Nebraska Soybean Board partners with the University of Nebraska - Curtis for the new Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center....page 8
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Interested in learning more about the Soybean Checkoff?

**“See for Yourself” this year!**

The Nebraska Soybean Board has kicked off another year of its “See for Yourself” program this fall. The See for Yourself program is designed to give Nebraska soybean farmers the opportunity to learn more about their checkoff. Farmers selected to take part in the program will attend checkoff-sponsored activities in an attempt to gain a better understanding of how their checkoff dollars are being invested to build demand and increase profitability.

“See for Yourself” is designed to include the opportunity to attend state, national and international activities. The in-state program gives farmers the chance to attend functions in Nebraska that are vital to the continued success of the soybean industry. The national program includes attending meetings sponsored by the United Soybean Board, United States Meat Export Federation, National Biodiesel Board, United States Soybean Export Council, United States Poultry and Egg Export Council, as well as many other important national meetings and activities. The international program is designed to show soybean farmers first-hand what the checkoff is doing to build global demand.

The Nebraska Soybean Board is currently planning its visit to Grays Harbor in the Pacific Northwest as a part of this year’s international tour. Grays Harbor is a vital shipping area for Nebraska soybeans, connecting our farmers with international buyers in Asia and the Black Sea region. The Grays Harbor tour aims to give Nebraska soybean farmers a better understanding of the logistical chain soybeans go through on their way to some of our international customers. Stops on this trip are planned to include a tour of the Union Pacific rail system in Omaha, a tour of Grays Harbor and a tour of a large user of biodiesel in Washington state.

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!
What a great fall. We actually got to enjoy great harvesting weather, except for periods where it was a little too dry and windy, fanning the combine fires in our area. This fall has had great football weather too, and as always, stories about high school and Husker sports have been prominent in the media. But what stories did you read about agriculture?

In this issue of SoybeaNebraska, you will find information on the production research the Nebraska Soybean Board is involved in. Production research is important, but what about all the other issues that affect the future of agriculture that you can be engaged in?

The first annual meeting of the US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) was held in Kansas City in November. This organization marks the first time that agriculture groups from across the board have come together in an effort to share the story of modern agriculture. The Nebraska Soybean Board has been a leader in the USFRA movement and is currently one of 59 state and national organizations that are working together to support American agriculture. The list of supporting organizations continues to grow and industry partners have also joined. The Communications Committee has been working diligently to put together and implement strategies to start conversations about modern agriculture production. Ketchum was selected as the public relations agency that is working with USFRA to set the table and start those conversations. Farmers and ranchers were invited to usfraonline.org to give input into the questions being asked by consumers. A national Food Dialogue was held on September 22, and you can view those conversations at fooddialogues.com.

The work continues, and USFRA is developing a FARM (Farmers and Ranchers Mobilization) Team. Go to the USFRA website, sign up and become a spokesperson for what you do as a farmer and rancher.

Throughout the winter there are going to be opportunities for all of us to get involved and talk about what we do and why we do it. Consumers are skeptical about our use of pesticides, antibiotics, hormones and the list goes on. Most of that is from misinformation and myths that consumers have started to believe are facts.

As farmers and ranchers, we’ve raised pretty much everything, except our voices. That needs to change, and USFRA is inviting all farmers and ranchers to join in the conversation and help lead the conversation with consumers about where their food comes from, the importance of agriculture and choices at the grocery store.

You have an opportunity this holiday season as you visit with family and friends around the dinner table to continue the conversation about food. Farmers and ranchers need to lead the conversation about where food comes from and why we do the things we do.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season,
Lisa Lunz
As we finish this year
— by Scott Richert, Gresham NE, NSA President

As 2011 comes to a close we reflect on accomplishments the past year. The Congressional passage of the U.S. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with South Korea, Columbia, and Panama is the big one that shows great opportunity for soybean producers. This represents nearly $3 billion of additional agriculture exports to these trading partners.

NSA and ASA have been working for a number of years toward passage of these trade agreements, which contain significant export gains for U.S. agriculture. Increased exports of U.S. soy and soy fed meat and poultry will benefit soybean farmers and rural economies. After nearly five years of delays and loss of U.S. market share, soybean farmers look forward to realizing the opportunities these FTAs provide for America's economic growth.

The passage is expected to result in $123 million per year in new Nebraska agricultural trade and 1,100 new Nebraska jobs.

The Korea FTA offers immediate duty-free access to U.S. soybeans for crushing and to U.S. soybean meal.

The Colombia FTA will create new opportunities for U.S. soybean farmers in the Colombian market by immediately eliminating tariffs ranging from 5-20 percent on soybeans, soybean meal and soybean flour, and phasing-out the 24 percent tariffs for crude soybean oil and refined soybean oil over five years.

The Panama FTA will benefit soybean farmers by immediately removing the tariffs on U.S. soybeans, soybean meal, and crude vegetable oils.

As we finish this year, the new Farm Bill is being written and much work still needs to be done. ASA is continuously representing your interests during the Farm Bill discussions, and we continue to push for the Biodiesel tax extender bill to further help the biodiesel industry.

It’s your membership dollars that support our policy efforts both at the state and national levels, since checkoff funds are not allowed to be used to influence policy. Thank you to those of you who are members, and we welcome new members to join. It’s hard to believe that I am approaching the end of my two years as President of this organization. I have enjoyed the opportunity to represent our members and their interests.

The policy process starts at the grassroots level…your voice can make a difference. If you believe, belong. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

I Believe, I Belong...

I believe in becoming a member of an organization that represents my businesses interest. By becoming a member of the Nebraska and American Soybean Association, I know that while I am working in the fields I have an organization monitoring issues on my behalf in Washington DC that could ultimately affect my bottom line.

Membership has never been more important than now. With issues like environmental regulations, animal rights initiatives and a new Farm Bill, soybean producers need organizations like NSA and ASA working for us. That’s why I believe and belong.

— Joel Lipp, District 1 NSA Director, Laurel, NE
Nebraska Soybean Board Elects New Officers

The Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB) elected new officers for Fiscal Year 2012. The elections were conducted by NSB members at their November meeting. The following officers will serve a one year term: Greg Greving of Chapman, NE – Chairman; Ed Lammers, Hartington, NE – Vice Chairman; Lisa Lunz, of Wakefield, NE – Secretary; and Greg Peters of Dewitt, NE – Treasurer.

Committee members and committee chairman were also appointed as follows:

Research Committee: Lisa Lunz will serve as Chairman and committee members are Richard Bartek of Ithaca, NE; Scott Houck of Strang, NE; and Greg Peters.

Domestic Marketing: Mark Caspers of Auburn, NE will serve as Chairman, and committee members are Greg Greving; Terry Horky of Sargent, NE; Ed Lammers; and Ron Pavelka of Glenvil, NE.

All board members serve on the Communications/Producer Education committee and the International Marketing committee in which Greg Greving is the Chairman for both.

“The Nebraska Soybean Board knows firsthand the importance of farmer profitability. NSB serves all of our state’s soybean farmers by increasing profitability through the promotion of animal agriculture, soy biodiesel, international marketing, soybean production research and other new uses for Nebraska Soybeans,” said Victor Bohuslavsky, NSB Executive Director.

L to R: Ed Lammers, Greg Greving, Lisa Lunz and Greg Peters
Finding Fairness in Unprecedented Times

When we work with our farm clients in the estate planning process, we are now planning in unprecedented times. The old will or trust that divided the estate equally among the children is a less viable succession plan than ever due to the increased land values and equipment prices existing today. The intensive capital requirement needed to operate a successful agricultural operation seems to just keep getting higher. The need to implement a successful business continuation plan for the on-farm heir is more critical than ever before and the reality is that the time frame in which to plan needs to begin earlier.

Equal or Equitable
The first matter to identify is whether the estate plan with a business succession plan component requires the children to be treated “equal” or “equitable”. If a client desires the children to be treated “equal” then life insurance likely needs to be a component of the plan. However, these products can be expensive and require a yearly cash flow. Most of our agricultural clients do not favor such a component due to uncertain income yields from year-to-year and generally extra income at the end of a successful year is plowed back into upgrading machinery. We suggest, otherwise, that the client consider using this component as part of the overall plan. It isn’t always necessary to buy a multi-million dollar policy. Any available cash upon the death of the second parent eases the pressure to work out an amicable agreement between the children to keep the farm in the family.

Transferring Operating Assets
The best business succession plans provide for transferring the operating assets to the on-farm heir(s) prior to death or immediately upon death. The transition of the equipment and livestock should begin to occur when the client becomes less active in the operation and the next generation has exhibited a “firm and solid footing” in the operation. Do not be afraid to put the operating assets into a separate entity like a limited liability company or family limited partnership and transfer the interests prior to death as part of an annual gifting process. If needed, a specific devise of the equipment should be considered and utilized at death.

Transferring Land
The most difficult asset to transfer today is land with its high value. We commonly draft purchase options for the “on-farm” heir to exercise upon the death of either parent to purchase the land. These options can be funded with life insurance or the option can explicitly define a method for payment to the non-farm heirs over time. Remember to start early and communicate regularly with your business partner.
UNL’s Curtis Campus Welcomes New Ag Building – by Andy Chvatal

While Nebraska farmers were harvesting their crops, the University of Nebraska, College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) welcomed its newest crop of students. These students will be the first to use the NEW Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center, dedicated to the agronomy and horticulture programs. NCTA is also completing a new residence hall, large addition to the Veterinary Hospital and a biomass project designed to burn the red cedar trees that infest our ranges.

The NCTA faculty expresses their gratitude to the Nebraska Soybean Board for its support of the new Education Center. We encourage all soybean farmers to visit campus and check out the Soybean Tower and the exterior mural, which displays a soybean plant as its focal point. Another attraction will be a Donor Legacy Wall that will celebrate the dedication of the Nebraska families who build Nebraska farms, ranches and agribusinesses.

The pictures to the right show a sample of the 12 inch glass tiles that will be displayed in the Education Center. A $1,000 donation will help NCTA complete the Education Center and give each family a tile to display in the Education Center AND one to take home. This gift to NCTA is critical to the building project and will create a family keepsake for generations to come.

Debbie Borg, former President of the Nebraska Soybean Growers Association and supporter of NCTA’s ownership programs, said “Our family is very appreciative for the generations of farmers who made it possible for us to fulfill our dream of owning and operating a farm. We salute them while we make plans to carry on the Borg Family Farm for generations to come. We look forward to seeing all the new buildings at NCTA that will substantially increase its ability to educate and prepare the next generations of farmers and ranchers.”

The NCTA’s wonderful new education center is well on its way to completion, but the college still needs your assistance. NCTA is asking for additional contributions to help complete the building and make it the best learning environment it can be for students.

When you give, your generosity won’t go unnoticed. Contribute $1,000 or more and your logo/photo will appear on a 12" x 12" glass tile adorning a Legacy Wall in the atrium. In addition to the tile that will hang in the building, you will receive a copy to display in your business or home.

As a valued supporter, this is a wonderful way to add a visual legacy of your business, career and family. It also helps NCTA complete this project critical to the future generations of students and rural Nebraska communities. Your support of NCTA will be visible for generations to come.

To donate, contact Ann Bruntz, abruntz@nufoundation.org, 402-458-1176. For tile photo submission process, contact Traci Bradney, tbradney2@unl.edu, 308-367-5200 or visit ncta.unl.edu/giving.
This fall about 40 oilheat dealers in the New York tri-state area took a step towards evolving their businesses with Bioheat®. The marketers attended a Bioheat workshop at Cit Field in New York City on Nov. 8, co-hosted by the National Biodiesel Board and the New York Oil Heating Association.

Dealers at the workshop were the first in the nation to receive the newly launched “Bioheat marketing playbook.”

The playbook offers a comprehensive breakdown of the definition, production, advantages, benefits and market overview of Bioheat. Also, it offers a sales and marketing strategy for registered Bioheat dealers.

The Bioheat team will be travelling throughout the Northeast to share the playbook and walk dealers through Bioheat strategies.

At the Cit Field workshop, Paul Nazzaro, who leads the NBB Bioheat team, told the group he understands that change takes time. “Oilheat businesses tend to be small, family-owned businesses that have been around for generations and are accustomed to doing things a certain way,” Nazzaro said. “That’s why we are doing everything within our grasp to make turning an oilheat business into a Bioheat business painless and simple.”

Port Energy Group in Glen Cove, New York, is a father-son business that began carrying Bioheat a few months ago. After attending the workshop, the company is ready to press forward with an active marketing campaign, using the tools provided by NBB, said Lewis Cahill.

“The workshop was terrific,” said Cahill, whose son Sean Cahill now runs the business. “It was very informative in bringing us up to speed with how we can market and educate customers.”

The company was the winner of a free Bioheat vehicle wrap at the workshop — and fortuitously, has a brand new oilheat truck to put it on, Cahill said.

Steven Caputo, energy and policy advisor for New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, spoke about new regulations taking effect during 2012. This includes phasing out No. 6 oil, a heavy oil used in commercial applications. The city’s goal is to work towards cleaner carbon fuels. That’s one reason the city passed a 2 percent Bioheat requirement, also beginning in 2012.

John Maniscalco, President of the New York Oil Heating Association, told the group that Bioheat could be a potential savior for the heating oil industry, which is under attack by natural gas in American households. That’s one reason the Bioheat awareness campaign currently underway is so important.

“Progressive New York-area oilheat dealers learn how to take cleaner-burning Bioheat® home”

“The afternoon’s ‘show and tell’ segment introducing the New York City Bioheat Awareness Campaign, entitled ‘Join the Evolution,’ was well received by those in attendance, and the inquiries we’ve received since indicate the beginning of a truly successful awareness campaign,” Maniscalco said.

In addition to showing off the ad campaign currently blanketing New York City radio stations, buses and subways, the Bioheat team’s Michael Devine and Steve Brenner gave attendees a guided tour of the revamped Bioheatonline.com. The new website is a valuable resource for consumers and dealers alike.

Bioheat is a blend of traditional heating oil and biodiesel, a renewable, cleaner burning fuel made from sustainable fats and vegetable oils.

Although the usual blend for home heating is between 2 and 5 percent biodiesel, research is underway at the New York-based Brookhaven National Laboratory on higher blends.

“The dealers left excited about the possibilities,” Nazzaro said. “There is room for innovation in even the most established of businesses. Who’s to say what the future holds? Bioheat changes everyone’s paradigm and gives them something to invest in with the hope of creating long-term customer loyalty.”

The diverse list of about 80 attendees, which included retail home heating oil distributors, biodiesel vendors, several local terminal operators, Bioheat consumers, and representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Brookhaven Lab, highlighted the expansive degree of interest Bioheat has raised in relation to the oil industry’s clean and green fuel of the future.

The NBB Bioheat awareness campaign underway has a two-pronged strategy, educating consumers as well as oilheat marketers. It is primarily funded by the Nebraska Soybean Board and the United Soybean Board.
It is a pleasure to be able to report how we in IANR at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln – your land-grant university – are at work for the soybean farmers of Nebraska.

Thank you for the valuable and vital support you provide our scientists in doing that work. It is a great partnership, and your commodity board funding is tremendously important to us. It allows us to connect to and address soybean farmers’ research and educational needs as you define those needs.

In fiscal year 2011 the Nebraska Soybean Board provided IANR $1,352,477 for work that ranged from soybean breeding and genetics studies to enhancing soybean germplasm through biotechnology, the influence of irrigation and crop rotation sequence on soybean cyst nematode populations, and much, much more.

In addition, funding you provided the North Central Soybean Research Program returned to Nebraska as $210,395 in funding for work occurring in IANR. An additional $424,710 from funding you provided the United Soybean Board also came to IANR scientists for work to benefit Nebraska soybean growers.

The importance of such public/private partnerships as we share with the Nebraska Soybean Board and other commodity groups will only grow in coming years as state and federal funds become more challenging. Currently, plans to close the federal budget deficit call for reductions in federal agricultural research and extension education funding.

This is occurring at the same time the world is challenged to double food production in the next 30-40 years while sustaining natural resources and rural communities in which food and renewable energy grow.

The House versions of the 2012 appropriations bill for federal Hatch funding, which supports agricultural research, and federal Smith-Lever funding, which supports extension education, would reduce funding significantly, while the Senate version maintains funding at or slightly above the FY 2011 levels.

Next the House-Senate conference committee begins meeting to reconcile the two versions of this legislation.

The House version of the Agriculture spending bill would cut funding for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) by $203 million (16.7 percent) compared to FY 2011.

While we know some budget cuts will be necessary, we request your assistance in supporting the Senate’s bill and opposing disproportionate cuts in the food-related research and education budget at a time when the need in these areas is so greatly expanding. The reality of these cuts highlights the importance of your support to IANR for research and education important to Nebraska.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Ronnie D. Green, NU Vice President
and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR
University of Nebraska-Lincoln scientists are using soybean protein and oil to help meet the growing demand for seafood worldwide.

Increasing demand in fish is straining the already over-harvested marine fisheries worldwide, said Thomas Clemente, UNL plant scientist.

“Aquaculture offers great potential to offset the strain put on wild fish populations,” Clemente said.

Nearly a third of the world’s wild caught fish species are used as feed supplements not only in food for farm-raised fish but also for other animals like swine and chickens.

“As demand continues to rise not only for fish food but also for fish consumed by humans, reliance solely on wild-caught fish will not meet future demands,” Clemente said.

Through support provided by the Nebraska Soybean Board and United Soybean Board, Clemente and his team have been formulating and testing aquaculture diets designed to displace fishmeal and fish oil with soybean-based protein and oil.

UNL research primarily focuses on Kona Kampachi®, a sashimi grade high fat fin fish native to Hawaii. This fish is raised off the big island of Hawaii.

Studies have successfully used a 40 percent soybean protein concentrate in the diet of Kona Kampachi, effectively displacing fishmeal to under 12 percent of the diet from over 50 percent.

UNL researchers also have blended fish oil with a high omega-3 fatty acid soybean oil which produces a novel omega-3 fatty acid called stearidonic acid. This blend of fish oil and high omega-3 fatty acid soybean oil can be used with no significant impact on the accumulation of the very long chain omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA in the harvested fish, Clemente said.

“Blending of stearidonic acid soybean oil that accumulates over 60 percent omega-3 fatty acids, leads to more total omega-3 fatty acids in the flesh of the harvested fish than a 100 percent fish oil based diet, without compromising either growth rate or feed conversion,” he said.

Researchers have been able to formulate a diet for a high-end fin fish, namely Kona Kampachi, which displaces up to 40 percent of the protein and 50 percent of the oil with the soybean-based product.

Research will continue to focus on refining the formulations. “This may ultimately lead to a total displacement of fish-based products in the diet of Kona Kampachi with the potential to translate the information gathered from these studies to other high value fin fish,” Clemente said.
Extension educator studying growth-enhancement products

A Miracle Grow for Soybeans

— by Sandi Karstens

A variety of products on the market are promising farmers an increase in yield or quality of their soybean crop. A University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator is testing those claims.

Michael Rethwisch, extension educator in Butler County, is leading a Nebraska Soybean Board-funded project that evaluates plant growth enhancement products to determine how they really affect yield and quality.

“We have lots of different strategies and lots of products out there that make claims that may or may not be true,” he said.

Most commercial products that claim to enhance growth claim to do so by making the soybean plant bigger with larger root mass giving the plant more access to water and nutrients, therefore causing less stress.

“How they work or don’t work we really don’t know,” Rethwisch said.

This year Rethwisch tested nine seed treatments.

“If I look across the board of things we tested, the vast majority of them did result in increased yields in 2011,” he said. “This isn’t true for everything.”

He found some treatments resulted in decreased yields with certain varieties. So, further testing needs to be done in relation to variety interaction with seed treatment products.

Looking at eight different treatments in the Ceresco/Waverly area, he said, on average there was a 1.5 bushel per acre increase with the treated seed.

“That is pretty good. Most of those are going to give us a nice economic return,” he said. “If we assume $5 per acre for cost of these, a 1.5 bushel increase is more than $10 per acre net.”

In the David City area, three different treatments were tested with two different varieties planted side by side. One variety averaged over a bushel per acre more, while the other variety had very little increase.

“So, it is interesting to see the differences in varieties and how they react to these treatments,” he said.

This project focuses on both irrigated and rain-fed soybeans.

Research Continues - Soybean Cyst Nematode

— by Sandi Karstens

Soybean cyst nematode is one of the most yield-limiting soybean pathogens to strike the United States. It causes millions of bushels of yield lost which translates into billions of dollars lost.

In its continued effort to help combat this pathogen, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln research project funded by the Nebraska’s Soybean Board is uncovering the effects of crop rotation patterns and irrigation on soybean cyst nematode populations.

The long-term study has already found some encouraging results, said Loren Giesler, UNL Extension plant pathologist.

Doctoral student Oscar Perez, who has been assigned to this project, has done two years of data collection from about 58 locations. Next year he’ll add another 25 to 30 locations.

So far, in relation to moisture and soil type, data has been all over the board and it is unknown how dryland or irrigated fields affect population reductions during rotation years. However, Perez has found a tremendous variation in the level of reduction of SCN happening in the year of corn rotation.

The preliminary results suggest the traditional corn-soybean rotation resulted in SCN populations decreasing significantly. Before the project started, researchers used an average estimate of a 25 percent reduction for SCN populations in the corn year of rotation.

“We have observed a much larger range in reductions and the average reduction has been over twice that amount with some fields seeing reductions in the 90 percent range,” Giesler said.

These results bring in more questions about what is going on in fields with high mortality. Researchers hope to be able to identify the factors responsible.

Management recommendations for SCN are centered on the use of not only resistant soybean varieties, but also rotation to a nonhost crop like corn.

While it is too early to make any formal conclusion, research will continue. “Depending on the findings of this study, we may change how rotation is recommended and we will all be better informed of what is happening in the corn year in SCN-infested fields,” Giesler said.
Soybean Board Support Plays Key Role in Testing Outside U.S. – by Dan Moser

Test plots in such far-away locales as Puerto Rico, Argentina and Chile play a key role in developing and testing the latest soybean cultivars for farmers in Nebraska and elsewhere.

That’s thanks to support from the Nebraska Soybean Board, which helps fund the facilities that allow University of Nebraska soybean breeder George Graef to conduct research year-round.

The growing season in Puerto Rico, without supplemental light, is about 90 days for soybeans adapted to Nebraska’s latitudes. Locations in Chile and Argentina, where it’s summer during our winter, allow scientists to grow soybeans under more normal conditions and measure traits, such as yield, as they are measured here.

The Argentina and Chile sites are used for progeny row evaluations and for some yield testing. The Puerto Rico locations are used mostly for generation advance and for crossing.

“We can develop material a lot quicker,” Graef said.

Graef has been UNL’s soybean breeder for about 24 years. “The top priority of Soybean Board-funded research is yield, and there are some encouraging preliminary signs in crosses now being tested,” Graef said. “Two-year yield averages on crops grown in, four locations are significantly better than standard yields, though it’s too soon to announce details.”

“It looks like we’ve got some really good material coming along,” he added.

Graef said progress also is being made in aphid and virus resistance.

In addition to developing high-yielding soybean varieties for use in Nebraska and the region, goals also include:

- Developing germplasm and cultivars for use in specialty and food-grade markets.
- Developing germplasm and cultivars with improved compositional quality, including increased crude protein content, increased total oil content, modified sugar composition and modified protein/oil/carbohydrate ratios in the seed, and specific meal and oil traits for improved end use quality for food, feed and industrial uses.
- Evaluating and developing germplasm and cultivars that are resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses, including iron deficiency chlorosis, soybean mosaic virus, bean pod mottle virus, soybean aphid, phytophthora root rot, sclerotinia stem rot and soybean cyst nematode.
The seventh annual Nebraska Ag Classic will be held at the Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE, January 9-11, 2012. Educational and entertaining speakers fill the program, which concludes with lunch on Wednesday, January 11. Association annual meetings will start the afternoon of January 9 and continue on the morning of January 10.

Kicking off the conference will be the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) representative Forrest Roberts, CEO of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, talking about what work is being done to build consumer trust in today’s agriculture. Other keynote speakers include an update on national agriculture policy with Ross Korves, Economic Policy Analyst with ProExporter Network and marketing with Mike Krueger of the Money Farm.

Visit www.neagclassic.org for the complete conference schedule.

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 till 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!

If You Believe...Belong

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Is your fuel ready for winter?

We all know that diesel has more challenges than gasoline in the winter. But with proper storage and handling techniques, you too can enjoy trouble free operation of your diesel vehicles this winter.

Without a proper fuel winter strategy, diesel fuel will gel in cold temperatures. No. 2 diesel typically has a cloud point anywhere from 0°F to 12°F. The cloud point is the temperature at which wax crystals can be seen in the fuel with the naked eye. No. 1 diesel usually has a cloud point of -40°F. However, during winter months, No.1 can cost 20-50 cents more per gallon than No. 2. Sometimes it is hard to get No. 1 during winter months and it has lower BTU content resulting in lower fuel economy. For these reasons, it is often more cost-effective to utilize cold-flow additives. The use of additives will not completely replace the need to use No. 1 diesel, but can save you money by using less No.1.

There are different types of cold flow additives, including cold-flow improvers, de-icers and WASA. Cold-flow improvers help improve low-temperature operability of fuel by a process called “wax crystal modification” by inhibiting wax crystal growth and agglomeration. De-icers help keep water in the fuel system from freezing. WASA (Wax Anti-Settling Agent) is an important component to a winter additive package. WASA keeps naturally occurring paraffins in diesel suspended in the fuel, preventing them from dropping to the bottom and plugging fuel filters. A combination of these cold flow additives may give the best results for diesel and biodiesel blend winter operability. Biodiesel blends up to 5 percent will behave the same as straight No. 2 diesel and can be treated as such. Using higher biodiesel blends is possible in winter but requires higher additive treat rates or greater percentage of No.1 blending.

Besides blending fuel for winter, the elimination of water is the key to avoiding fuel-related problems. Water is caused by condensation of air in warm weather and hot engines. When temperatures are consistently below 32°F, the water droplets will cause filter plugging and can damage injectors. It is important to check for water in your storage and vehicle tanks before the cold weather sets in. Because the viscosity of fuel increases in the winter months, it is recommended to install a new 20-100 micron dispenser filter on your storage tank at the beginning of winter.

For questions about diesel, biodiesel and additives, MEG Corp Fuel Consulting, at 800-929-3437.
Federal government figures show U.S. soy continues to be in strong demand among international customers. Buyers outside of the United States purchased 1.5 billion bushels of whole U.S. soybeans in the latest marketing year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That makes U.S. soy one of the largest agricultural exports. And U.S. agriculture continues to lead all economic sectors with a positive balance of trade.

“Increasing demand for U.S. soy abroad has been the cornerstone of the soybean-checkoff-funded marketing efforts for the past 20 years,” says Mark Caspers, a soybean farmer from Auburn, Neb. Caspers also sits on the United Soybean Board (USB) International Marketing committee.

Caspers says he thinks international marketing is vital to U.S. soybean farmers. “When approximately half of our U.S. soybean crop is exported each year, it’s vital that we continue building relationships with these foreign buyers to market our soybeans.” Although the global marketplace continues to change, Caspers still sees the value in maintaining strong personal relationships with foreign buyers. “We want to put a face with the name for these foreign buyers. We want to give them to opportunity to...
come to our farms to see the quality of U.S. soybeans, as well send trade teams to their respective countries to help better understand their needs.”

The soybean checkoff helps fund market-building activities like highlighting the advantages of using U.S. soybeans for food and feed as well as hosting international buying teams to showcase the technical capacity of efficiency of U.S. soybean farmers.

Additional key soybean export figures for the 2010/2011 marketing year:

- U.S. soybean farmers helped export over 1.5 billion bushels of whole soybeans.
- Soybean meal from over 332 million bushels of soybeans was exported.
- Oil from approximately 290 million bushels of soybeans went to foreign customers.

Soy users in China weighed in as the top international customers of whole U.S. soybeans buying 895 million bushels, up from 825 million bushels during the 2010/2011 marketing year. Other top importing markets for whole U.S. soybeans in the last marketing year include the following:

- Mexico – 124.3 million bushels
- Japan – 75.2 million bushels
- Indonesia – 71.03 million bushels
- Taiwan – 55.9 million bushels
- Germany – 36.3 million bushels
- Spain – 28.6 million bushels
- Egypt – 27.8 million bushels
- South Korea – 26.3 million bushels
- Thailand – 18.6 million bushels

The soybean checkoff funds international marketing efforts in more than 80 countries worldwide. These include market development, communications and education.

USB is made up of 69 farmer-directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. Checkoff funds are invested in the areas of animal utilization, human utilization, industrial utilization, industry relations, market access and supply. As stipulated in the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soybean checkoff.
Soybean Growers Bolster U.S. Pork Sales in the World’s Most Lucrative Market

– by Joe Schuele, U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF)

When it comes to enhancing utilization of U.S. soybeans, pork exports are a proven, value-added mechanism. The U.S. currently exports more than one-fourth of its total pork production, with an export value per head of slaughter of nearly $55. So exports are critical to the bottom line of U.S. producers, who are among the soybean industry’s most important customers.

Japan is not only the leading value market for U.S. pork exports, it’s the most sought-after and competitive pork market in the world. Through August of this year, U.S. pork exports had already reached nearly $1.3 billion in value, on a volume of about 724,000 pounds. They are on track to break last’s year export value record of $1.65 billion, which accounted for one-third of the worldwide value of U.S. pork exports in 2010.
“There is simply no other market that rivals Japan, both in terms of total value and the premiums delivered to producers,” said U.S. Meat Export Federation President and CEO Philip Seng. “But we can never take this market for granted, because it is the No. 1 target of every pork-producing country that is serious about exports.”

Even though USMEF’s marketing efforts have helped establish U.S. pork as the import market share leader in Japan, U.S. pork still captures less than 20 percent of Japan’s total pork consumption. This means that seemingly small gains in market share can be worth tens of millions of dollars to the U.S. industry.

This makes it all the more critical that U.S. agriculture invests the marketing dollars necessary to further grow the presence of U.S. pork in Japan. Nebraska soybean producers have done exactly that, funding a number of demand-building projects, including:

- A cooking event for influential food bloggers at Sesto Senso, a high-end restaurant in Tokyo. USMEF hosted 25 “power-bloggers” who have cooking-related blogs with enormous daily readership, providing them with useful information on U.S. pork.
- An educational seminar for professional, health-conscious women, highlighting the nutritional attributes of U.S. pork.
- Special lectures at elementary schools, in which Japanese schoolchildren learn about the flavor and quality of U.S. pork, as well as the careful manner in which U.S. livestock is raised.

“We really appreciate the foresight the Nebraska Soybean Board has shown in sponsoring these important promotions events,” Seng said. “Direct marketing at the supermarket and restaurant level is important, no question about that. But we also need the resources and the creativity to focus on long-term demand and appeal to the next generation of consumers. That’s the only way U.S. pork will remain the market leader in Japan, and continue to reap the benefits this market delivers.”
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Nebraska Soybean Farmers Could Gain from Recent Free Trade Agreements

– by the United Soybean Board

Soybean farmers across Nebraska stand to benefit from recent congressional passage of the U.S. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. The three FTAs gained approval by both the U.S. House and Senate recently after nearly five years of negotiations.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack said the passage of these agreements could translate into more than $2.3 billion in additional agricultural exports a year, which could support nearly 20,000 jobs here at home.

USDA data shows that in 2010 Nebraska exported $5.3 billion agricultural products, with $1.8 billion coming from soybeans and soy products.

“The free trade agreements will help soybean farmers by broadening our export customer base to more countries...”

According to the USDA, the greatest potential benefit of the U.S.-Korea Trade Agreement (KORUS) will likely come from improved access to Korea’s 11.02-million-bushel market for food-grade soybeans by eliminating a 5 percent applied tariff on food-use soybeans. The KORUS agreement will also create immediate duty-free access to U.S. soybeans and soybean meal, and reduce tariffs on crude soybean oil, soybean flour and meal.

Currently, Colombia has a system that results in tariffs as high as the 150 percent World Trade Organization ceiling. USDA says that the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (Colombia TPA) will immediately eliminate tariffs ranging from 5-20 percent on U.S. soybeans, soybean meal and soybean flour, and phasing out the 24 percent tariffs for crude soybean oil and refined soybean oil over five years.

The implementation of the Panama FTA will immediately lock in place the current zero-tariff treatment on soybeans, soybean meal and crude soybean oil says USDA. The agreement will also phase out the 20 percent tariff on refined U.S. soybean oil over the next 15 years.

All three of the trade agreements will be put into effect on January 1, 2012.

U.S. soybean farmers exported over 1.54 billion bushels of whole soybeans in the past marketing year.
CONSUMERS aren’t getting the real story about American agriculture. Luckily, there is a group of farm women out to change that by doing something extraordinary.

There are a lot of folks weighing in on the food system these days; we just want to make sure they’re getting the whole story. That’s why the United Soybean Board and the National Corn Board, along with the Nebraska Soybean Board and Nebraska Corn Board, have teamed up to create a new movement in which farm women and urban women are working to find their common ground. Our program, aptly named CommonGround, is all about starting a conversation between women who grow food and the women who buy it. This is our chance to set the record straight by helping urban consumers get the facts about food and farming that they need in order make the decisions that are right for them and their families.

Nebraska was one of five states originally selected to launch the program, along with Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky and South Dakota. Since then, eight additional states have joined the program: Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and South Carolina.

CommonGround Nebraska kicked off its activities with a grocery store event at Hy-Vee in Lincoln on February 26, with its three original volunteers, Shana Beattie, from Sumner; Dawn Caldwell, from Edgar and Kristen Eggerling, from Martell. Six additional volunteers were added in June, bringing the total to nine with the additions of Diane Becker, Madison; Leslie Boswell, Shickley; Chandra Horky, Sargent; Hilary Maricle, Albion; Joan Ruskamp, Dodge and Linda Schwarz, Bertrand.

These volunteer farm women have been working hard to spread agriculture’s message at grocery store events, club meetings, food fairs and other food-related events. As the disconnect between consumers and the farm keeps growing, this program and others like it are more important than ever. Consumers are growing more interested in where their food is coming from, and CommonGround volunteers are using their stories to help consumers better understand today’s food system. Family farms have anchored U.S. agriculture for generations, and the CommonGround volunteers help tell that story.

The Nebraska Soybean Board and Nebraska Corn Board provide resources and line up meetings and events for volunteers to attend. The farm women volunteer their time completely to help share ag’s story. Most of the women also blog, and you can read more about them and their effort to spread the word about agriculture at www.commongroundnebraska.com.

We encourage you to find out more information on the CommonGround movement and find ways that you can become an advocate for agriculture. We hope you will join in the conversation.
More than 300 women in agriculture converged on Northeast Community College’s (NECC) campus for the third annual Ag-ceptional Women’s conference on Friday, November 18, in Norfolk. As in years past, this year’s attendance had to be capped at 300, not including 20 presenters and 38 vendor booths. Despite the conference’s overwhelming popularity, it grew from humble beginnings.

The idea for a conference in northeast Nebraska began as a conversation between Ag Technology Instructor, Bonnie Schulz and the Associate Dean of Agriculture, Heath and Science Division, Corinne Morris about what Northeast Community College could do to reach adult women in agriculture. Schulz suggested that NECC host a conference similar to the Women in Ag conference hosted in Kearney each year.

In the fall of 2008, Schulz and Morris invited several women in agriculture from around the area to hold a focus meeting and the AG-ceptional Women’s Committee came up with the following goals:

• Activate Women in Agriculture Group.
• Study the educational needs of women in agriculture and provide appropriate responses.
• Contribute to rural revitalization through ag education.

Morris said that since the first event in the fall of 2009, the Ag-ceptional Women’s Conference has received tremendous support from the agriculture industry and media; however, the event’s gained popularity primarily by farm women telling friends and family. “Word of mouth has been our strongest ally. Our committee members initiated many conversations to build interest. Also, by providing a positive experience the first year, we were able to have hundreds of women spread the word. They got something they needed from the conference and they wanted to tell others,” Morris said.

This year’s conference included a presentation about the CommonGround program from volunteer Dawn Caldwell. In her presentation, Caldwell spoke about the importance of men and women of agriculture to be proactive in sharing stories and information with consumers about what they are doing on their farms. Caldwell said she thought that the Ag-ceptional conference was a perfect setting to share the CommonGround message. “Too often, as farmers, we can get defensive about farming practices different than those we use on our own farms. It was super rewarding for me to share with the group how to discuss all types of agriculture in a positive light. I think we found some ‘common ground’ among fellow farmers as well as conversation starters for ‘common ground’ with consumers.”

Much of the common ground she found with the audience came through laughter, as Caldwell illustrated the misconceptions many consumers have due to being three to four generations removed from the farm. One of the highlights of her presentation came when she shared a story she heard with the audience that involved a vegetarian on an airplane who ate chicken wings, “because they grow back.”

Peggy Kline also provided a keynote address that touched on the importance of women finding ways to treat themselves like royalty. Kline, who also relied heavily on humor, highlighted the many common situations, worries and fears that women share in day-to-day life.

The conference also featured breakout sessions on everything from agribusiness to health and home management. During a special presentation, Jan Miller, of Belden, was awarded the Ag-ceptional Woman of the Year Award and there was a video presentation in her honor. Morris said that she thinks the conference was such a huge success again this year because of how many amazing women are willing to collaborate and share their talents to promote the cause. “These women truly value the opportunity to get together. Although they love the food, I think women enjoyed the chance to network and share a common experience with people like themselves. Ag-ceptional Women’s Committee member and CommonGround volunteer, Joan Ruskamp also coined the phrase, ‘educate, motivate, and celebrate women in Agriculture.’ I think that sums it up pretty well.”
Soybean Sampling Tour 2011

— by Teri Koch

- Sampling Crop Tour participants from China, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Thailand traveled 8 days throughout the Western Corn Belt to collect 2011 soybean samples, observe fall harvest conditions, and better acquaint themselves with U.S. producers and grain systems.

- 281 samples were collected from five Midwestern States – North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska.

- The average moisture content of the 2011 samples were about 3 percentage points lower than 2010 and 2009 samples.

- In the October 12th Crop Production Report, USDA reduced soybean yield forecasts for three states – Iowa (50.5 bu/acre), Nebraska (54.0 bu/acre), and North Dakota (30.0 bu/acre).

- The general comment from producers was that the soybeans handled the pressure of summer weather better than corn and that their soybean yields were “above average.”

- By October 16th, USDA reported our soybean harvest areas as roughly 88% complete due to ideal harvest conditions.

- Nationally, the 2011 harvest samples collected indicate that the crop did not improve in quality from last year regarding crude protein and fat.

- However, Iowa had the largest fall in crude protein of over a full percentage point, while Nebraska had the largest gain.

- We look forward to revisiting these states in the coming years to develop an early-harvest soybean quality information base to assist buyers with purchase plans from the western Corn Belt locations and AGP processing plants.
It’s been a busy fall for staff and our farmer-directors. With harvest finally finished, state and national meetings are on the horizon. This means two things – travel and more travel. At the last United Soybean Board meeting, I learned some new communication techniques and it sparked a few ideas. The first being, people like question and answer formatted interviews (see below). They’re relevant and easier to read than one big body of words. The other thing that I learned was that a writer has nine seconds to grab a reader’s attention, so hopefully I haven’t lost yours yet!

As farmers, we look at the markets daily. Heck, maybe even hourly. Sometimes their up ten, sometimes down ten…sometimes more. But what really determines what the markets do? Is it Flooding? Drought? Supply? Demand? Foreign buyers? Fact is, it’s all of them and then some. My morning call wasn’t about the markets though, it was about the importance of what we can control as producers – our attitudes towards our buyers.

**Trade Teams Visit BRT Farms**

— by Andy Chvatal

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Andy: Good morning, Rich.
Richard: Good morning, Andy.
A: I have just a handful of questions for you this morning, so I’ll get to it. From a farmer’s perspective, why is it important to know who your customers are?
R: Well, our end user determines what our product is worth. What they need is what we have got to produce. It all comes down to making them happy, which in turn will make us happy as well.
A: Do their needs mirror how we choose to grow soybeans?
R: No, I don’t really believe that’s the case at this point-in-time. When it comes to farming, we try to raise the highest yielding bean we can get. And rightfully so, the more you produce is the more you get paid. But in the long run, if they don’t like what we raise then they can look towards South America, or elsewhere. If we can’t get rid of our product, then it’s really going to reflect in the price we receive.
A: When selecting seed, would it be wise to find a handful of high-yielding varieties and then re-order them based on protein and oil content?
R: Yes, I think things could change here quickly and we NEED to focus on our quality concerns just as much as our quantity concerns, if not more.

A: So, I call you up and ask you to host a trade team tomorrow. What is the day going to look like at BRT Farms?
R: Andy, don’t call me tomorrow. We’re busy.
A: Haha, figured you would be.
R: I’m just kidding. No, we love hosting trade teams. Even if we’re harvesting, we’ll take the time to be good hosts. It’s fun showing them how we operate and what our machinery looks like. The most important thing is to be hospitable. Depending on the time of day, we’ll always have coffee and rolls or drinks and snacks. We won’t hide anything. We’ll take them to the field, let them sit in the combine, and show them how our grain handling system works.
A: What countries have you had visitors from?
R: Well, it really all started with my dad many years ago. We’ve had visitors from Czechoslovakia, Taiwan, Yugoslavia, Romania, Russia, Japan, China and Argentina. We’ve gotten all kinds of visitors with jobs that range from marketing and purchasing, to food and livestock production.
A: How important is family farming in your operation?
R: Family farming is our operation. I farm with my two brothers, Bob and Tim, and Bob’s son Chad. Tim’s boys, Aaron and Kyle, help us as well when we need it. My wife, Kelly, has really become understanding of how the farming operation works and she really enjoys hosting these foreign trade teams as well.
A: Every time that I’ve stopped out, she’s been nothing short of welcoming.
R: She loves making them feel like they’re at home, especially making sure they have all they want to eat and drink. Making them feel comfortable goes a long way in talking business with them. If any soybean farmers have any doubts or curiosities, they’re welcome to call us and we’ll have them out the next time a trade team stops by.
A: How was harvest this year?
R: Better than I thought it would be. We had some pollination problems from the July heat, but yields were good and the weather was perfect for harvest. We’re better off than others in our area and our country and we really ought to be thankful for that.
A: Thanks for your time this morning and I’m sure I’ll be seeing you soon.
R: Thanks, Andy. And keep sending them trade teams our way!
The **Grand Ole Opry** Sets the Stage for Commodity Classic Attendees

An exclusive performance at the Grand Ole Opry awaits those attending the Evening of Entertainment at the 2012 Commodity Classic, March 1-3 in Nashville, Tennessee. Commodity Classic is the nation’s largest farmer-led, farmer-focused convention and trade show, presented annually by the American Soybean Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Association of Wheat Growers and National Sorghum Producers.

This year Commodity Classic attendees are lucky to have the chance to visit the place that led the way for Nashville to become Music City. Since its humble beginning as a simple radio broadcast in 1925, the Grand Ole Opry has featured a mix of country legends and the contemporary chart-toppers. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people make pilgrimages to Nashville to see the show live.

Commodity Classic, held March 1-3, 2012 offers a wide range of learning and networking opportunities for growers and the agricultural industry in the areas of production, policy, marketing, management and stewardship, while providing state-of-the-art exhibits of the latest in equipment, technology and innovation. For more information, visit www.CommodityClassic.com.

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**Dorns Selected as the 2012 ASA/DuPont Young Leaders representing Nebraska**

Nathan and Stacy Dorn of Hickman, Nebraska have been selected as the Nebraska Soybean Association’s (NSA) 2012 Young Leaders. The Dorns were chosen from a group of applicants by the NSA Young Leader committee.

The Young Leader Program is sponsored by the American Soybean Association and Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business. It is designed to recognize and strengthen leadership in the agricultural community as well as cultivate producer leaders who are shaping the U.S. soybean industry.

The Dorns are involved with the family corn, soybean, wheat and alfalfa crop operation in Lancaster county where they also have a cow/calf and cattle operation. In addition to farming, the couple is involved with their local church and school.

Nathan says, “The top issue facing our industry today is sustainability. Not only in farming practices but where the next generation of farmers are going to come from. How can we train and replace the generation of farmers we are losing?”

Nathan and Stacy will join the 2012 class of Young Leaders, which is made up of selected leaders from each soybean producing state, to participate in a challenging and educational leadership experience. Part one was held November 29 – December 2, at Pioneer headquarters in Johnston, Iowa. They will complete the second part of training February 28 – March 3, 2012 in Nashville, TN in conjunction with the annual Commodity Classic. This seminar offers the opportunity for participants to enhance their leadership skills, as well as meet other Young Leaders from around the United States.
Clean Bean Benefits  
— Steve Werblow

It’s widely recognized that early weed competition can take a mighty bite out of soybean yields. Iowa State University weed scientist, Bob Hartzler calculated that every day’s delay in weed control after the one- or two-trifoliate stage of soybean growth can cost one percent in yield. But weeds may also provide habitat for pathogens, nematodes and insects, creating a reservoir of challenges that can pummel your emerging crop.

That means weed control is about more than just safeguarding your crop’s access to moisture, nutrients and light, notes David Wright, director of research for the North Central Soybean Research Program. “It’s not just weed control – it’s integrated crop management,” he says. “Weeds, pathogens and insects are part of an ecosystem in the field. They’re all connected.”

Wide Host Range

“The idea of a reservoir is something I’ve thought about in the past, but I don’t think there’s been much work on that in soybeans,” says Carl Bradley, Extension plant pathologist at the University of Illinois. In fact, while pursuing his graduate school research, he noted that purple seed stain (Cercospora kikuchii) was significantly more prevalent in weedy plots than in herbicide-treated ones. The same phenomenon may occur with other diseases.

At Iowa State University, plant pathologist Alison Robertson takes a similar tack. “Pythium, Rhizoctonia, Fusarium – they have a wide host range, so I don’t see why weeds wouldn’t host them as well,” she says. “White mold will infect many different species, so some weeds will serve as host. Similarly, some weeds can serve as host for the stem canker pathogen, and there are a couple of weeds that are host to the bean pod mottle virus.”

In fact, Robertson adds, the bean leaf beetles that are a major vector of bean pod mottle virus also feed on certain weeds. Though bean leaf beetles haven’t been a problem for several years, she notes, the possibility exists that they may reemerge as a challenge – and when they do, the advance wave is likely to feed on early-season legumes.

Looking Ahead

At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, plant pathologist Tamra Jackson says soybean cyst nematode could be on the list of pathogens harbored by weeds.

“We know there is a whole list of weeds that are hosts for soybean cyst nematodes – common winter annuals like henbit,” she says. “The soybean cyst nematode’s life cycle at optimum temperatures is as short as 28 days. My suspicion is that early season weed control would be important.

“Thinking ahead to a future corn crop, many nematodes damage corn, and some of those can also feed in soybeans and have a wider host range,” Jackson adds. “In soybeans, if you don’t control your grassy weeds or even your volunteer corn, it may impact the success of your rotation for managing future crops.”

Lessons from the Northwest?

Though the links between weeds and crop pests in soybeans are relatively uncharted, wheat and barley growers are quite familiar with the concept.

“Some of the concepts of a weed reservoir of pathogens can be similar to what was seen in cereals with Rhizoctonia in Oregon and Washington,” says Bradley.

Does weed control do more for your soybeans than just killing weeds?

At the USDA-Agricultural Research Service’s Root Disease and Biological Control Research Unit at Washington State University, Research Plant Pathologist Tim Paulitz says wheat growers in the Palouse region of Washington, Oregon and Idaho typically wait two to three weeks between burning down weeds and seeding spring cereals, heading two decades’ worth of research that shows that the practice significantly reduces Rhizoctonia infection.

Paulitz explains that weeds serve as a “green bridge” that carries pathogens – especially Rhizoctonia – from one season to the next. Blowing that bridge requires controlling the weeds long enough before planting to let pathogens die off before the next crop is planted.

Rhizoctonia builds up on the large root masses of volunteer cereals and other grassy weeds, says Paulitz. Applying glyphosate makes the problem worse because the herbicide’s mode of action disarms weeds’ natural defense against disease.

“Once you knock that defense out, the pathogen really takes control of the weed,” he says “You create ideal conditions for Rhizoctonia, Pythium and take-all to move in. Once they kill the root, they gobble up the dead tissue.”

No Silver Bullet

Of course, fungi, nematodes and insects aren’t entirely dependent upon weeds to carry over to a new season. Hard-walled sclerotia can help fungi such as Rhizoctonia and white mold survive in the soil for years, and nematodes may survive deep underground for many seasons. But well-timed weed control could turn out to be part of a good overall pest management program, and may help provide your crop with a leg up in the spring.

For more information on pathogens, nematodes, insects and weeds, visit the Soybean Plant Health Initiative web site at www.planthealth.info.
YOUR SOYBEAN CHECKOFF IS HERE.
Working with researchers to provide a competitive edge to the U.S. soybean farmer.

By pursuing advancements in key areas such as pest management and disease prevention, soybean checkoff-supported research has helped U.S. soybean production grow from 1.98 billion bushels in 1991 to a forecast of 3.32 billion - 2010.

“Checkoff dollars help bring the research community and soybean breeding community together and really develop collaborations that focus on U.S. soybean-specific problems. In the early days of soybean genomics, it was really checkoff funds that got us started. The ultimate gain of this research impacts U.S. farm-gate profit.”

Gary Stacey, Ph.D.
Associate Director, National Center for Soybean Biotechnology
University of Missouri

Find more information on Biobased Products. Visit www.nebraskasoybeans.org