally reduced down to these six important issues:

1. Water – Nearly half of the cropland uses irrigation from more than 92,000 registered irrigation wells throughout Nebraska. Farmers need to stay abreast of the current water regulations and keep the public up-to-date on the measures being taken to maintain sustainable water practices. Other water topics discussed: water availability, water regulations, irrigation and run-off.

2. Animal Agriculture – Foremost, Nebraska soybean farmers need to recognize that being a strong advocate for a healthy livestock industry is of vital importance. Animal care is a top priority for Nebraska livestock producers, and it is the key to addressing the numerous groups that are putting out negative messages about farmers and animal welfare issues. Our farmers know that a healthy animal equals a productive animal, and a productive animal benefits everyone. Other animal topics discussed: too high of regulation, nutritional benefits of meat continue to increase, and the livestock industry being a crucial market for soybean farmers.

3. Food Integrity – Sustainability. Thus far, word of the 21st century. Today’s farmers efficiently produce an abundant supply of safe and nutritious food using fewer natural resources than ever before. Most Americans are disconnected from agriculture and lack the knowledge of where their food actually comes from. All consumers aren’t farmers, but all farmers are consumers. Communication needs to be a two-way street. When a consumer asks about sustainable production practices, the farmer needs to tell his story, break the communication barrier and build trust.

4. Misconceptions – Roughly 17% of Americans live in rural areas. The scary stat is that this means 83% of Americans don’t live in rural areas, so the perception of farming is quite
skewed. We’re in “emotional” times. All it takes is one emotional press release, one emotional magazine article or one emotional pet commercial to sway an opinion. With our voting population, it doesn’t take very long for a 30 second commercial to unravel 25+ years of improved farming practices.

5. Government Regulations – The larger sector of society spins a web of government regulations and social mandates in an effort to control what it does not understand. Nebraska farmers need to get out of their defensive stance and take a proactive approach and engage in a dialogue with others about their values and priorities. Also, if we do have a large government influence, then there needs to be more government accountability, especially when government reports have such a large influence on commodity pricing and farmer profitability.

6. Volatility – Lastly, we come to the issue of volatility. Farming is a risk/reward occupation. You risk your inputs with hope to enjoy the rewards of your outputs. Currently, the profit cycle is in a good position for Nebraska farmers. However, it’s important for farmers to implement sustainable practices for future generations. The population is growing by 200,000+ daily, and it will be absolutely necessary to create more food from less land in the coming years.

The Audiences

Each of the previous issues has specific targeted audiences and many of the issues overlap one another. For example, animal agriculture is a big misconception with selective audiences and water use will continue to be heavily regulated by government. Audiences listed for the previous issues are: general consumers, the media, Nebraska farmers, the University of Nebraska, and state policy makers. In the coming month, we’ll be conducting surveys and developing talking points so that we can equip Nebraska farmers with the facts. The audiences you should help get these facts to will also be tied in with the talking points.

In the meantime, what can you do? Get involved, because every voice matters. Think this doesn’t apply to us good-hearted mid-westerners? In the time that has lapsed between the Freedom to Operate discussion and the writing of this article (22 days), Hormel has begun plans to phase out gestation crates in their hog production facilities, and McDonald’s has teamed up with the Humane Society of the United States at looking deeper into the possibility of purchasing their pork sausage, bacon and Canadian bacon from producers who do not use gestation crates. This is a reality check and a sign of the times. Once again, look to get involved. Attend your local commodity meetings. Don’t wait for others to raise their voice, raise your own voice. Ask your local extension office for a list of meetings and events. And feel free to contact your district’s soybean director with any questions or concerns.
Five of Nebraska’s volunteer farm women traveled to Charleston, S.C. in early February to attend the national CommonGround Shared Voices Conference. The three-day conference was created in order to bring volunteers together to discuss activities in their respective states. Sessions were geared toward learning how to reach more consumers with the truth about farming and food.

The CommonGround movement started over a year ago as a partnership between the United Soybean Board (USB) and National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). The movement started as a pilot program set up in the five original states of Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska and South Dakota. Since then, 10 states have been added including Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina.

The three-day conference, which began on Thursday, February 2 and concluded on Saturday, February 4, included sessions on collaboration between states, guest speakers, media training and social media. Five volunteers from Nebraska joined the 27 other registered participants at the conference. Nebraska volunteers included Shana Beattie, Sumner; Diane Becker, Madison; Leslie Boswell, Shickley; Joan Ruskamp, Dodge; and Linda Schwarz, Bertrand.

Diane Becker, who farms corn and soybeans with her husband near Madison, says she is always excited to share her experiences with other CommonGround volunteers. “It’s exciting to see everyone. There are so many amazing women in this program, and I love listening to their stories and what they do on their farms. By bringing volunteers together from a variety of states, we are able to learn about types of farming not native to our respective areas as well as brainstorm new ways to reach consumers and address their concerns more fully.”

Joan Ruskamp, who owns and operates a feedlot with her husband near Dodge, says she was also excited for the conference. “The conference is a great resource for us because it provides an opportunity to come together and talk about the issues that consumers are bringing to us about food and how it’s produced. By pooling our knowledge, we can do a much better job of answering their questions.”

Ruskamp said that she is often asked about animal care practices, including why they give their livestock implants. “It’s not about pumping up their muscles so they can look like Mr. Universe,” she said. “We do it so we can increase feed efficiency. By using implants, we are able to produce the same amount of meat using fewer resources. Once we explain that, it’s easier for them to understand why we do what we do.”

At the end of the day, although they may live and work on opposite sides of the spectrum, farm women and urban women share the same concerns about how they feed their families. CommonGround volunteers are passionate about agriculture and want consumers to understand how American farmers and ranchers work to provide a safe, abundant, affordable food supply and are dedicated to ensuring the best conservation and care for our land and animals.

For more information about CommonGround, please visit the newly redesigned CommonGround national website, which is designed to answer consumers’ questions about food at www.findourcommonground.com.

For more information about CommonGround Nebraska volunteers, please visit www.commongroundnebraska.com.
Eight Nebraska producers gathered in Omaha last week to take part in the first See For Yourself educational mission to Washington D.C., hosted by the Nebraska Soybean Association and funded in part by the Nebraska Soybean Board. With the added challenge to produce more food on less land while sustaining natural resources, farmers are facing increased potential regulations, including the upcoming 2012 Farm Bill. It’s more important than ever for farmers to become educated on the potential impacts of regulation. From the get-go, the participants realized just how important their trip out to Washington D.C. was, and how education is the first step to understanding farm regulations. “It is critical for us to hear messages and concerns from our nation’s farmers and local people. Reach out to your congressional staff when you are back home and invite them to your farms,” said Beau Greenwood, executive vice president of Government Relations and Public Affairs, CropLife America.

The most reoccurring issue throughout the mission was the 2012 Farm Bill. Participants heard over and over again how crucial it is for the agriculture industry to pass a bill this year. “You need to think about what issues are hindering your children from coming back to the farm. Those are the issues that are most important for this next farm bill,” stated Brandon Willis, deputy administrator for Farm Programs.

Participants heard from various organizations and speakers including, Krysta Harden, Chief of Staff, USDA; Doug O’Brien, Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development; Beau Greenwood, Executive Vice President of Government Relations and Public Affairs, CropLife America; and William Murphy, Administrator for the Risk Management Agency.

“I now have a deeper understanding of the current issues affecting agriculture, and with the education I received through this mission, I can stay abreast of all the issues directly affecting Nebraska farmers,” said Nathan Dorn, farmer from Hickman, NE. “We heard over and over again how important it is for us to reach out to our local government officials when we are back at home and I now realize the impact we could have with a simple visit.”
Nebraska Soybean Board Promotes Bio-based Products at the 2012 Lincoln Home and Garden Show

The many benefits of using bio-based products to build, decorate and clean your home were showcased by Nebraska Soybean Board at the 2012 Nebraska Home Builders’ Association Home and Garden Show at the Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln, NE. The Soybean Board’s 40 foot by 20 foot “soy home” was a keystone booth at the show. Designed as a real living space, the booth featured countless bio-based products. Soy-backed carpet was installed in partnership with Carpets Direct, walls and wood were finished with soy-based paint and varnish by Christo Design Build, and even the furniture, from Lincoln Mattress, was made with soy-based foam.

“Bio-based products are an easy, green choice for consumers to make in their daily lives,” said Victor Bohuslavsky, Nebraska soybean farmer and Executive Director of the Soybean Board. “Soy-based products are safer for our families, great for Nebraska’s economy, and widely available in the stores where Nebraskans already shop.”

Home Show visitors saw how bio-based cleaners use soybean oil instead of petroleum, resulting in safer, bio-degradable, non-toxic products that are also good for the American economy. More than 2,500 visitors went home with free samples of soy-based home cleaners from the Omaha-based Clean Environment Company. Countless more learned that larger companies and organizations, such as Clorox, Ford Motor Company, Soft Soap, Aveeno, Kansas State University, and more are recognizing the benefits of soy and using it in their products.

Terri Brand from Lincoln, NE won the Broyhill soy-foam couch, and two others won soy gift baskets filled with soy-wax candles from Soy Accents, Bolt-Off from Nutek, soy lip balm, and more bio-based home cleaners from the Clean Environment Company. Total attendance at the home show was 15,852 visitors, with 7,293 of them attending on that Saturday. There was also 290 exhibitors present, which had just over 600 booths.

More information about bio-based products can be found at http://nebioproducts.org/
Announcing the 2012 Nebraska Soybean Association 3-Year Membership Seed Bonus Promotion

Take advantage of the 2012 Membership seed bonus promotion today!

Join as a new or renewing 3-year member for $250 and when you purchase 12 bags of soybean seed, you will receive 6 bags free! Offer good until December 31, 2012.

We proudly recognize our 2012 Sponsoring Companies: AgVenture, Asgrow, Channel, Fontanelle Hybrids, Hoegemeyer Hybrids, LG Seeds, Mycogen, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Renze Hybrids, Stine Seed Co., Syngenta NK Soybeans (NK, Golden Harvest, Garst)

3-year members also Earn 100 Units of Optimize Seed Treatment. To check on the status of your membership or for more details contact the NSA office at 402/441-3239 or email: association@nebraskasoybeans.org

Recruit your neighbor to join!

NSA co-hosts Ribs and Bibs

On February 14th, the Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA) along with the Nebraska Pork Producers hosted Nebraska State Senators and industry leaders to mouth watering pork ribs during a dinner held in Lincoln.

The purpose of the dinner was to further educate the State Senators on the importance of the pork industry as it relates to them being our number one customer. Animal agriculture is the number one domestic use of soybean meal. Several NSA directors attended the event and had an opportunity to visit with their State Senators on several ag issues currently being debated in the Legislature.

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Our Soy Checkoff
University of Nebraska research funded by the Nebraska Soybean Board has shown that your soybean yield declines each day that soybean planting is delayed after May 1st. That yield decline can range from about one-quarter (0.25) bu/ac to about 5/8 (0.625) bu/ac (depending on the year) for EACH DAY you delay planting after May 1st. So, if you plant 16 days after May 1st, your soybean yield potential will fall by either 16 x 0.25 = 4 bu/ac or by 16 x 0.625 = 10 bu/ac depending on the year. Multiply those potential yield loss numbers by the current market price of soybeans and you can easily see that delayed planting can put a big dent in your potential gross revenue per soybean acre.

Why does yield decline as planting is delayed? Take a look at the pictures of the soybean strips that were planted (see plot signs) in early May or late April vs. mid-May vs. late May (or early June) vs. late June in 2003 and 2004. The pictures were taken just a few days after the longest day of each year (i.e., summer solstice on June 21). You can easily see that the earlier the soybean planting, the earlier (in the year) the canopy will close. You want your soybean crop to collect ALL of the sunlight it can, simply because sunlight is the energy the plant uses to fix and reduce carbon dioxide — with the reduced carbon being then used by the plant to make the carbohydrate, protein, and oil that it puts into soybean seed.

With an earlier planting date, your crop not only starts collecting sunlight earlier in the season (see pictures), it can also collect more per day because the days are longer! Moreover, when sunlight is not intercepted by leaves, it is then intercepted by the soil surface, leading to evaporative water loss from a warmer soil. By covering the soil with crop leaves, you lessen the amount of soil water lost to evaporation, thus reserving that water (indeed, the water you were saving by using no-till management) for use by your crop when, to acquire CO₂, it opens its leaf pores and thereby loose H₂O. Dr. Jim Specht of UNL offers this slogan: “Get your soybean crop all green to the eye by the 4th of July.” You really do NOT want to see much brown (soil) when the days are long.

Aside from early planting, which results in more light capture and less soil water evaporation, the NSB-funded research led to the discovery that soybean plants add one new main stem node every 3.7 days after the first trifoliolate appears at the V1 stage, until seed development begins at the R5 stage (see SoyWater website article, next page, in this issue for details). Soybeans planted later cannot catch up. A “node” is where the flowers, then pods and then seeds in those pods are produced. You want to make sure that your crop is given enough seasonal time to produce as many main stem nodes (and thus flowers, pods, seeds) as possible. Delay planting by one week (7 days), and bingo, your crop just lost an opportunity to put two nodes on its main stem earlier in the season. So, when thinking about soybean planting in 2012, Dr. Specht says “Think EARLY!”

Why Early Planting Matters

— by James E. Specht, UNL Professor of Agronomy & Horticulture

2003 and 2004 pictures were taken just a few days after the longest day (6/21) of each year. Planting dates are indicated on the plot signs. Note the plant main stem node (Vn) numbers.
Soybean Cyst Nematode (SCN) Facts:

• SCN is the most yield limiting disease of soybean in Nebraska – taking over $30 million from producers in 2011.
• Infested fields often show no visible symptoms of SCN, but experience significant yield losses.
• Yield losses as high as 41% have been observed in Nebraska due to SCN.
• Average yield increases on infested sites with SCN resistant varieties is 5-6 bu/A.
• First symptom of SCN in a field is soybean yields that level off or drop while corn yields are good.
• SCN can be present in any field, not just those along a river.
• Currently SCN has been identified in 54 counties producing over 90% of Nebraska’s soybeans.
• Over one-forth (26%) of the soil samples submitted from farmer’s fields in the last seven years have been positive for SCN.

You can find out if you have SCN by taking a simple soil test that is being paid for by your soybean checkoff. Contact your local University of Nebraska-Lincoln extension office.
Achieving the highest yield potential of your soybean crop is the goal of every soybean producer in Nebraska. Winter annual weeds have become a common sight prior to soybean planting in many Nebraska no-till fields. Recent research at UNL demonstrates the importance of controlling those weeds early and planting your soybeans into a weed-free seedbed.

To examine the effects of allowing winter annual weeds to grow in the spring, experiments were conducted in dryland fields at the South Central Agricultural Laboratory near Clay Center and the Agronomy Farm in Lincoln. At both locations, corn and soybeans were planted about mid-May each year. Crop yield from plots where winter annual weeds were removed in November of the previous year were compared to yield when weeds were removed the subsequent March, April, May, or June.

In five of six site years, not controlling winter annual weeds prior to planting corn or soybeans resulted in a greater than 5% yield loss. In four of six site years, yield loss exceeded 10%. The critical dates for winter annual weed control to prevent yield loss ranged from March 20 to May 5 for soybeans planted in mid-May. Below are three tips on how to reduce yield loss due to winter annual weeds and help fight the evolution of glyphosate-resistant weeds:

1. Removing winter annual weeds such as henbit, tansymustard and field pennycress at least two weeks prior to planting prevents yield loss due to uncontrolled winter annual weed influences. There are many good options including the Authority products, Enlite, Optill, Sharpen, Valor, Valor XLT and Verdict. A little homework should be done by the producer to match the best product with the weed spectrum in your field.

2. Implementing a burndown program that includes full rates of residual PRE herbicides help to slow or prevent the evolution of glyphosate-resistant weed populations in species such as giant ragweed, kochia, waterhemp and Palmer amaranth.

3. Including 2,4-D as part of an early burndown prior to soybean planting will help control glyphosate-resistant marestail. Relying heavily on POST herbicides to control glyphosate-resistant marestail in soybeans precarious proposition. If using 2,4-D prior to planting soybeans, be sure to follow labeled planting restriction intervals.
The introduction and adoption of glyphosate-tolerant soybeans changed the face of row crop weed control and ultimately production agriculture in the Midwest. No other technology has had a comparable impact at the grower level in the era we consider modern agriculture. Farmers quickly learned this technology provided excellent weed control, with excellent crop safety, with a highly flexible total postemergence weed control approach. As the price of glyphosate herbicides dropped over time, the economics of modern crop production coupled with the effectiveness of glyphosate logically led many producers to a glyphosate-only approach for soybean weed management. Unfortunately, like many things in life, too much of a good thing can ultimately lead to significant problems.

In 2011, glyphosate-resistant giant ragweed and kochia populations were confirmed in Nebraska. The evolution of these populations should cause all Nebraska soybean producers to figuratively “hit the refresh button” when considering their soybean weed control choices. Glyphosate-resistant weeds have not impacted Nebraska to the same extent as other areas of the Midwest and Southern regions, but our fortune regarding resistant weeds seems to be changing rapidly. It is known that heavy reliance on a single herbicide inevitably leads to the evolution of resistant weed populations. This is true for glyphosate or any other herbicide. Unfortunately, the evolution and proliferation of glyphosate-resistant weeds have the potential to negate a significant portion of the ease and benefits farmers realized with the adoption of glyphosate-tolerant soybeans. The way to combat resistant weed evolution is an integrated weed management approach. Implementing multiple tactics that include PRE herbicides, POST tank mixtures of glyphosate with other effective herbicides, timeliness of applications, tillage if appropriate and crop rotation all reduce the chance of glyphosate-resistant weed evolution. If you don’t currently have resistant weeds, these steps will help keep the problem at bay. If glyphosate-resistant weeds have already developed on your farm, a diversified approach is absolutely necessary to achieve adequate weed control and keep your yields high.

The bottom line is this…the days of glyphosate-only weed control in soybeans are closing rapidly. There are many good options to control weeds in soybeans. Doing a little homework to understand how to get the most out of each tool is critical for successful and sustainable soybean weed control this year, and for years come.
The Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA) elected its 2012 officers and directors during their annual meeting held in Kearney on January 10th, 2012, at the 7th annual Nebraska Ag Classic.

Geoff Ruth of Rising City, NE was elected as NSA President for his first term. Ruth begins his first term as President and oversees the functions of the state organization. Ruth previously served as Vice President of NSA. He says, "One of my goals is to continue to increase membership by communicating the value of belonging to the Nebraska Soybean Association and the importance of membership as it relates to policy work."

Ken Boswell of Shickley, NE was elected Vice-President. Boswell serves as the District 7 director for NSA. Rodney Smith of DeWitt, NE was re-elected to serve as Treasurer, and he currently serves as the District 6 director. Serving another term as Secretary was Diane Becker of Madison, NE who represents an At-Large District.

Elected to a first term to serve for District 2 director position was Robert Johnston of Clearwater. Johnston was appointed last year to fill the remaining term as a State Director representing District 2. Diane Becker of Madison was re-elected to a second term to represent an At-Large seat.

This year’s recipient of the Nebraska Soybean Association Promoter Award was awarded to Farm Director Chad Moyer with KTIC radio in West Point, NE. The award was presented at the Saunders County Soybean Expo held in mid-December. Moyer has been a familiar face at many of the Soybean Association’s events and continues to cover soybean industry news and helps spread our message to thousands of listeners. This award is presented annually to recognize and thank an individual who has shown outstanding leadership and support to the betterment of the soybean industry.

Resolutions adopted and discussed during the annual meeting included various topics. Some of the highlights included supporting private insurance carriers to administrate the crop insurance programs and opposing having the FSA as the program administrator of Federal Crop Insurance; opposing a farm program that distorts planting decisions; opposing the early termination of CRP contracts without penalty and opposing the one-call diggers hotline requirement for soil tests and seasonal sensing probes.

Several of the state resolutions were forwarded for discussion during the American Soybean Association’s annual resolutions meeting which was held in early March in Nashville, TN during the Commodity Classic Convention.
genes have been recently developed and are under rigorous testing. Commercial SCN-resistant soybean varieties containing these new genes could be available as early as 2017. Until then, farmers will need to rely on improved management strategies including old school cultural practices and emerging technologies to limit yield loss to SCN.

Nematicide seed treatments are emerging as the next wave of options available to soybean farmers to manage SCN. That's why the North Central Soybean Research Program is evaluating nematicide seed treatments across a 12 state region.

Using commercially treated seed, plant pathologists evaluated the effectiveness of this technology by determining the SCN population at planting and again in the same location, after harvest. The numbers tell the story – an uncertain story. There was no clear benefit to the seed treatments in the 2011 field trials. Keep in mind however, it is extremely difficult to get a clear picture of performance based on one year of field data so the study will be repeated in 2012 and 2013.

In other studies, researchers are looking at levels of SCN reproduction on roots of soybean varieties labeled as resistant. The results are surprising: not all SCN-resistant soybean varieties manage SCN equally; some varieties still have a large number of SCN on the roots at harvest. Repeated use of these varieties allows the SCN population to continue to grow – and feed on soybean roots. However, field studies also show that some of these same varieties remain high-yielding under pressure from SCN. More work is needed in this area to better understand this relationship. Meanwhile, check with your state Extension specialist for information on SCN reproduction on commercial soybean varieties to determine if your soybean variety is actually lowering SCN numbers.

Old school cultural practices like rotating soybeans with corn or other non-host crops is still a great way to lower SCN populations. Many farmers have shifted to a soybean-corn-corn rotation strategy to benefit from higher margins realized from corn production. Older research clearly shows a decrease in SCN numbers when soybeans are planted following one year of corn. It is unclear whether a long-term soybean-corn-corn management strategy significantly reduces SCN numbers – and increases soybean yield.

Until a genetic solution is discovered that eliminates SCN feeding and reproduction, several management tactics will need to be employed to reduce yield loss from this pest. Seed treatments, planting SCN resistant varieties, crop rotation, and monitoring SCN numbers within fields are all critical. For more information on managing SCN, go to www.planthealth.info.

What’s new in managing SCN?

– by David L. Wright, PhD
(Director of Research)

Despite valiant efforts by farmers and the seed industry to control Soybean Cyst Nematode (SCN), it is still considered to be the #1 yield robber in soybean production. It invades roots, feeds, then reproduces 250-fold. It can reduce yield as much as 70 percent under severe infestations and drought conditions; under more moderate conditions it can cause 30 percent yield loss without visual symptoms.

An army of researchers funded with soybean checkoff dollars has been working to find that elusive solution to the $1.5 billion annual economic loss. The solution, improved genetic resistance, is a ways off but it is coming. Plant breeders at Midwest universities, in partnership with the USDA, have been searching the nation’s germplasm collection for novel genes to complement those in today’s varieties. Several breeding lines containing these new

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2 Words

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