

# THE NORTH DAKOTA Soybean GROWER MAGAZINE

VOLUME 9 • ISSUE 3  
JUNE 2020



**INSIDE**  
Transportation  
Provides the  
Crucial Link

PAGE 16

**CAUTION**  
HELP PREVENT FIRE  
Do not use any flammable or  
combustible liquids or gases.  
Do not use any open flames.  
Do not smoke while operating.  
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80  
MICRON



## ERIC NELSON

DEKALB® ASGROW® BRAND TECHNICAL AGRONOMIST  
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

*Seeds and agronomy. They're the one-two punch for improving performance in any field. That's why farmers in southeast North Dakota and northwest Minnesota rely on DEKALB® Asgrow® technical agronomist Eric Nelson for management advice. He's been working in the region for eight years and is a great source for local knowledge. Here he addresses some of this year's pressing management questions.*

# ASK AN AGRONOMIST

## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MANAGE WHITE MOLD IN-SEASON?

Sclerotinia white mold has been easier to limit than it is to manage in-season. Several fungicides can provide some level of disease suppression. Therefore, outbreaks may be reduced by applying fungicides during flowering. The best timing for application is R1-R3 to protect senescing flowers from infection. Adequate coverage deep into the canopy and timing are important, so good application techniques are critical. Nozzle selection, gallonage and pressure will all be important. Fungicides will be most effective if applied as a preventative measure rather than as a rescue, since efficacy for white mold declines significantly after symptoms become visible on plants. Fungicides are not a silver bullet for white mold control but can decrease severity. Paying attention to cultural practices before the crop is planted is key as well.

## LOOKING AHEAD, WHAT CULTURAL PRACTICES WILL HELP NEXT YEAR?

There are a handful of cultural practices that will help lessen the incidence and severity of this disease before the crop is planted.

**Crop rotation:** We mostly think of white mold as a soybean disease, and then we add in the history of edible beans, sunflowers and canola as crops that can increase inoculum levels. Any time the length of the rotation gets shorter, the incidence of white mold in soybeans can increase. As you put together your crop plan, consider your previous white mold pressure in all crops on your farm.

**Product selection:** Especially in fields that you know are at higher risk for white mold infestation, choose soybean products that

are as tolerant of white mold as possible. This will be affected by not just plant type, but an inherent tolerance that helps the plants survive infection. No soybean products are completely resistant, but tolerant products can be effective.

**FUNGICIDES WILL BE MOST EFFECTIVE IF APPLIED AS A PREVENTATIVE MEASURE RATHER THAN AS A RESCUE, SINCE EFFICACY FOR WHITE MOLD DECLINES SIGNIFICANTLY AFTER SYMPTOMS BECOME VISIBLE ON PLANTS.**

**Row spacing:** In low to moderate disease pressure environments, white mold increases as row spacing narrows. Air is more able to circulate to the soil surface, thus lowering humidity in wider rows. This slows spore formation and infection. High plant populations that narrow row spacings can increase white mold incidence due to higher humidity in the crop canopy.



ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW PESTICIDE LABEL DIRECTIONS. Performance may vary, from location to location and from year to year, as local growing, soil and weather conditions may vary. Growers should evaluate data from multiple locations and years whenever possible and should consider the impacts of these conditions on the grower's fields.

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## NORTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT

Joe Ericson, Wimbledon | D4 | joe.ericson@NDSGA.com

### VICE PRESIDENT

Ryan Pederson, Rolette | D7 | ryan.pederson@NDSGA.com

### SECRETARY

Greg Gussiaas, Carrington | D5 | greg.gussiaas@NDSGA.com

### TREASURER

Kasey Bitz, LaMoure | D2 | kasey.bitz@NDSGA.com

### DIRECTORS

Matt Swenson, Kindred | D1 | matt.swenson@NDSGA.com

Spencer Endrud, Buxton | D3 | kasey.bitz@NDSGA.com

Sam Landman, Northwood | D6 | sam.landman@NDSGA.com

Mike Appert, Hazellton | D8 | mike.appert@NDSGA.com

Logan Ferry, Manvel | At-Large | logan.ferry@NDSGA.com

Joshua Stutrud | At-Large | joshua.stutrud@NDSGA.com

Joshua Askew | At-Large | joshua.askew@NDSGA.com

Justin Sherlock | Corvea Young Leader | justin.sherlock@NDSGA.com

### AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS

Josh Gackle, Kulm | josh.gackle@NDSGA.com

Monte Peterson, Valley City | monte.peterson@NDSGA.com

## NORTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN COUNCIL

### CHAIRMAN

Austin Langley, Warwick | D9 | alangley@ndssoybean.org

### VICE CHAIRMAN

Chris Brossart, Wolford | D11 | cbrossart@ndssoybean.org

### SECRETARY

Mike Langseth, Barney | D1 | mlangseth@ndssoybean.org

### TREASURER

Dan Spiekermeier, Sheldon | D2 | dspiekermeier@ndssoybean.org

### DIRECTORS

Mike Schlosser, Edgeley | D3 | mschlosser@ndssoybean.org

Joe Morken, Casselton | D4 | jmorken@ndssoybean.org

Rob Rose, Wimbledon | D5 | rrose@ndssoybean.org

Levi Taylor, Ypsilanti | D6 | ltaylor@ndssoybean.org

Brian Jodock, Northwood | D7 | bjodock@ndssoybean.org

Milo Braaten, Sharon | D8 | mbraaten@ndssoybean.org

Adam Redmann, Saint Thomas | D10 | aredmann@ndssoybean.org

Jennifer Meyer, Wilton | D12 | jmeyer@ndssoybean.org

## UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD DIRECTORS

Jay Myers, Colfax | jmyers@rti.net

Darren Kadlec, Pisek | dkadlec@polarcomm.com

Matt Gast, Valley City | mgast85@gmail.com

Ryan Richard, Horace | ryanrichardusb@gmail.com

## STAFF CREDITS

### PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Nancy Johnson, NDSGA Executive Director  
nancy.johnson@NDSGA.com | (701) 640-5215

### STAFF WRITER

Suzanne Wolf, NDSC Communications Director  
swolf@ndssoybean.org | (701) 566-9300

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Daniel Lemke

Stephanie Sinner

### CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Wanbaugh Studios

Betsy Armour Images

### NORTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN COUNCIL

4852 Rocking Horse Circle South, Fargo, ND 58104  
(701) 566-9300 | www.ndsoybean.org

### NORTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

4852 Rocking Horse Circle South, Fargo, ND 58104  
(701) 566-9300 | www.ndsoygrowers.com

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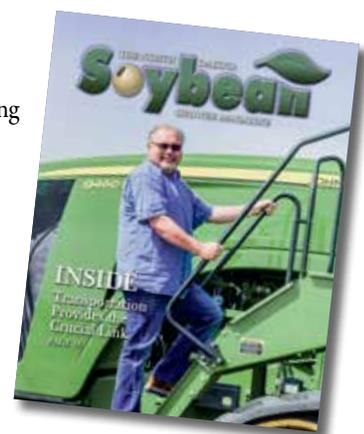
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# O

## n the cover

Doyle Lentz has spent nearly four decades advocating for and helping shape North Dakota agriculture. Leadership roles in state and national organizations have taken Lentz around the world and given him a unique perspective on trade and other important farm issues. The Rolla, North Dakota farmer shares some of his insights in this issue.

—Photo courtesy of Betsy Armour Images



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## Ag Conservation and Stewardship

There have not been many legislative assignments in February or March, but on March 12, I attended the very first Agricultural Conservation and Stewardship Roundtable, followed by the Ag Coalition meeting at the North Dakota Heritage Center.

The first meeting was an attempt by North Dakota's soil conservation districts to engage the representatives of commodity groups in the Ag Coalition to not only communicate what the conservation districts do, but also to look for conversation that might help people identify how they could more effectively serve the agriculture community. Board members and staff from around the state were well represented as they told us about farmers coming into the soil conservation district offices and asking about programs that are not part of the soil conservation organization. Because soil conservation is often co-located with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices, that confusion is understandable, especially when you know that partners, and supporting agencies and organizations include North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension, the USDA-NRCS, the Forest Service, the North Dakota Department of Game and Fish, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) and the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality.

The state soil conservation districts were founded about 90 years ago, so there would be a local presence with someone who could help producers. The soil conservation districts provide not only trees, but also agricultural education, conservation presentations, technical assistance and other services. It was a good meeting with fine people who have their work cut out for them when trying to get word to producers about what they can offer. They have a mill levy to work with and an office in all 53 counties, but offices are struggling

with wildly different funding that makes keeping some employees for any length of time perhaps their biggest problem, along with being readily identifiable by the county residents. Please go to the website or, better yet, stop by your county's soil conservation district office to become more familiar with it and its programs.

The Ag Coalition met and heard updates from State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE) Chair Mark Birdsall. He said that SBARE has held listening sessions around the state and will soon rank items for legislative attention. After Birdsall's update, the Ag Coalition voted Larry Hoffman into a second term on the SBARE board.

Dr. Greg Lardy of NDSU Extension provided an update about the fund drive for the Ag Product Development Center which had \$40 million appropriated by the legislature last session but needs another \$20 million from private funds before construction can begin. It is a heavy lift with about \$5 million raised so far.

Senator Robert Erbele followed with an explanation about where the interim Natural Resources Committee is with fashioning a pilot program for the hunting and posting issue. Basically, the committee has identified three counties, scattered across the state, which want to be involved with the pilot program. The project focuses on making a database that shows how people responsible for posting land would like the access for hunting on their land represented. A lot has been done



**Veteran lawmaker and educator Phil Murphy is the NDSGA liaison between legislators and farmers.**

on this issue, with much still to do, but like all other interim committees, meetings have been postponed indefinitely by COVID-19.

Representative Dennis Johnson, chair of the Agriculture and Transportation Committee, updated us on what the NDDA has done about the grain licensing program, an effort, to my mind, that has been speedy and helpful. Again, there is much to do, and progress for this committee has been hampered by the virus which is affecting too many of our lives. Like so many plans and events, we will have to wait and see how this interim, and potentially the upcoming regular legislative assembly, session moves forward.

### PROBLEMS WITH GOOSE DEPREDATION?

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department and USDA Wildlife Services offer assistance programs for producers who are experiencing crop depredation by geese, including scare devices, harassment techniques and training.

For chronic problems on agricultural land, special depredation permits are available that allow destruction of nests and eggs, and direct killing of Canada geese and goslings that do not respond to nonlethal deterrents.

Producers who have not had a depredation permit in the past require a site inspection from USDA Wildlife Services, and can call 701-355-3300 to begin the process. For more information about Canada goose depredation permits, visit the Game and Fish website at [www.gf.nd.gov/plots/landowner](http://www.gf.nd.gov/plots/landowner), and scroll down to "Depredation Assistance." Qualified previous permit holders can renew their permit at the Game and Fish web address above, or call 701-328-6610.

### NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

100 North Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095

701.328.6351 Email: [ndgf@nd.gov](mailto:ndgf@nd.gov) Web: [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov)



## North Dakota Farmers Practice Productive Isolation

Until the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, few of us had likely ever heard the term “social distancing.” Keeping a six-foot distance from each other during the outbreak was a widely used practice which was intended to limit the virus’ spread.

Farmers in North Dakota know a little about how to operate under social-distancing parameters. North Dakota’s sheer geographic size and the fact that we’re a largely rural state mean that, by nature, we’re far more isolated than our city cousins. Most of us appreciate the open space and the ability to operate our farms independently, relying on favorable weather and our own management to achieve success.

While we appreciate the independence that farming offers, we also know the value of cooperation and recognize that agriculture is one part of a larger food system.

Most people in the United States take food security for granted. A trip to the local grocery store typically reveals a wide selection of foods in abundant supply. In addition to teaching us social distancing, the coronavirus outbreak should help us gain an appreciation for the supply chain that links farmers with transporters, processors, marketers

and retailers to keep those store shelves stocked. Spot product shortages during panic buying in the pandemic’s early days illustrate that it takes a lot of often-unseen effort to keep products available for consumers.

Other unseen efforts include activities undertaken by the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) during this unprecedented situation in our nation. NDSGA members and farmer leaders have participated in numerous on-line meetings, webinars and other activities with business leaders, state officials and our federal delegation.

NDSGA’s role is to advocate for the state’s soybean industry and farmers. We’ve shared our thoughts and information with our congressman as well as our senators as they grapple with decisions and responses to fallout from the coronavirus. We are committed to making sure they understand the needs of farmers and agribusinesses.

North Dakota farmers are now back isolating ourselves in the cabs of our tractors as we work to produce the 2020 crop. For most of us, there’s no place that we’d rather be than working the land and raising crops, but we’re also in tune to discussions



**Joe Ericson**  
President, North Dakota Soybean Growers Association

**Email:**  
joe.ericson@ndsga.com

**Website:**  
ndsoygrowers.com

that impact agriculture. We’re dedicated to doing our part to provide a stable, healthy and nutritious food supply now and in the future.

Have a safe and healthy year!



### Membership Application

To join ASA and the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association, complete and return this application with payment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Farm/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation (Please check all that apply)

- Farmer     Retired     Agribusiness  
 Finance     Elevator     Other

Do you raise:

- Cattle     Hogs     Poultry     Dairy

Do you currently grow soybeans?

- Yes     No

Soybean Acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Acres Farmed: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about NDSGA? (Please circle one)

Recruited in person; Recruited by phone, Magazine;  
Internet; Mailing; Radio; Event; Other

3-Year Membership \$200     1-Year Membership \$75

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# A Front Row Seat



**D**oyle Lentz has had an up-close perspective for some key agriculture challenges over the past four decades. In addition to operating a fourth-generation family farm near Rolla, North Dakota, Lentz has served in leadership roles which have given him a unique perspective on agriculture.

Lentz has been farming since 1980 and is currently working on the family's 120th crop year, growing wheat, barley, canola and soybeans.

Lentz says that he started dabbling with soybeans around 2000, planting just a few acres as a test plot. With no flex head for his combine, soybeans were cut with a swather and placed in windrows for

harvest. After a couple years, Lentz could see that there was some opportunity, so acreage expanded.

"Soybeans fit because companies are investing in the technology so that we can plant them up here," Lentz says. "We hardly ever seed the same variety two years in a row because there's something new or better. That's what makes us excited about growing soybeans. Our small plots have grown. This year, we'll have about 2,500 acres of beans."

For 37 years, Lentz has been involved with agriculture groups such as the North Dakota Barley Council, the Northern Crops Institute, and the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education. Lentz chaired the U.S. Grains Council's international market development efforts, a task which took him to over 40 countries while he was working to increase the demand for U.S. grains.

"I must raise my hand too much," Lentz quips. "When you're a million-mile flier on two different airlines, and you're just happy to be driving around the country, that pretty much tells you you've been gone from home plenty."

Lentz still co-chairs the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative, an effort which he and other farmers and researchers helped to start almost 25 years ago to battle the disease that nearly crippled the wheat industry.

"I'm the only farmer still on the board and the last of the original members," Lentz says. "The Scab Initiative has grown into a 30-university, \$15 million effort."

## Global View

From his farm a scant 15 miles from Canada, Lentz has acquired a real-world perspective on trade and international markets. In addition to his agriculture service, Lentz served as a World Trade Organization negotiator and helped to negotiate the original North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). He spent more than a year flying to Ottawa and Mexico City to help hammer out the agreement.

"Trade agreements are important, but how you implement them is a whole different thing," Lentz says.

Like many farmers, Lentz wasn't in favor of the trade war with China, preferring a negotiation approach to resolve trade issues rather than the imposition of tariffs. The resulting trade disruption with China has hurt many North Dakota farmers.

"Traditionally, our soybeans go to the Pacific Northwest," Lentz explains. "The trade war really changed our flow of beans."

Even with the Phase One trade deal with China signed, Lentz remains dubious that it will deliver what farmers need. The day he read the agreement, he sold all of his soybeans and oilseeds.

"It wasn't worth the paper it's printed on because there's no teeth if the Chinese choose not to comply. We just go back to the tariffs, which is where we were already," Lentz contends.

In the Phase One agreement, China agreed to buy \$80 billion of agriculture goods over the next two years. In 2017, China purchased \$24 billion of U.S. commodities. China



**Lentz has served as a World Trade Organization negotiator and had a hand in crafting the initial NAFTA agreement.**

pledged to use that amount as the baseline for each of the next two years as well as buying an additional \$12.5 billion in 2020 and an additional \$19.5 in 2021. Lentz is concerned that those purchase numbers are not realistic, especially in light of the global coronavirus pandemic.

### Challenges Ahead

With nearly 40 growing seasons under his belt, Lentz recognizes that the biggest need for most farmers is to achieve or to maintain profitability, which can be a challenge with the current economics.

“Soybean markets are nowhere near where we want them to be. On the other hand, markets aren’t good on any of the other commodities either. We’re trying to find a crop we can lose the least amount on right now,” Lentz says.

According to Lentz, getting the markets flowing to move volumes of grain is vital. There are agreements in place, but commodities aren’t moving full speed yet. Until large-scale movement occurs, prices are likely to remain depressed.

“We also have an oversupply of soybeans. At some point, we’re going to have to deal with that oversupply,” Lentz says. “The best cure for low prices is low prices.”

### Eyes Up

Despite the current economic challenges in agriculture, Lentz says that he wouldn’t still be farming if he didn’t see opportunities. He’s optimistic about trade opportunities because negotiators are talking with Chinese officials in addition to having other conversations.

“We’ve learned that we don’t want to become too reliant on one customer like we had been. Looking at marketing opportunities where we traditionally haven’t been is an opportunity,” Lentz says.

Even in the tough times, Lentz sees an opportunity for young farmers. He explains how they’ve learned that they have to be smart and efficient to make it through difficulties.



**Lentz says that while difficult economic times aren’t fun for anyone, those conditions can help farmers refine and improve their management.**

“It’s not all \$5 corn and \$11 beans all the time,” Lentz declares. “I know it’s harsh, but those are the things that taught me back in the ‘70s and ‘80s. They’re good life lessons to learn. They hurt, but they’re good lessons to learn because they make you better in the long run. We all know that, in this business, nothing is forever, so you have to make sure that you’re positioned so the bad times can be weathered, too.”

Lentz says that among his keys to success are trying to recognize trends and growing what customers want to buy. He also recommends being innovative and trying something new.

“I see the young guys, and I encourage them to seed a little corn, see how it works. Eventually, we’ll probably be growing corn up here,” Lentz says. “Don’t wait until the day after you should have been growing a

commodity to do it.”

Lentz explains that he’s also a big proponent of building relationships, whether it’s with the local grain elevator manager or a customer from across the globe.

“It’s all about getting along, so you can sell your product,” Lentz explains.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by Betsy Armour Images

# Opportunity in the Challenge

**F**arming has never been for the faint of heart. The variability of weather and markets, both of which are outside the farmer's control, can be enough of a challenge. Throw in an extremely difficult fall harvest, the ongoing repercussions of a trade war with China and now a global pandemic, and it seems that hardly anything about farm life is normal or certain.

Despite those challenges, farmers and ag leaders are going to step up and face the future like we always have: with courage, determination and leadership.

When I started farming, I was also interested in serving my community and helping the agriculture industry progress. We often think that, if we do our best and raise a good crop, we're going to be successful. I've learned that profitability and success go much deeper than just being a good producer. The reality is that we need leaders to help make inroads with trading partners and emerging markets in order to build global demand, so when we leave grain at the elevator, it has somewhere to go.

To make sure we have opportunities, we can't sit by and hope. We have to be proactive and promote the fact that our soybeans have the best nutritional bundles available to consumers worldwide.

Not long ago, there wasn't a big global soybean demand. Soybean farmers built relationships in China, which led to that country becoming the world's biggest soybean importer. Much of that growth came about because soybean industry leaders recognized the opportunity which China presented and made the commitment to build long-term relationships. Today, industry leaders are working in dozens of countries that have the potential to purchase more U.S. soybeans while simultaneously maintaining relationships with our important current customers.

The North Dakota Soybean Council (Council) works to build demand for North Dakota-grown soybeans and to support efforts that increase farmer profitability. Frankly, as farmers, we're better at growing the supply than we are at growing the demand. The Council's role is to help build demand and to

create space for those soybeans.

None of us want to deal with difficulties, and we can get nervous when times are tough. Challenges present an opportunity for good people to lead and to make a difference. The Council has 12 great farmer-leaders on the board. They all bring innovative ideas and a real passion for agriculture.

The Council not only works to create demand, but also to maintain relationships. Just like we, as farmers, have developed relationships with the trusted business partners with whom we work year after year, we, as an industry, need to build and to maintain relationships with customers who want our soybeans.

To get through our current challenges, we will have to work hard, and we have to be strong. We also have to adapt. That adaptability includes coming up with new ways of doing business to increase farm profitability.

In addition to market development, the Council also supports the creation of new soybean uses. There are exciting developments which have led to soybean oil being used to make tires. There are dust suppressants and building materials, including plastics, which are made from soy.

Technology will help us expand the list of soy-based products that help to increase soybean demand.

There's no doubt that times are tough for agriculture. The harder we push, the more we lead, and the more innovative we become, the greater the likelihood that we'll have a better tomorrow. We'll come through this situation even stronger and more prepared to adapt to whatever the future holds.



**Austin Langley**  
North Dakota Soybean Council Chairman

**Email:**  
alangle@ndsoybean.org

**Website:**  
www.ndsoybean.org



**FRIDAY, AUGUST 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
7PM - 10PM

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup>**  
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# New Directors Elected to the North Dakota Soybean Council

The North Dakota Soybean Council (Council) recently welcomed two new directors to its board. Their official terms began on April 1, 2020.

Wilton soybean farmer Jennifer



Jennifer Meyer

Meyer is the first woman to be elected to the Council. She was elected to represent soybean farmers in District 12 which consists of 21 southwest North Dakota counties. Meyer and her husband produce grain crops, with soybeans being one of their largest crops, along with operating a cow/calf operation. Meyer is currently the president for the North Dakota Cooperative Director's Association, vice president for Farmers Union Oil of Wilton and active with the North Dakota Farmers Union. She holds a degree in criminal justice.

"I am excited to be the representative for District 12 on the North Dakota Soybean Council," says Meyer. "I believe the council is an important tool to help North Dakota farmers provide resources and information, and bring a unified voice when it comes to the challenges we face in the

industry and in the country. I look forward to working with farmers here and across the state to represent our industry."

Milo Braaten, a soybean farmer from Portland, was elected to represent District 8 which includes the counties of Nelson, Griggs and Steele. He farms with his two sons. They produce soybeans, corn, edible beans and sunflowers. Over the years, Braaten has been involved with numerous boards, including the Steele County Farm Bureau as president, the Portland Credit Union as a board member and chairman, the Finley Farmers Elevator board, the Bang Church board as president and the Enger Township Board as its current chairman. He has a degree from Moorhead Technical College.

"I am honored to be elected to the North Dakota Soybean Council," says

Braaten. "I look forward to working with farmers from around the state to help the soybean industry grow."

Adam Redmann, a soybean producer from Saint Thomas, was re-elected to represent soybean farmers in District 10 which includes Cavalier, Pembina and Walsh Counties. Redmann and his father raise soybeans, corn, pinto beans and pink beans. Redmann is involved with his local church and has a finance degree from the University of North Dakota.

Soybean producer Dan Spiekermeier from Sheldon was re-elected to represent soybean farmers in District 2 which includes Ransom and Sargent Counties. Spiekermeier and his son raise soybeans, corn, wheat, barley and sunflowers. He is a board member for the Ransom County Farmers Union and the Enderlin Rural Fire District. Spiekermeier is an assistant chief for the Enderlin-Sheldon Fire Department.

"We are excited to welcome Jennifer Meyer and Milo Braaten to the board. We look forward to working with them as they serve on behalf of their fellow North Dakota soybean producers," says Stephanie Sinner, NDSC executive director. "We also congratulate Dan Spiekermeier and Adam Redmann on their re-election to the board and look forward to their continued leadership."

—Story by staff, photos courtesy of Jennifer Meyer and Milo Braaten



Milo Braaten

## Do You Know Beans?

Attend NDSU Summer Field Days Featuring Soybeans and you will!

Due to COVID-19, please contact Extension Offices to confirm schedule and agendas

### TENTATIVE AGENDAS

**July 8** Dickinson Research Extension Center [typically 8:30 a.m. to noon MDT, for information call (701) 456-1100]

**July 8** NDSU Williston Research Extension Center, Dryland Tour [3:00 p.m., for information call (701) 774-4315]

**July 9** NDSU Williston Research Extension Center, Nesson Valley Irrigation Tour [8:30 a.m., for information call (701) 774-4315]

**July 13** NDSU Casselton Agronomy Seed Farm Tour [5:00 p.m., for information call (701) 347-4743]

**July 14** NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center Field Day [for information call (701) 652-2951]

**July 15** North Central Research Extension Center, Minot [pest clinic 8:30 a.m., tour 9:00 a.m., for information call (701) 857-7677]

**July 16** NDSU Langdon Research Extension Center [8:00 a.m., Field Tours 8:30–noon]

**August 4** NDSU Oakes Irrigation Research Site Robert Titus Research Farm Field Day [information call (701) 742-2189]

**August 27\*** NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center Row Crop Tour [for information call (701) 652-2951]

\*Tentative date



# NDSU



# North Dakota Soybean Council *Welcomes* Jena Bjertness as Director of Market Development

**T**he North Dakota Soybean Council (Council) is excited to announce the addition of Jena Bjertness to its staff team. Effective March 25, 2020, she is the director of market development.

“The Council is very pleased to have Jena Bjertness join our team as the director of market development,” says Council Executive Director Stephanie Sinner. “This position serves a critical role supporting the North Dakota soybean producers and the industry. Jena brings to the position true passion and enthusiasm for working for North Dakota soybean producers. Jena’s expertise will help our producers succeed in

promoting North Dakota soybeans around the world. We are delighted to have Jena on our staff!”

Bjertness is originally from Vermillion, Minnesota. In 2015, she received a master’s degree from North Dakota State University (NDSU) in animal science (emphasis nutrition). She also has a bachelor’s degree in animal science and microbiology from NDSU. Most recently, Bjertness was the program manager for the Northern Crops Institute and was tasked with managing soy industry relationships and programming. Bjertness’ background also includes technical laboratory experience at several livestock feed testing labs and

internships which involved livestock extension programming. She has experience with livestock nutrition, global soybean markets and managing commodity-related programming.

“I am excited to join the North Dakota Soybean Council staff as their director of market development,” says Bjertness. “I have seen firsthand the valuable work checkoff dollars can do for grain marketing and exports. This knowledge will enable me to foster new relationships that continue to utilize soybean checkoff dollars in their most lucrative manner. I am also excited to continue my work with the national soybean organizations.”

—Story by staff, photo by NDSU



Jena Bjertness

## Celebrate *Summer* with Simple Soy Deliciousness!



**T**ofu, also known as soybean curd, is a soft, cheese-like food made by curdling fresh, hot soymilk with a coagulant. Tofu is a bland product that easily absorbs the flavors of other ingredients with which it is cooked. Tofu is rich in both high-quality protein and B vitamins and is low in sodium. Firm tofu is dense and solid and can be cubed

and served in soups, stir fried, or grilled. Firm tofu is higher in protein, fat, and calcium than other forms of tofu. Soft tofu is good for recipes that call for blended tofu. Silken tofu is a creamy product and can be used as a replacement for sour cream in many dip recipes.

—Recipe courtesy of The Soyfoods Council, photo by staff

### Silky Lemon Tofu Pudding

#### Ingredients

- 1 10 ounce jar lemon curd
- 1 12.3 ounce silken firm tofu box
- Optional - Graham cracker crust(s)

**Toppings:** Garnish with raspberries (or fruit of choice)

#### Directions:

In a blender, add lemon curd and tofu. Blend until smooth.

When ready to serve, add lemon mixture to individual graham

cracker crust shells. Or layer in parfait glass with whipping cream or soy whip. Garnish with shortbread cookie, raspberries or fruit of choice and small mint leaf.

**Yield:**  
8-10 servings

*For more delicious soy recipes for your entire family, visit [www.TheSoyfoodsCouncil.com](http://www.TheSoyfoodsCouncil.com)*





**Austin Langley**

## *Eddy County Soybean Producer Austin Langley Elected Chairman*

**E**xecutive board officers were elected during the North Dakota Soybean Council (Council) board meeting on March 26. Austin Langley of Warwick was elected to be the chairman of the board. Langley represents soybean farmers in Eddy, Foster and Wells Counties. He, along with his father and uncles, grows soybeans, edible beans, wheat, barley, alfalfa and corn on a minimal-till farm. His family also operates a cow/calf operation. Langley has a degree from North Dakota State University (NDSU) in agricultural economics. He is a member of the National Agri-Marketing Association, Farmers Union and 4-H, and he is active with the Winchester Arms Collectors Association.

“Being elected by my fellow board of directors as the new chairman of the North Dakota Soybean Council is a great and humbling experience,” says Austin Langley. “What an honor to work alongside the Council board and terrific staff this coming year! We are truly lucky to have some of

the best people working on behalf the North Dakota soybean industry. Looking at agriculture today and into the future, we have a host of issues facing us, like wet weather, lagging markets and now COVID-19. Challenging times will bring opportunities. The soybean industry will overcome these challenges and, at the same time, will produce new ideas. For example, projects focused on new uses will bring insight for all that soy can do now and in future while finding new ways to maintain and build our markets at home and abroad. Soybeans are a very versatile crop, just like the North Dakotan farmer, and we will overcome these challenges to be one of the most profitable options in agriculture. I am very excited for what the future holds for agriculture.”

The board elected Chris Brossart of Wolford as vice chairman. Brossart represents soybean farmers in District 11 which consists of 13 northwest North Dakota counties. He grows soybeans, spring wheat, barley, corn and canola with his wife and parents on a third-generation family farm in Pierce County. He graduated from NDSU with a degree in crop and weed sciences, and agribusiness. Brossart is active with the North Dakota Farm Bureau and the Nodak Insurance Board. From 1998-1999, Brossart was a North Dakota Future

Farmers of America state officer. He is also involved with his local church.

Mike Langseth of Barney was re-elected as the secretary. He and his father raise corn and soybeans. Langseth is also a member of the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association and the Richland County Crop Improvement Association. He is currently the chair of the Northern Soy Marketing board, a tri-state board that invests grower checkoff funds to conduct research about soybean quality and critical amino acid value levels in northern-grown soybeans; the board also funds outreach to buyers around the world. Langseth has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota and represents Richland County soybean producers.

Sheldon soybean producer Dan Spiekermeier was re-elected as the treasurer. He represents soybean farmers in Sargent and Ransom Counties. Spiekermeier has farmed since 1985, and along with his son, Nathan, raises soybeans, corn, wheat, barley and sunflowers. He is a board member for the Ransom County Farmers Union and the Enderlin Rural Fire District. Spiekermeier is an assistant chief for the Enderlin-Sheldon Fire Department.

*—Story by staff, photos by  
Schering Photography*



**Chris Brossart**



**Mike Langseth**



**Dan Spiekermeier**

# WORKING Through the Clutter

**E**ven in a typical year, grain marketing can be a challenge for both novice and seasoned farmers. Thus far, 2020 has been anything but a normal year, throwing even more variables and uncertainty into farm marketing plans. Trade deals, depressed commodity prices and a global COVID-19 pandemic have yielded nearly unprecedented market turmoil.

North Dakota State University (NDSU) and the North Dakota Soybean Council are teaming up to help cut through the clutter and to give farmers information, helping growers to develop strategies for making informed marketing decisions in a time of widespread uncertainty.

The Summer Midseason Market Outlook is scheduled for Thursday, July 30 at Barry Hall on the NDSU downtown campus and at Bismarck State College. NDSU Distinguished Professor Bill Wilson and NDSU Extension Crops Economist and Marketing Specialist Frayne Olson will guide participants through the factors that have contributed to current market conditions while helping farmers formulate a strategy for moving forward.

“We will provide a reassessment of where we are,” Olson says. “We won’t look too far back, but we will look at historical trends. Mostly, we’ll look forward at some key variables and trends that farmers should be watching for in the future.”

## Local, National and Global Issues

Olson says that the conversation will include a look at what is happening globally with transportation, basis and the cost of grain storage. Discussions about the market signals that can help farmers identify and implement strategies to get their grain moved will follow.

Marketing plans are difficult

enough to formulate and to follow during normal economic times. The current, uncertain conditions drive the need for this program.

“If we were in typical times with (a) typical supply and demand situation, farmers would have a better view,” Olson says. “That’s not the case this year. There really are no reference points for what’s happening. This really is uncharted territory, and we’ll all just trying to adapt.”

Olson expects the turmoil with global markets to continue for the foreseeable future. This situation creates more reasons for farmers to learn and develop a plan.

“In my opinion, we’ve not yet seen the full implications of the trade war with China; now, they’re working on a Phase 2 agreement,” Olson explains. “The global coronavirus outbreak is also having an impact on prices as well as supply chain disruptions.”

Olson says that Argentina and Brazil are having port issues with workers related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Because grain is primarily delivered to ports by truck, many port workers are concerned about exposure to the

coronavirus. Worker absenteeism is causing some workforce disruptions.

COVID-19 could also affect processing plants here in the United States. Disruptions with oilseed, ethanol or meat-processing facilities will have a ripple effect.

“This outbreak has local, national and global implications,” Olson contends. “Supply networks are still in turmoil. There are both short and longer-term issues. Market shifts are going on due to coronavirus, changes in the energy sector and because of the Phase One trade agreement. They all impact the soybean sector, and farmers are trying to figure it out.”

## Preparing for Change

Even after issues with COVID-19 settle down, Olson expects that there will be a lasting ripple effect. Will consumers change their buying habits? What changes have happened to prices and to the supply chain? Who is buying grain now, and how does that answer affect North Dakota? All of those questions and more will be addressed at the Summer Midseason Market Outlook Seminar.

The Summer Midseason Market Outlook session focuses on soybean-related concerns, but Olson says that what happens with corn markets also affects soybeans. For example, challenges with the ethanol industry have led to some ethanol plants shutting down. As a result, supplies of dried distiller’s grains with solubles (DDGs) are tightening. DDGs are used as an ingredient for hog and cattle feed. The current price for DDGs is high, Olson says, because of strong feed demand and a shrinking supply. DDGs can be replaced by soybean meal. As a result, the demand for soybean meal has been strong.

“This is the kind of thing farmers need to understand to make better decisions,” Olson says.

Olson says that the session won’t be a lecture. Rather, it is intended to be an interactive exchange and discussion with participants. The goal is to filter out the nonsense.

“Our emphasis is on what farmers need to focus on to help them think through issues and provide them with solid information,” Olson says.

For more information and to register for the Summer Midseason Outlook, visit [www.ndsoybean.org](http://www.ndsoybean.org).

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photo by staff



**Dr. Frayne Olson will provide farmers information to develop strategies for making informed marketing decisions in a time of widespread uncertainty.**



# During COVID-19, USSEC *Leverages Technology to Stay Connected* with Key Audience Stakeholders



In the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) remains hard at work. During this period of uncertainty, the USSEC is leveraging technology to further engage key audience stakeholders. In U.S. soy markets around the world, the organization's teams, which USSEC CEO Jim Sutter often refers to as "boots on the ground," have continued to stay engaged.

"Exploring and leveraging our technological capabilities is critical right now," says Sutter. "We feel very fortunate to have access to so many platforms that allow us to continue to connect with our customers and stakeholders."

Developing and maintaining face-to-face relationships is a hallmark of the U.S. soy industry, and USSEC is working to keep close contact with its customers through virtual webinars and conference calls, courtesy of WebEx, Zoom and other platforms.

On March 31, more than 150 U.S. soy stakeholders from every part of the soy value chain participated in a WebEx call to discuss the effect of the novel coronavirus on the global soy industry. Stakeholders represent-

ing the soy value chain, including USSEC members, buyers, customers and soy partners, listened to insights from the organization's regional directors about the influence of the novel coronavirus on ports, supply chains, animal agriculture production, various governments' management of the crisis and opportunities for U.S. soy. Sutter reiterated the need for a strong and reliable supply chain. Because agriculture has been designated as a critical industry by the Department of Homeland Security, USSEC teams have engaged with the USDA because inspections are critical to keep the U.S. supply chain moving.

On April 14 and 15, USSEC hosted the U.S. Soy Connection: Global Digital Conference and Situation Report, a virtual worldwide conference that provided the global customers of U.S. soy with the most updated information from subject-matter experts on production, global supply and demand, and the pandemic's effects on agricultural markets, along with updates from U.S. soybean farmers about planting progress; 1,600 global customers from 84 countries took part in this

digital event.

Valley City farmer Monte Peterson, who serves as USSEC chairman and a director for the American Soybean Association (ASA), discussed the importance of maintaining partnerships during this time of uncertainty. "The value of our partnerships is immeasurable. It's something that helps differentiate the U.S. soy advantage to our customers," Peterson told call participants.

USSEC is also starting to host virtual webinars for regional customers. For example, on April 1 and 3, two virtual webinars were held in China for food and feed customers, providing information about the U.S. soy outlook, supply, risk management, purchasing and the effects of COVID-19 on Phase One of the U.S.-China trade deal. More webinars are being planned in multiple regional markets.

Teams are providing virtual technical and trade support, and will continue to enhance this assistance in all markets. For example, USSEC's

southeast Asia aquaculture program began using teleconferencing approaches in early March for target audiences who have the capability and desire to do so. The aquaculture team worked to bring a subject-matter expert together with a Vietnam feedmill that works closely with USSEC on aquaculture nutrition and formulation by utilizing U.S. soy.

"As we continue to navigate these unprecedented times, it's more important than ever that we demonstrate to current and potential international customers the strength of our farmers and benefits of buying U.S. soy," says Sutter. "(The) USSEC has quickly adapted and changed tactics, so we can show customers that our entire supply chain is working to ensure a sustainably and safely produced, reliable supply of soy for global customers."

—Story and photos courtesy of USSEC



USSEC Chairman and ASA Director Monte Peterson, a soybean farmer from Valley City, welcomed more than 2,000 participants from 100 countries during the U.S. Soy Connection: Global Digital Conference and Situation Report, a virtual webinar which was held in mid-April.



Terry Branstad, U.S. Ambassador to China, reiterated the commitment of the U.S. soy industry and the U.S. government to their partners in China, ensuring the U.S. soybean buyers about the sustainability of soy production and the reliability of the U.S. soybean supply. The webinars in China attracted nearly 240 attendees from more than 80 companies, representing soybean importers, crushers, feed millers and animal integrators.

# NDSU Extension Proactive to Combat the Spread of Palmer Amaranth



In 2019, millet was in demand in North Dakota as a feed for livestock and as a cover crop.

Millet was also a target for Palmer amaranth, a very aggressive, difficult-to-control weed that was found in North Dakota for the first time in 2018. After Palmer amaranth was confirmed in multiple millet fields in Grant and Emmons Counties in 2019, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension weed specialist Joe Ikley urged producers with millet to scout fields for the troublesome weed.

That timely warning helped at least one Emmons County producer.

“He checked his millet fields after hearing about the issue and, indeed, found Palmer amaranth in his millet field,” Ikley says. “That infestation may have gone unnoticed without the Extension efforts to raise awareness, and the farmer was very thankful.”

Knowing the threat which Palmer amaranth poses to crops, Extension agents and specialists began alerting producers about Palmer amaranth even before it was discovered in North Dakota. With optimum conditions, it can grow 2 to 3 inches per day. The plants can reach 6 to 8 feet tall, and a single plant can produce up to 1 million seeds.

Palmer amaranth is hard to control because it is very prone to being resistant to herbicides. In addition, it can be difficult to identify because it resembles redroot pigweed, smooth pigweed and waterhemp.

To help producers identify and eliminate any Palmer amaranth on their land, Extension agents and specialists developed a website ([www.ag.ndsu.edu/palmeramaranth](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/palmeramaranth)), posters and handouts with photos in order to help distinguish Palmer amaranth from other plants. The agents also provided some recommendations for chemical control. The key message is to detect the weed early, before it develops seeds; to pull out the plants; and to destroy them by burying them deeply or burning them.

“Don’t let anything go to seed,” advises Extension weed specialist Brian Jenks. “It’s much easier to pull 100 plants than to deal with millions of seeds next year.”

Agents spread the word about Palmer amaranth in a number of ways.

In McIntosh County, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) and the county weed board sent letters that included Extension information to all landowners.

“In 2019, we continued talking to producers, sent emails and made

Facebook posts, as well as hung up posters in the area,” says Crystal Schaunaman, Extension’s agriculture and natural resources agent in the county. “I also talked about how to identify it at various meetings, such as the Tri-County Plot Tour and several meetings in January/February, and looked at many pictures of suspect plants which have been texted to me.”

In neighboring LaMoure County, Extension agriculture and natural resources agent Julianne Racine had scouted fields with agronomists and on her own.

“Earlier in the 2019 growing season, I visited different ag businesses and gathering spots, spoke with managers and community members

about identifying characteristics and scouting their own fields,” she says. “Everyone was left with handouts and posters. I also tried to stress that people should call us or their weed board. As well, I put articles in the paper and soil conservation newsletter reminding people to keep vigilant.”

Extension efforts are similar in other counties.

“I made efforts to make producers more aware of the problem through news columns, radio interviews, crop meetings, pesticide trainings and personal conversations,” says Sheldon Gerhardt, the agriculture and natural resources agent in Logan County. “At my pesticide training, I used a problem-based learning presentation where producers need to discuss how they will manage the potential problem on their farm.”

Emily Trzruc, the agriculture and natural resources agent in Emmons County, has been helping producers identify suspicious plants and educating farmers about where to look for Palmer amaranth.

“Producers should be sure to get out and walk their fields to look for this weed since crop height will likely match that of the mature Palmer amaranth that could be in the field,” Trzruc says. “If producers are suspicious of any pigweed species they encounter in their fields, they should contact their local Extension agent or their county weed board officer,” she adds. “From there, we can help them get their plant identified by our



**A group of NDSU researchers and extension agents traveled to Nebraska to learn more about the dangerous and destructive weed, including management.**

NDSU Extension weed specialists or through genetic testing.”

A DNA-based assay that the National Agricultural Genotyping Center in Fargo developed in 2019 has been very helpful when determining whether the weeds which producers find are actually Palmer amaranth, according to Tom Peters, an Extension sugarbeet agronomist and weed control specialist at NDSU and the University of Minnesota.

“The assay provides us with a very quick way to follow up on leads,” Peters states.

Peters notes that NDSU Extension’s efforts to educate producers about Palmer amaranth are a partnership with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. In December 2019, Extension hosted a meeting to provide training for new agents and agents who had less weed-management experience with an opportunity to learn more about Palmer amaranth.

By 2019, Palmer amaranth had been found in eight of North Dakota’s 53 counties.

“We believe the new counties in 2019 (Grant, Emmons, Morton) were due, primarily, to contaminated millet seed,” Jenks says.

“Without the efforts of Extension, I have no doubt that Palmer amaranth infestations in 2019 would have been much more widespread,” Jenks adds. “People know about Palmer amaranth primarily due to our education efforts. People are aware and looking for it. People also appreciate us going to the sites, teaching them about the plants and discussing future options.”

## Palmer Amaranth Action Plan

### Landowners

1. Landowners should scout fields starting in late spring and going through the summer and fall, especially before harvest.
2. When a suspicious plant is found, contact your county Extension agent or county weed officer.



**Dr. Tom Peters, NDSU extension agronomist, holds a Palmer amaranth plant in 2019 in Nebraska. The plant that can easily get 10 feet tall and 6 feet across.**

- Mark/flag the location. Leave the plant in place so that you do not spread the seeds. It’s easier to identify the plant if it hasn’t been pulled.
3. The county weed officer will work with NDSU Extension in order to
    - Gather photos and information to send to NDSU weed specialists for confirmation or ruling out Palmer amaranth.
    - Develop an action plan with NDSU specialists if Palmer amaranth is confirmed.
  4. Landowners should hand pull, bag on site and destroy the confirmed Palmer amaranth plants.
  5. Palmer amaranth plants should be burned or deeply buried to prevent seed movement.
  6. Landowners should work with their county weed officer and should continue to survey the field for a

period of 3-5 years post removal in order to verify that no additional Palmer amaranth is found.

### Weed Officers and Extension Agents

1. A suspicious plant is found.
2. The individual takes pictures and marks the location.
3. The individual contacts the

county weed officer or county Extension agent.

4. The weed officer and Extension agent work together by providing information to (an) NDSU specialist(s) in order to identify the suspect plant.
5. NDSU and the county weed officer confirm that it is/is not Palmer amaranth. The NDDA should be contacted if it’s confirmed.
6. The NDDA notifies the state seed department.
7. The county weed officer and the NDDA should lead the investigation while NDSU may assist the farmer with identifying how widespread the infestation is, how it got there, etc.

## Contacts Links

### County Extension Agent

ag.ndsu.edu/extension/directory/counties

### County Weed Officer

nd.gov/ndda/pa  
(701) 328-2231

### Genetic Testing National Agricultural Genotyping Center

genotypingcenter.com/services/testing  
(701) 239-1451

—Story and information courtesy of NDSU and the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, photos courtesy of NDSU



**Because each Palmer amaranth plant has as many as a million seeds, the weed can multiply rapidly, overrunning a field within three to five years from when the first plant begins growing there.**

# Transportation

Provides the Crucial Link



**T**he journey of 6,000 miles begins with one local delivery.

Before North Dakota soybeans ever reach their final destinations, likely thousands of miles away in southeast Asia, those soybeans must first leave the farm on which they were raised. For most North Dakota farmers, that trip to the elevator is relatively short, and the grower's transportation concerns end when he/she unload his/her soybeans at the local buyer. In reality, to reach their ultimate customer, most North Dakota soybeans travel a maze of transportation systems, including township, county and state roads; railways and deep-water shipping ports.

Transportation is a complex system that needs to function seamlessly in order to ensure efficient delivery. Issues along any part of the soybean supply chain can be problematic.

"A lot of farmers don't realize the importance of transportation until we hit a bump," says Wimbledon farmer and North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) President Joe Ericson. "So much of our grain leaves the state, but the average farmer doesn't think a lot about all of our transportation needs."

According to the North Dakota Soybean Council, prior to the trade war with China, 94 percent of the state's soybean crop left North Dakota. About 24 percent went to other states for processing while the remaining 70 percent was bound for export

markets via the Pacific Northwest.

"Agriculture is the number one industry in North Dakota," says state Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring. "We're number one in the production of 10 different commodities. We're also very diverse, with 54 commodities produced commercially."

Goehring explains that North Dakota commodities are shipped to 137 countries, with wheat, soybeans and soybean meal among the top exports. Approximately 95

percent of the world's population and 80 percent of the world's buying power lies outside the United States. With an estimated 92 percent of all middle-class growth expected to occur outside the U.S., trade is vital to North Dakota's economy.

"No one really understood the value of trade until we had problems the last couple of years. Then, all of a sudden, people see value in it; they see it's needed. Trade supports our rural communities; it supports our states; and it supports jobs in the United States," Goehring says.

Ericson states that, because trade is such an important factor for agriculture, transportation issues are perpetually on the NDSGA's list of concerns.

"We're always going to have transportation as a priority issue on the local, state and national level," Ericson says.

## Local Roads

Untold bushels of crops start their journey to market via small roads which are maintained by townships or counties. Farmers are concerned that many of those roads are not

equipped to handle modern farm equipment.

"When road restrictions are on, our travel distance to the elevator doubles," Ericson explains. "Township and county roads need to be fixed."

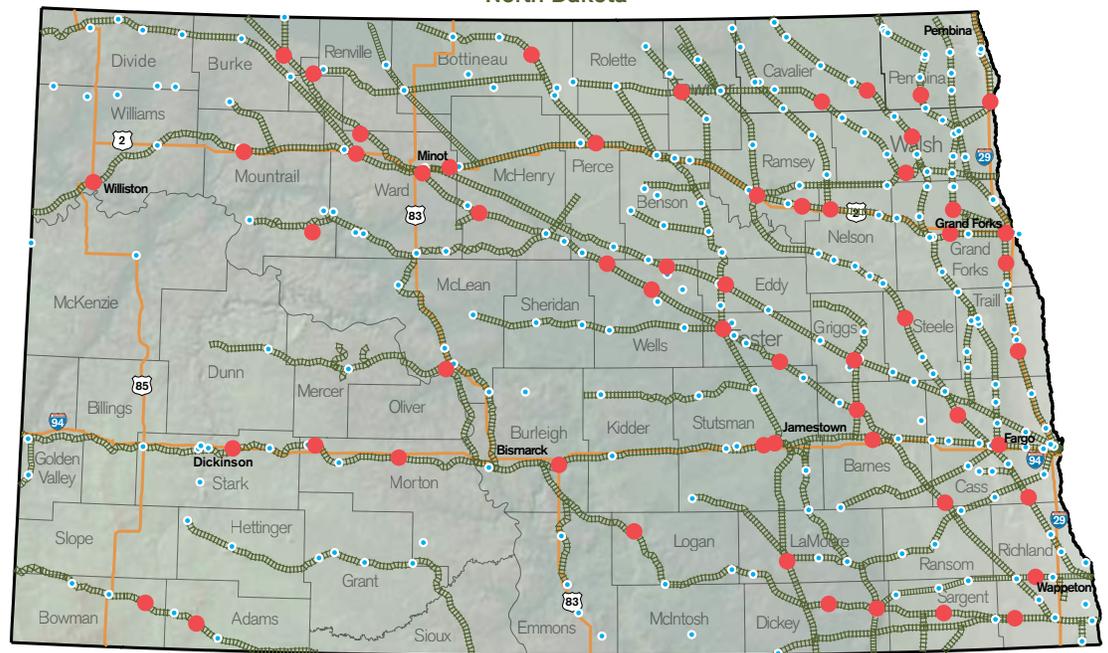
"I have to get my township and my county up to speed because they are not keeping up with the needed improvements on infrastructure that was developed 100 years ago," says Valley City farmer Monte Peterson.

Peterson chairs the U.S. Soybean Export Council which works to create a preference for U.S. soy products around the world. Efficient exports depend on adequate transportation infrastructure.

"That is key in accomplishing what we need to do. We're always looking for opportunities to improve on what we're doing and looking for alternatives that might make us more efficient," Peterson states. "When we affect trade flows, we have to understand what the reaction is to our transportation system, how we have to change and adapt."

Road funding is always a concern as states and other entities grapple

## Grain Elevator and Rail System Map North Dakota



● Shuttle Facility ● Grain Elevators — Rail System  
*A shuttle facility is a grain elevator with capacity to handle 100-plus train cars*

© North Dakota Soybean Council 12/17/19

Source: BNSF Railway, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute

with limited budgets. Dedicated funding for transportation improvements is one possible avenue.

“The American Trucking Institute has been advocating for a fuel tax increase, but in this climate, there doesn’t appear to be much appetite to make that happen,” says John Hausladen, president and CEO of the Minnesota Trucking Association. “There will likely need to be some sort of fuel tax, but I’m not sure who has the appetite to make that happen.”

## Railroads

Much of North Dakota’s export capacity was built to efficiently and rapidly move grain to ocean ports in the Pacific Northwest. Goehring says that about 82 percent of North Dakota’s ag products move from the state by rail. Two Class One railways, BNSF and Canadian Pacific, operate within North Dakota. There are also over 1,300 miles of short-line railway in the state.

Rob Keller, director of corn, feed and oilseeds for BNSF, states that the

company operates 32,500 route miles of track in 28 states and 3 Canadian provinces. He says that rail traffic through mid-March was down about 7 percent year to date, mostly driven by lower coal movement. Due to trade and crop quality issues, year-over-year commodity shipments are down for BNSF, as is the movement of containers.

Keller explains that BNSF recognizes the need for continued investment, including double tracking to increase product flow. BNSF plans to invest \$3.4 billion for improvements in 2020.

“Over the last 10 years, we have invested almost \$40 billion in our network, in our rolling stock, in our track and in our locomotives,” Keller says. “Going forward, that’s going to be a key point for us to keep reinvesting in our infrastructure.”

Keller states that, because BNSF is privately owned, railway improvements aren’t limited as much by funding as they are by the process of



**Valley City farmer Monte Peterson was among the delegation of North Dakota farmers taking part in the inaugural Northern Commodity Transportation Conference.**

securing the needed permits to make upgrades.

Some specialty grains, including food-grade and identity-preserved soybeans, are shipped in containers. Currently, the closest intermodal truck-rail container transfer terminals with regular service for most North Dakota shippers are located in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. However, transporting the containers to and from these terminals by truck is costly.

## Waterways

Although most North Dakota soybeans head west to the Pacific Northwest (PNW), inland waterways, such as the Mississippi River, affect ag product movement in the state. Most locks and dams are old and in need of improvement. However, there has been limited investment for the nation’s inland waterways.

“The lock and dam system is a long-term concern for us,” says Brock Lautenschlager, CHS rail services director. “Investments in that area have been neglected over the years. We need to see reinvestment in the lock and dam system soon so that we can maintain a reliable supply chain, not only for moving products south to the Gulf, but also fertilizer up into the Upper Midwest so that we can produce the grains to send to the PNW and other markets.”

The Pacific Northwest is of strategic importance for moving North Dakota grain to global markets. Ten

different ports are located in Oregon and Washington, and they are equipped with the infrastructure to keep the grain flowing.

“We have a very diverse group out in the Northwest, and they’re all pulling together because they know that infrastructure really, really matters,” says Kristin Meira, executive director of the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. “We know that the last stop for your product here in the United States can make or break the competitiveness of your product, and whether or not you can make it in very challenging export markets.”

Meira states that she would like to see a comprehensive infrastructure funding package put in place to create jobs and to make needed improvements for all transportation modes.

“We know that, in the U.S., we are largely coasting on the investments made by previous generations when it comes to infrastructure. Other countries are doing more because they get it and recognize that transportation systems really matter,” Meira says. “It’s crucial that we don’t just keep up but actually reinvest.”

Meira states that there is broad recognition in Washington, D.C., about the need for transportation and infrastructure investment, but there is no consensus about how to fund it.

—Story and photos by Daniel Lemke

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Crop Production Manager  
100 N 10th St  
Breckenridge, MN 56520  
218-643-1797 | 701-640-2279  
matt@richlandifc.com  
www.richlandifc.com



# A Distant Advocate



**Photo Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Executive Director Kristin Meira (center) pushes for projects that keep shipments moving smoothly from important ports in the region.**

**N**orth Dakota may be a long way from the Pacific Ocean, but what happens at port facilities in Washington and Oregon matters to farmers in the Peace Garden State.

Because about 70 percent of North Dakota's annual soybean crop is exported through the Pacific Northwest, groups advocating for

maintenance and improvements to port facilities are working on soybean farmers' behalf.

The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) is a nonprofit, non-partisan trade association that advocates for federal policies and funding for regional economic development. The PNWA membership includes over 135 entities, ranging

from public ports, barge companies, steamship operators, and grain-elevator operators to agricultural producers, forest-product manufacturers, electric utilities, and public agencies throughout Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The PNWA works with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Congress and the administration to advocate for the highest possible funding for the Northwest's federal navigation projects.

"We make a commitment to understanding the nuances of the federal budget process and also partner with our Corps colleagues to learn about navigation projects on the Washington and Oregon coasts that serve growers and manufacturers nationwide," says PNWA Executive Director Kristin Meira. "The PNWA advocates for the water-related transportation infrastructure needed to maintain navigation so that the Pacific Northwest remains a globally competitive area for imports and exports."

## Present and Future Needs

Meira says that infrastructure in and adjacent to the water needs

attention. The PNWA advocates for present needs, such as routine maintenance dredging on the Lower Columbia River, to ensure that ships can be fully loaded with U.S. grain products for export. Shippers pay a penalty if they're not able to deliver the contracted amount of cargo.

"We look ahead as well and partner with the Corps to plan for major rehabilitation projects before the infrastructure starts to fail," Meira explains.

Those efforts include a multi-year project to protect the entrance to the Columbia River by rehabbing rock jetties that help keep the river open year-round.

The PNWA is also involved with policy issues, including the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. This fund, paid for by importers, should cover 100 percent of the coastal operations and maintenance in the United States. Unfortunately, Meira says, not all of the revenue has been passed along to the Corps over the years, and a "surplus" of collections over expenditures has grown to over \$9 billion.

"We support the effort to develop a comprehensive fix for this trust

## Soybean Rail and Terminal Map Washington/Oregon



- Soybean Terminal Facilities**
1. LD Commodities – Seattle
  2. AGP – Gray's Harbor
  3. TEMCO – Tacoma
  4. EGT – Longview
  5. Kalama Export Co. – Kalama
  6. TEMCO – Kalama
  7. United Grain Corp. – Vancouver
  8. Columbia Grain – Portland
  9. TEMCO – Portland
  10. LD Commodities – Portland

 **Grain Terminal Facility**  
 **BNSF Ag Rail Network**

© North Dakota Soybean Council 032620

Source: BNSF Railway, Soybean Transportation Coalition



**NDSGA president Joe Ericson (center) and Scott Gauslow, (right) were among the North Dakota soybean farmers providing input about transportation related issues.**

fund which includes working to fully spend annual collections, address the needs of donor ports, and ensure funding to small ports. This navigation policy item will, hopefully, be addressed in a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) this year if the House and Senate have enough

legislative days left after dealing with the coronavirus,” Meira says.

### A Short Stay

Soybeans arriving by rail at terminals in Puget Sound, Grays Harbor or the Lower Columbia River typically spend very little time

at the export terminal. The terminals aren’t intended for long-term storage; rather, they are part of a supply chain that is meant to be in constant motion. For that process to happen, the bulk vessels that call on these ports need to be able to berth at the terminals quickly, load efficiently, and then depart the port area and move to their overseas destination.

“This requires the coordination of many entities and individuals: terminal staff, grain inspectors, river and bar pilots, tugboat crews, USCG (U.S. Coast Guard) staff, longshoremen, shipping agents and many more,” Meira says. “PNWA works with all of those entities to understand their challenges and ensure

infrastructure is in place to support their activities.”

Meira hopes that North Dakota Soybean Growers Association members will contact their congressional representatives and the administration to support dredging the Lower Columbia River and Grays Harbor, repairing the jetties at the mouth of the Columbia, and maintaining the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle harbors to accommodate the soybean industry’s shipping needs.

Meira recognizes that, because soybeans from North Dakota travel by truck and train before they ever reach the Pacific Northwest, all modes of transportation must function smoothly to efficiently move products to market.

“Our success as a nation that exports products is only as good as our weakest link, so all transportation systems must be functional and reliable at all times,” Meira says. “Although our primary focus is on the viability of our federal waterways, we partner with our colleagues in the surface transportation world to ensure that our ports are well connected with rail and road, ensuring smooth movement of U.S. product.”

Because ports in the Pacific Northwest are the last domestic stop for North Dakota soybeans, Meira says that the PNWA is committed to farmer success.

—Story and photos by Daniel Lemke

## PREMIUM SOYBEAN PRODUCTION CONTRACTS AVAILABLE

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**North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring was a panelist during the transportation conference and offered insight into ongoing challenges for moving commodities. North Dakota soybean farmer Robert Sinner (front, center) provided input.**



# BIODIESEL INDUSTRY UNVEILS PLANS FOR FUTURE GROWTH

## SOY TO PLAY THE LEADING ROLE, BACKED BY SOYBEAN GROWERS



projecting biodiesel producers could need more than 18 billion pounds of soybean oil in 2030, making it soy oil's largest customer."

Can soy provide that growth? Weber says yes. With increased protein demands worldwide, soy's popularity continues to rise. The protein need far outpaces the demand for vegetable oil, leaving a surplus of soybean oil on the market.

"The food industry certainly uses a lot of soybean oil in frying, dressings and packaged goods," adds Weber. "But, we currently have a surplus of oil on the market, and that trend looks to continue in the next decade."

The NBB notes that the demand for biodiesel is growing in various markets. California alone will need a sizeable piece of the biodiesel production in 2030 while oil-heat marketers are driving the use of biodiesel-based Bioheat® on the east coast.

"We've laid the groundwork for the biodiesel industry to take off, and the timing couldn't be better," adds Richard. "Biodiesel has proven to be a reliable customer for our soybean oil, and we look forward to even more growth in that market."

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos by NBB and staff

The biodiesel industry, led by the National Biodiesel Board (NBB), recently announced a new goal of 6 billion gallons of biodiesel and renewable diesel by 2030. The goal more than doubles use in the next decade and sets the biodiesel industry on a fast growth trajectory with existing feedstocks to supply that demand. Biodiesel's growth projections mean good news for soybean farmers.

Biodiesel, a leading soybean customer, increased its demand for soybean oil by 300 percent in the last 10 years. Ryan Richard, a soybean grower from Horace, North Dakota, says that the demand growth for the next decade probably won't come from where farmers may initially guess.

"Sad to say, but the demand isn't

going to come from North Dakota," says Richard as he chuckles. "The biggest opportunities are on the coasts."

Richard, through his work with the United Soybean Board, recently saw the opportunity firsthand in California and is optimistic about the potential there.

"California has the ability to use a good chunk of that 6 billion gallons of demand," Richard states. "Their fuel needs are far greater than ours in the Midwest, and their focus on sustainability and carbon reduction adds another opportunity for biodiesel to shine in meeting the needs of customers."

Richard says that farmers can help the most by doing a few simple things.

"We want farmers to use their own product," Richard adds. "Not just to support it, but also take into consideration the long game. Using biodiesel adds to your operation's sustainability footprint, something that California and other customers are watching closely."

Richard continues, "We also have to market ourselves. We need you to talk positively about biodiesel and your production practices. Positive promotion can only benefit us long term in being a united front."

### Additional Biodiesel Demand Furthers Soybean Oil Needs

It's true. Soybean oil is already the

golden standard for biodiesel production. Biodiesel is the most researched renewable fuel on the planet, thanks, in part, to soybean farmers and their checkoff. Now, biodiesel will be leaning on soybean farmers to provide even more oil to meet the growing demand for markets coast to coast. NBB says that biodiesel will need a lot more soybean oil in the near future.

"We estimate U.S. biodiesel and renewable diesel producers will use 9 billion pounds of soybean oil in 2020, which is just over one-third of the oil available from crushed soybeans in the U.S.," says Alan Weber, senior feedstock adviser to the NBB. "We're

## Three Reasons Why Biodiesel Should Be Part of Your Operation

As summer rolls on and fall is on the horizon, North Dakota farmers should be considering biodiesel to fuel equipment on and off the farm. Here are three reasons you shouldn't be skipping the biodiesel in your operation this year:

- 1. Support Your Own Bottom Line:** North Dakota has quickly become one of the top soybean-producing states in the country. Now, we must back up the supply with the demand. Biodiesel adds real dollars to your bottom line.
- 2. Expand Your Sustainability Story:** Reducing emissions can help sell your farm to tomorrow's consumer. Food companies, municipalities and more end users are demanding to see sustainability practices from operations. Take a look at how you manage resources and package that for long-term success.
- 3. Breathe Easy:** Biodiesel is an easy, drop-in solution for diesel engines. Use a blend with which you are comfortable. Regardless of the percentage of biodiesel you use, you're improving the air that you breathe and adding to overall health.

Reach out to your local fuel supplier and request biodiesel today.



Ryan Richard



## NSM Shifts Focus to Domestic Audiences

For nearly a decade, the tri-state partnership among the North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota soybean councils has invested heavily in changing the dialogue about how feed buyers and nutritionists value the quality of soybeans in feed rations. The three soybean councils formed Northern Soy Marketing, LLC (NSM) to grow the essential amino acids (EAA) brand abroad.

The purpose of NSM is to encourage the soybean marketplace, particularly international buyers, to recognize EAA concentration—rather than crude protein—as the most complete and best indicator of soybean quality and feeding value. NSM has recently expanded its target audiences to include foreign governments and regulatory bodies, soy industry collaborators and the domestic supply chain. In March, the NSM team met in San Antonio to review its 2019 projects and to forge its path for 2020.

“Now that our foreign customers understand and have heard our messages about the value of EAA in feed rations, it’s time to bridge the gap and work with the supply chain, so they can speak the same language about the quality of northern-grown beans,” says Mike Langseth, NSM chair and North Dakota Soybean Council director from Barney.

“That’s why NSM has expanded its audiences to include some of these domestic influencers.”

NSM continues to focus much of its work on foreign buyers in China, Thailand, Vietnam and Mexico. The Philippines, Sri Lanka and Myanmar are a few of the secondary audiences. Before the coronavirus outbreak brought travel to a halt, a recent NSM delegation traveled to a few of these target audiences.

Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) Director Patrick O’Leary, University of Minnesota Soybean Agronomist Seth Naeve, consultant Peter Mishek and South Dakota Soybean



**Peter Mishek, middle, answers quality questions about northern-grown soybeans for international customers.**

Research & Promotion Council (SDSRPC) board member David Struck traveled to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia in order to meet with buyers and to highlight the quality of northern-grown soybeans. When meeting with these feed producers, buyers, nutritionists and trading companies, the NSM delegation gave presentations about the 2019-2020 crop conditions and protein quality research.

“Myanmar is a very interesting country,” O’Leary said. “From a feed standpoint, it’s an up-and-coming country, with significant potential with the expansions that are going on.”

The group also visited the ongoing poultry feeding trials in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to review the status of the trials that are evaluating the growth of broiler chickens which are fed with soybeans and soybean meal from different origins and have different crude protein and critical amino acid value (CAAV) profiles.

“Malaysia went very well. They’re in the process of some feeding trials, and it was a good discussion, and things are moving forward,” said O’Leary. “We hope it’s going to be a positive scenario for the northern soy growers.”

NSM also took part in the inaugural Northern Commodity Transportation Conference (NCTC) in Bloomington, Minnesota, in March. This conference gathered farmers,

first purchasers, commodity organizations and political officials to share transportation issues, similarities and opportunities for corn, soybeans and wheat grown in the tri-state region. NSM was a major sponsor for the event and conducted side meetings with grain elevator staff from the tri-state region. At these side meetings, attendees learned about the higher EAA content in northern-grown soybeans; why this content is important, especially in crushing; and how it produces a higher-quality feed for monogastric livestock.

An ongoing NSM project which is being conducted by Naeve is educating northern farmers about the potential consequences of delivering soybeans with high levels of foreign material (FM) to local elevators and the larger downstream effects on soybean exports to foreign markets such as China. Educational materials, including electronic and print materials, PowerPoint presentations and short videos, are being developed to discuss all aspects of maintaining high-quality soybeans for domestic utilization and export. Stay tuned for the release of these materials which will be utilized at producer meetings across the tri-state region and will be available online.

“It’s important that northern producers maintain the quality of soybeans we grow,” Langseth says. “Knowledge is power, so Seth’s project will assure that producers are continually learning the best practices and continuing to deliver the highest-quality soybeans they can.”

“This is a time for NSM to focus on our domestic audiences and continue collaboration with other soy industry partners,” Langseth states. “We see the soy industry catching up to what feed formulators and regulators have known for a while: that a really good monogastric feed ration is based on EAA, not just crude protein.”

—Story by Katelyn Engquist, photos courtesy of Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council

## Guest Column

# Coronavirus Stings Nation's Pork Producers

Everyone in the country and especially those in agriculture are feeling the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. Perhaps nowhere is that more evident than in the pork sector.

Coronavirus outbreaks among workers at pork processing plants in Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota forced the temporary shutdown of several key packing facilities. At one point, approximately 30 percent of the nation's pork processing capacity was offline. That disruption caused tremendous upheaval in the pork supply chain. Unfortunately, the repercussions were felt most in our region as thousands of market-ready hogs had to be euthanized because there was no place for them to be processed.

North Dakota largely escaped that unthinkable situation because most commercial hog operations are farrowing facilities that produce feeder pigs for farms in South Dakota and Iowa. So far, North Dakota farmers have been able to keep their part of the pipeline moving. However, the current economics in the pork industry are beyond challenging.

What happens in the hog economy stretches beyond the farm to the local communities. A

5,000-head sow operation in a town of 600 that employs 20 people is very impactful for that community. Most of the farms that are here have been in business for many, many years. We hope those operations will be able to hang on through these difficult times and stay in business.

The pork industry operates with such efficiency that when you get one disruption, like the closure of processing plants, it has a major impact on the entire supply chain. Those disruptions will be noticed by consumers.

I consider myself to be a discerning grocery shopper. For the first time in my life I made purchases not based on price but based on availability. That's impactful. We take for granted that when we go to the grocery store, everything we want will be there. For the first time in our generation, North Dakotans are going to the store and discovering that what we want may not necessarily be there.

When the restaurants were asked to shut down, a lot of pork products that were destined for food service and restaurant business needed to shift over to supply the retail side which is not an easy process. Food service generates the largest demand for bacon. When they shut down, we suddenly



Tamra Heins

had a bacon surplus at plants rendering pork bellies. Bacon fell to the lowest prices we've seen for a very long time. Now, with the processing disruptions, we could see a bacon shortage. That turnaround happened in only six weeks.

The nation's hog farmers have been preparing for disease outbreaks for years, but those efforts have been geared toward preventing the introduction and spread of animal diseases. We've spent the last two years preparing for African Swine Fever (ASF), which is also a type of coronavirus and have successfully kept it out of the country. We prepared for what would need to be done if we had to depopulate and euthanize animals because of ASF. Never in our wildest dreams did we think it would be a human virus that would cause the problems in the industry.

The thing that's great about the hog industry is that if we can get our plants back up and running at full capacity, while being a safe place for people to work, it won't take long for us to catch up because there are a lot of pigs out there that are ready for processing. Once we see things starting to move back to normal, there is some potential in the export market as other countries and their economies start to bounce back. There is opportunity in the long term. We just have to survive the short term.

—Story and photo by Tamra Heins,  
North Dakota Pork Council Executive Director,  
photo at left by Wanbaugh Studios





# Forging Ahead for IP Crops

## Entering Year Two, the SSGA Continues to Build on Success

**B**uilding on strong momentum in its second year, the Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance (SSGA) continues to grow and to enhance its efforts for the U.S. identity-preserved field crop industry by hiring regional technical advisers and cultivating relationships with industry leaders and political officials.

“It has been exciting to see SSGA hit the ground running and working like a well-oiled engine,” says Curt Petrich, owner/partner of HC International in Fargo and the chair of the SSGA board. “We are focused on helping our members develop markets for their value-added crops. With all of our successes, we have laid a lot of ground work; we have put people in place; and we have defined our action teams with active participants.”

The SSGA takes pride in developing ways to reach foreign markets with funding from an Agricultural Trade Promotion (ATP) grant which has enabled the organization to hire three identity-preserved (IP) technical advisers. All of them join SSGA with extensive international experience. Hoa Huynh will advise southeast Asia; Alyson Segawa is advising north Asia; and Eugene Philhower will advise Europe. They will focus on communicating the benefits of IP crops and the crops’ traceability, reporting on trends, competitors and transportation as well as building upon SSGA’s value worldwide.

“Expanding our network with top-notch experts in their field will allow us to provide greater value to our members through timely information,” says Eric Wenberg, SSGA’s executive director. “We have a solid team in place that really is able to accomplish our goals as an organization and help the IP industry grow.”

### Leading the Way for the IP Industry

In April, the SSGA met with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) staff members who work for the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS), and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) departments to discuss the SSGA’s programs as well as Japanese market-access issues. During these meetings, officials announced that they received official communication from the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) which confirmed the delay of Japan’s phytosanitary requirement that was set to be implemented on June 1.



“This was a true win for the IP soy industry,” says Petrich. “This requirement would have had a huge impact on our industry, and now, we have some time to navigate this challenge to create a long-term solution and grow our relationship with our Japanese partners.”

The SSGA led this effort, which started in February 2020, by documenting examples from its member companies for the USDA in order to illustrate the difficulties of certifying with the current practices and complying with Japan’s request. The argument was that the cost would be borne by the industry with no increased outcome for making crop exports safer from transmitting pests and diseases. According to the USDA, the SSGA’s effort made the

difference when asking Japan for the delay.

“IP comes from rural America, adds jobs in rural places and categorizes North Dakota as an exporter. The small businesses that buy premium crops from North Dakota farmers need efficient and cost effective access to markets abroad,” Wenberg says. “Commodity organizations need to support the IP industry by seeing the need, and pushing for, reform of the U.S. grain system to reduce the extra costs and hassle of inland inspection. Passing the regulatory or administrative reform in the United States needed to comply with Japan’s requirement will take a lot of effort. We can pursue solutions together.”

—Story and photos courtesy of the  
Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance



**Alyson Segawa, Hoa Huynh and Gene Philhower have been hired as SSGA’s identity-preserved technical advisers. They will communicate the benefits of IP crops and the crops’ traceability, reporting on trends, competitors and transportation to build the SSGA’s value worldwide.**

# HIT THE ROAD WITH U.S. SOY

## USSB RESEARCH CREATES NEW MARKETS FOR SOYBEANS

U.S. Grown Soybeans Are Used To Make More Flexible And Durable Rubber For Both Goodyear Tires And Skechers Shoes.

**W**hether you're hitting the road for a run or a drive, you can now do so with soy-based rubber technology. U.S. soy is now utilized for Skechers footwear—thanks to the company's collaboration with The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company—opening the door to a new market for U.S. grown soybeans.

The United Soybean Board (USB) regularly collaborates with Goodyear for research about how to incorporate soy into the company's rubber technology. This research led to the discovery that soybean oil could not only improve tire flexibility across temperatures, but also provide enhanced grip on road surfaces, making the oil an ideal choice for Goodyear's all-weather tire line. Building off Goodyear's discovery, Skechers utilized the same technology to deliver grip, stability and durability for select models of its running shoes, with plans to incorporate the rubber into more styles throughout 2020.

"This collaboration is an example of two trusted brands coming together to create a high-tech product that will truly benefit our consumer," said Michael Greenberg, the president of Skechers.

Today, there are more than 1,000 different soy-based products available, including everything from turf grass to machinery lubricants to asphalt. USB is committed to continuing its work to research, develop and

expand new uses, including these tires and shoes, in order to enhance the demand for U.S. soybean farmers.

"U.S. soybean growers are pleased to see this multiplier effect growing from their own collaboration with Goodyear through the soybean checkoff," said Ralph Lott II, a USB director and soybean farmer from New York. "USB worked with Goodyear to support their innovation with U.S. soy that is now available in four lines of Goodyear tires. We're enthusiastic that consumers have a new choice for performance as well as

sustainability with U.S. soy in a range of Skechers footwear."

Once just a byproduct, soybean oil is now a lucrative value driver for farmers, being used as a sustainable, environment friendly and functional replacement for petroleum in industrial products. Now, both Goodyear's tires and Skechers' shoes utilize soybean oil. Goodyear recently announced that it will be increasing its use of soybean oil in 2020 by 25 percent, with even loftier goals for 2040.

"Goodyear has always worked to create innovative products that

Checkoff  
Investment



provide consumers with high-performance tires, and now we're using that same ingenuity to enable consumers to wear high-performance shoes," said Christian Jurado, Goodyear's global director of licensed products.

Skechers' soy-based shoes are available in stores and online now; the shoes are part of the Skechers GORun collection. The brand shared plans to expand the range of styles and colors available through 2020, including branching out into the trail, work and safety footwear categories for men, women and children. All models which utilize the soybean oil will be labeled as having Goodyear Performance Outsoles.

Goodyear's soy-based tires are available in the U.S. and Canada in several sizes and styles, including some of the top-performing tires: the Assurance® WeatherReady®, Eagle Exhilarate™, Eagle® Enforcer® All Weather® and the Assurance ComfortDrive®.

To learn more about these innovations and soy-based products, visit [soynewuses.org](http://soynewuses.org).

—Story and graphic courtesy of the United Soybean Board



Goodyear (and winged foot design) and Bling are trademarks of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and used under license by Skechers USA, Inc., Manhattan Beach, CA. Copyright 2020 The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. This or any footwear cannot completely eliminate the risk of slipping.



# Study Reveals the Ramifications of Limited Rural Broadband Service for American Farmers

A majority of farmers say that their internet access is insufficient to run their business.

A majority of farmers say that their internet access is insufficient to run their business.

A study commissioned by the United Soybean Board (USB) reveals that the lack of broadband access in rural areas takes a significant toll on American farmers and the economy.

According to “Rural Broadband and the American Farmer: Connectivity Challenges Limit Agriculture’s Economic Impact and Sustainability” an alarming 60 percent of U.S. farmers say that they do not have enough connectivity to run their businesses. USB initiated the rural broadband study to better understand how and why farmers currently access the internet, and the implications that access has for a farm’s business decisions, economic viability and overall sustainability.

Data from the United States Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service indicate that farming contributes to nearly \$133 billion of our country’s gross domestic product. Based on USB’s rural broadband survey, the lack of connectivity negatively affects farmers and is responsible for \$80 billion of gross domestic product.

“End users ask farmers to deliver a consistent and high-quality crop without adequate internet access and reliable broadband speeds, which undoubtedly impacts their efficiency and sustainability,” says Tim Venverloh, USB’s vice president of sustainability strategy.

Other significant findings include

- 78 percent of farmers do not have a choice for their internet service providers.

- 60 percent of farmers say that the internet service they do have is slow, with most relying on cell signals or hotspots to connect to the internet.

- 40 percent of farmers have a fixed internet connection while others rely on satellite connections.

“There’s a clear disparity between connectivity in rural versus non-rural areas,” says Venverloh. “The lack of connectivity, however, extends to farmers past the farm gate. When farmers can’t maximize the functionality of their equipment, particularly in the middle of the field, it has repercussions beyond the farm. More and more of the future is about data and data transfer. The timely dissemination and use of data is becoming more important in a precision ag and decision ag world.”

The results of the qualitative and quantitative research highlight the critical need to improve rural broadband access, which has implications far beyond quality of life (information, communication and entertainment) in addition to rural communities’ livelihood.

“Farmers continually look for ways to improve efficiencies while protecting natural resources,” adds Venverloh. “Upwards of 50 percent

of the farmers we surveyed want to incorporate more technology into their operations, but they are held back by limited connectivity. Improving their access to broadband needs to be a priority.”

USB will share survey data with internet service providers as well as influencer organizations which are working to tackle the policy and technical challenges involved with delivering high-speed broadband access to rural communities.

More than 2,000 primary and secondary farm operators responded to a combination of online and mail-in surveys. Thanks to cooperation from the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Soybean Association, the Illinois Soybean Association and the North Carolina Soybean Producers Association, the report represents a cross-section of U.S. agriculture. Participants had the following characteristics: 86 percent grew field or row crops, such as corn and soybeans; 21 percent grew specialty crops, such as fruits and vegetables; and 55 percent raised livestock. In-depth telephone interviews were also conducted with participants in eight states during July and August of 2019.

—Story and photo courtesy of the United Soybean Board



Broadband access is critical for all farmers’ operations throughout the country.

# HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

# GET A TASTE

# OF SOYFOODS

**T**he North Dakota Soybean Council (Council) is helping to promote the nutritional benefits of soyfoods to a very influential audience.

In March, the North Dakota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (NDAND) and the North Dakota Nutrition Council (NDNC) held their annual meetings in Fargo. These professionals work with dietetic students and the greater community to provide sound, scientific nutritional information.

The Council sponsored the keynote address at the NDAND conference; the speech was given by Dr. Mark Messina, Nutrition Matters, Inc. Dr. Messina is one of the world's foremost experts on soyfoods and their nutritional effect on humans.

Dr. Messina presented outcomes from the most recent health and nutrition research about soy protein. He also helped to dispel myths and misinformation about soyfoods while discussing promising research about the benefits of soy, including an innovation skin wrinkle study.

Participants at the two events were also able to taste how soyfoods can easily be incorporated into meals. Linda Funk, executive director of The Soyfoods Council, worked with the NDAND and the NDNC to provide tasting opportunities at meals as well as at The Soyfoods Council's exhibit booth.

"It's about talking to people who are out on the front lines, making sure they have the right information and being able to talk to people



**Soyfoods were featured on the lunch menu during NDAND conference.**

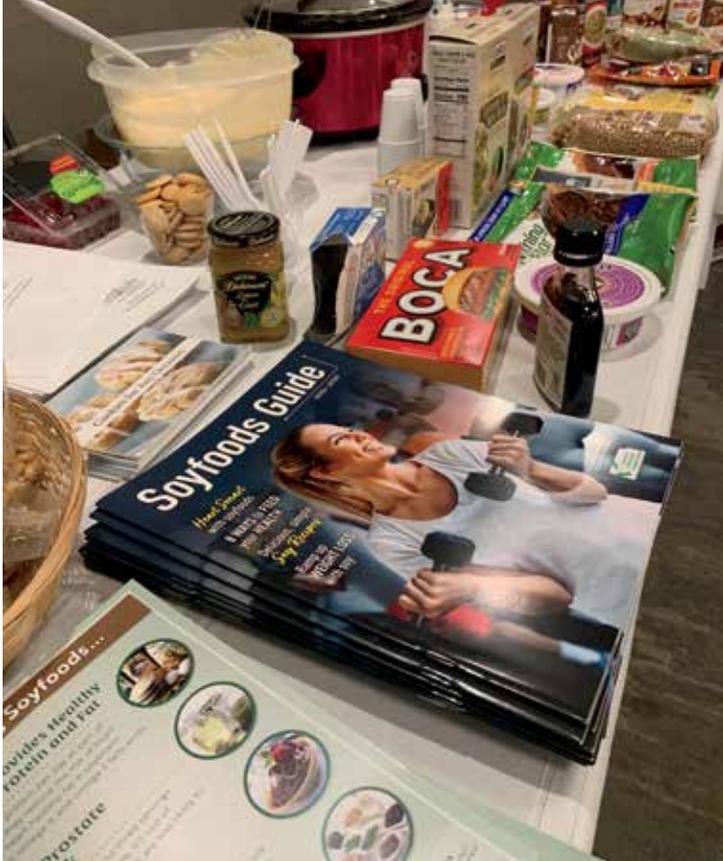
so that everybody can start eating soy at least once or twice a day to really help with that healthy lifestyle profile," Funk said.

At The Soyfoods Council booth, attendees sampled a tomato, black soybean and water-packed tofu soup as well as a lemon dessert which was made with lemon curd and silken tofu. The food samples sparked conversation about soy benefits and illustrated how easy it is to incorporate soyfoods with healthy diets.

Many of the nutritionists had not tasted black soybeans or tofu, and the people were amazed about how delicious both recipes were. The Soyfoods Council's display featured examples of the many soy-based foods that are readily available as well as information about the hundreds of everyday products which contain soy-based ingredients.



**Linda Funk and Dr. Mark Messina provide samples of soy recipes for conference attendees.**



Plenty of soy health brochures, literature and recipes were available for conference participants.



Dr. Mark Messina provided a detailed presentation of soy nutrition health studies and research to NDAND attendees.

The Council sponsored the Soyfoods Council's participation at the North Dakota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and the North Dakota Nutrition Council's annual meetings because exhibiting and speaking afforded soyfood proponents the opportunity to increase the aware-

ness of soyfoods' health benefits and research to key influencers. At the same time, the promotional efforts also showcased the many soyfoods that are available in the marketplace.

—Story by Linda Funk and Daniel Lenke, photos by staff



# Young Leader

## Charts Unique Course

**J**ustin Sherlock's path to farming hasn't followed a typical route. Sherlock, from Dazey, North Dakota, has been operating his farm for seven years, but years ago, the prospect that he'd become a farmer seemed unlikely.

Sherlock graduated from North Dakota State University (NDSU) with a degree in agriculture business. He went to Washington, D.C., where he interned with then Senator Kent Conrad. Following Sherlock's graduation from NDSU, farming wasn't in the cards.

"I always wanted to farm, but there just wasn't room for me," Sherlock says.

Sherlock explains that both sets of grandparents had farmed, but they left farming decades ago. Sherlock's father worked for a neighboring farmer and was eventually able to rent some land from the grower in 2000.

That move got the Sherlock family back into farming.

"Not many farm families who folded up their tents are able to get back into it again," Sherlock says. "Fortunately, Dad was able to get back into farming during some good economic times."

Because there wasn't room for him, Sherlock moved back to Washington, D.C., to work for the National Farmers Union.

In August 2012, Sherlock's father passed away in an accident. Sherlock left Washington, D.C., and moved back to North Dakota in order to take over the farming operation.

### Leadership Roles

In addition to working as a farmer, in 2016, Sherlock was elected as the mayor of Dazey, a community of about 100 people.

"Small communities have a lot of the same issues as larger communities,



**Dazey farmer Justin Sherlock (left center) converses with another young farmer during an American Soybean Association Corteva Agriscience Young Leader event.**

just with fewer resources to fix them," Sherlock contends.

Sherlock says that, during the good economic times, a number of young people came back to the community. He's determined to do his part in order to keep the rural community vibrant.

"I want to live here, so I hope to help make the community as good as we can. I want to maintain our community so that we can keep our small businesses, our local hospitals and our schools open," Sherlock explains.

Sherlock was selected by the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association (NDSGA) to represent the state as the American Soybean Association Corteva Agriscience Young Leader. The 36th Young Leader class began its leadership journey at the Corteva Agriscience Global Business Center in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Indianapolis training session was the first phase of the program which is designed to identify future grower leaders within the agriculture community and to provide them with opportunities to enhance their skills while networking with other farmers. The second and final phase took place in San Antonio as part of the Commodity Classic.

Sherlock says that he had taken other leadership classes, but "this sounded like a good opportunity to refresh my skills and learn to better

apply them."

Sherlock's experience working in Washington, D.C., and serving on the board for the Barnes County Farmers Union has given him a level of comfort when talking with members of Congress and the administration, but the additional training has been valuable.

"The best thing is the connections I've made," Sherlock says. "The Young Leader program is, by far, the best designed leadership program I've participated in over my career. There were phenomenal speakers, great discussions, and I really appreciate being able to connect with other soybean producers."

Young farmers from 19 states and Canada participated in Sherlock's class. He said that a lot of participants face the same challenges, including access to land and capital.

"It's been fun to learn what innovative things they're doing. That has led to a lot of in-depth conversations," Sherlock adds.

Being selected as a Young Leader also means that Sherlock serves on the NDSGA board for a year.

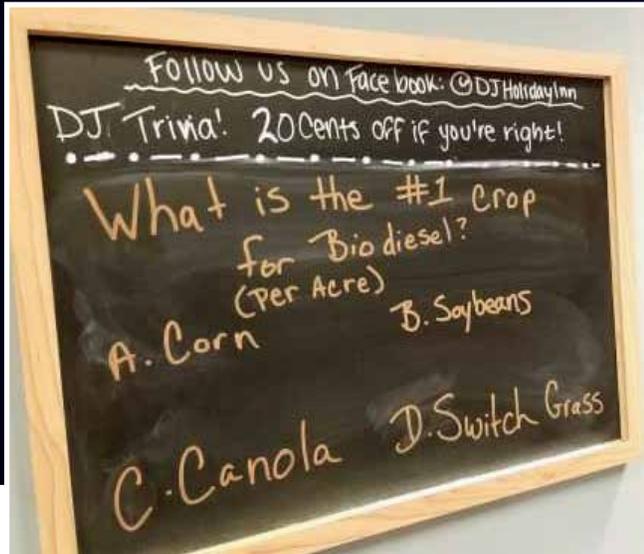
"I'm enjoying that, too," Sherlock says. "The level of knowledge and professionalism of the farmers on the board has been great."

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photos courtesy of ASA



**ASA President Bill Gordon (left) presents Sherlock (center) with a plaque recognizing his participation in the Young Leader program.**

# COFFEE SHOPS AND BIOFUELS



It began innocently enough. Burleigh County farmer Heather Lang was simply getting a cup of coffee at a Fargo coffee shop when she was in town for a North Dakota Farm Bureau (NDFB) event. A sign at the store offered a discount to patrons who correctly answered a question about the number one crop for biodiesel per acre: corn, soybeans, canola or switchgrass?

The barista who wrote the question said that the correct answer was switchgrass because she'd found the answer online. Lang, who serves on the NDFB and the American Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Committees, didn't think that answer was correct, so she set out to find the true story about biofuels and biodiesel in particular.

"If I have ignorance about this, I'm sure others do, too," Lang says.

Lang's inquiry led to a conference call with North Dakota Soybean Association staff and National Biodiesel Board Sustainability Director Don Scott who says that he sees confusion and misunderstanding about biodies-

el all the time.

"There's so much to know, and the general public doesn't have that background, so there are a lot of myths and rumors," Scott says. "We have a good story to tell about biodiesel, but it's often a complicated story."

All commercial biofuels in the U.S. are byproducts of food production, says Scott. Biodiesel is made from vegetable oil or animal fats that, when processed, can be used as a domestic fuel. About half of the nation's biodiesel supply is made from soybean oil.

"The biodiesel industry began with soybeans because we have more oil than we can eat. Soy produces the highest amount of protein per acre, but we can't eat it all," Scott explains.

Biodiesel has grown beyond soybeans to include other fats and oils such as canola. Soy, however, is still the most common feedstock.

As an advanced biofuel, biodiesel substantially reduces the emissions from diesel engines. Scott says that biodiesel reduces lifecycle greenhouse-gas emission by more than

75 percent compared to diesel fuel. The U.S. biodiesel industry reduces nearly 25 million tons of carbon dioxide every year and aims to grow that reduction to 35 million tons by 2030. Biodiesel also reduces harmful tailpipe emissions which helps to prevent nearly 300 premature deaths from respiratory illness every year.

Scott says that another myth is that biofuels take more energy to produce than they return. Corn ethanol returns about two units of energy for every one unit used to produce it while biodiesel is even more favorable, returning five units of energy for every unit required to make it.

"Biodiesel is solar energy because soybean plants capture the sun's energy. It's a good idea to tap into that solar energy rather than fossil fuels," Scott explains. "There aren't many other fuel options out there that deliver greenhouse gas reduction, especially for heavy-duty uses like farm and construction equipment."

According to Scott, there's a misconception that farmers are planting crops just to turn them

into biofuels. While that choice may be the case in the future, the industry originated and still operates as a way to utilize coproducts.

"It would take a major shift to grow other crops specifically for fuels," Scott adds.

A key difference between ethanol, which is used in gasoline engines and biodiesel, made for diesel engines, is that ethanol is produced from carbohydrates such as starch and sugar. Through a complicated cellulosic process, switchgrass can be made into ethanol. However, switchgrass produces very little protein, so it's not a good crop for food or livestock feed. Switchgrass also has very little oil content, so it's of no value for making biodiesel.

The distinction for the top biodiesel-producing crop belongs to soybeans. Now, Heather Lang knows the true story even if she had to pay full price for her coffee.

—Story by Daniel Lemke,  
photo by Heather Lang

# GLOBAL PANDEMIC:

## A DISRUPTIVE FORCE

## ON AGRICULTURE

It's doubtful that most farmers include a global health crisis on their list of variables to manage. Yet that's exactly what has transpired this spring with the COVID-19 outbreak disrupting nearly everything that had been normal about life in the United States.

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. government labeled agriculture a critical industry during the novel coronavirus outbreak. The designation extends to the entire food and agriculture production system. "If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule," the guidance states.

The move encourages state and local authorities to allow farms and the entire food supply chain to continue operating as usual amid current and potential restrictions created to stem the spread of COVID-19. The designation reassures U.S. farmers and input suppliers that the 2020 growing season will get underway as planned.

Because the designation covers the entire supply chain, farmers should continue to have access to everything

from equipment parts to inputs such as seed, fertilizer and pesticides in order to plant crops this spring. Farmers should be able to continue delivering soybeans and other commodities to the value chain for transportation to customers, which ensures a steady supply of soybean meal for use in animal feed as well as soy and soybean oil for human consumption.

As part of this production system, the U.S. soybean industry will be able to continue business as close to usual as possible. The U.S. soy industry is working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that inspection and logistical support remain in place to provide high-quality soybeans as needed.

"Our teams at the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) are engaged with USDA and we are assured they are working to ensure inspections and logistical support remain in place," said Jim Sutter, USSEC CEO. "The supply of U.S. soy remains solid and available for purchase."

### Close to Home

While the recognition of agriculture's importance is appreciated, the designation has done little to smooth the volatility created by the pandemic.

North Dakota State University

(NDSU) Extension Ag Finance Specialist Bryon Parman told participants in an NDSU webinar that, of the top 15 worst days on record for the U.S. stock market, three of them occurred in March 2020.

"Two of the top 15 worst weeks happened in March," Parman added. "By late March, about 35 percent of the stock market highs had been washed away."

Agriculture markets have also showed volatility due to the uncertainty presented by the COVID-19 outbreak.

"It's a psychological battle," said NDSU Extension Crops Economist and Marketing Specialist Frayne Olson. "These are uncertain times because there are no reference points that look similar."

Olson explained that market traders are trying to figure out the worst-case scenarios. He also expects the market trends to be lower until there is some positive news about the number of coronavirus cases in the United States.

"In my opinion, there will be downward market pressure until cases start to decline," Olson said. "A downturn in cases will be the tipping point. In my view, grain and energy will rebound the quickest;

livestock will likely take longer to bounce back."

Fallout from the coronavirus has been tough on the energy sector. Oil prices have fallen sharply, and fewer miles are being driven as people stay home to limit the virus' spread. That scenario has been tough on bioenergy demand, including fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, but it may yield one benefit for the state's farmers.

"Farmers pricing fuel for spring may not see a better price ever," said David Ripplinger, NDSU bioenergy economist. "The problem is a shift in demand that hits both fossil and renewable fuels. Excess capacity will be troublesome."

As farmers make their plans for the 2020 growing season, many of them are working to secure operating loans. Olson says that, given the unusual circumstances, most lenders with whom he's spoken are doing what they can to rework loans to keep people farming.

"There are farmers who may not be able to get credit, but COVID-19 isn't the cause," Olson said.

"Credit issues go back to cash flow," Parman concurred. "There aren't more problems because of coronavirus."

## Government Aid

The \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress in March provides \$25 billion for agriculture, including \$9.5 billion in emergency funding and \$14 billion for the Commodity Credit Corporation. The \$9.5 billion funding stream has given money for the USDA to provide support for agriculture producers affected by the coronavirus. Farm operators could also be eligible for forgivable loans from the Small Business Administration.

North Dakota officials have also made changes which are designed to help businesses and agriculture. Changes include incrementally lifting some spring road restrictions and adjusting pesticide applicator requirements.

North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) Commissioner Doug Goehring says that, while some restrictions have been loosened, the NDDA is continuing to fill its food

safety and inspection role.

“We’re still regulating meat and milk,” Goehring says. “That’s still business as usual. We’re still screening for safety.”

Goehring explains that the NDDA continues to issue export certificates for ag commodities bound for export markets.

The USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) authorized additional flexibilities due to the coronavirus. Changes include enabling producers to send notifications and reports electronically, extending the date for production reports, and providing additional time and deferring interest on the premium and other payments.

“Crop insurance will continue to support farmers through the challenges ahead, and our RMA team is here to support them,” RMA Administrator Martin Barbre said. “We are working with the authorized insurance providers to continue to deliver crop insurance and to respond to farmer needs.”

## Uncertainty Remains

The USDA March 31 planting intentions report estimated that U.S. farmers would plant 83.5 million acres of soybeans. North Dakota soybean production is estimated to increase 18 percent from 2019, going to 6.6 million acres.

Olson expects that, because of the wet fall and late harvested corn, there may be some prevented planting acres again in 2020. Prevented planting looks better when prices are low, but most farmers still want to get a crop planted.

“Given the uncertainty, my recommendation is to keep your plans in place,” Olson said, “not only because of economics, but also because of fertilizer and weed management plans.”

While a great deal of uncertainty surrounds the long-term coronavirus effects, Parman expects that farmers should be able to proceed with their spring-planting activities as normal.

“There hasn’t been a hiccup in the input supply chain. Products are

there and are better than in 2019.

Olson explained that there some global signs that point to potential opportunities for U.S. agriculture. China bought winter wheat and soybeans in late March; it was China’s first wheat purchases from the U.S. since 2017.

Brazil and Argentina both produced large soybean crops, which Olson said makes selling old-crop soybeans more difficult. However, possible workforce issues in South America related to the coronavirus outbreak could mean more U.S. soybean purchases by China.

“The situation is changing fast,” Parman added. “Estimates of the long-term implications are all over the place. How long will we operate as we are now? No one knows.”

Visit [ndsoygrowers.com/category/covid-19-resources/](https://ndsoygrowers.com/category/covid-19-resources/) for the latest agricultural resources about COVID-19.

—Story by Daniel Lemke, stock image

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# Getting to Know Your Council County Representative



Allan Rohrich, Zeeland, North Dakota

## Tell us about your farm.

I farm with my brother, Mark, and our dad, Tom. We grow wheat, corn, and soybeans and are currently working on expanding our operation.

## What do you like best about farming?

I enjoy the opportunity to do something different every day.

## Did you always know farming was something you wanted to do?

Farming was the goal, but my career started out differently. I have been working at a John Deere dealership for 15 years. I am slowly working towards farming full time and currently still work part time at John Deere.

## What's exciting about the upcoming spring season?

I look forward to a new challenge and a fresh start for the new year. Hopefully, it will be a lot different than the last one!

## How did you get involved with the North Dakota Soybean Council as a county representative?

I got involved so that I could share input and see where our checkoff dollars are going.

## Why are soybeans part of your crop mix?

Soybeans are a good rotational crop, and they help spread harvesting out. They are also profitable.

## If you could change something about the current operating climate for North Dakota farmers, what would it be?

I would like to see more end users and animal agriculture in the state.

## What changes do you see in farming over the next 5 to 10 years?

I expect to see the trend towards larger farms and more efficiency through the use of agricultural technologies.

## What do you like to do outside farming?

I like to golf; pontoon; and spend time with my wife, Becky, and four children (Matthew, Grace, Nathan and Michael).

## If you could go anywhere, where would it be?

I would like to travel to Ukraine to see their agricultural practices. It is also where my ancestors came from.

—Story and photo by staff

*Allan is one of the North Dakota Soybean Council's (Council) county representatives. To learn more about serving on the Council as a county representative or board member, visit [ndsoybean.org/council-elections](http://ndsoybean.org/council-elections)*

# #SoyHelp Offered to Overcome **FARM STRESS**

In April, the American Soybean Association's (ASA) COVID-19 Task Force conducted a survey regarding the effects of COVID-19 on soy growers as well as their operations, employees and families. The stress level reported by the 86 farmer respondents from across the soy-producing states was high. The ASA, state soybean affiliates and the United Soybean Board (USB) want to help.

During Mental Health Month in May, the ASA launched a proactive communication campaign to combat #FarmStress and to offer #SoyHelp.

This assistance came in many forms and from many sources, and the ASA researched a range of options that were shared both nationally and by state soybean affiliates:

1. National mental-health resources, including suicide hotlines and crisis centers
2. Agriculture-specific resources for farmers and farm families, both national and state
3. COVID-19-specific resources for stress and other concerns, both national and state

"Stress levels have crept up out there in farm communities for some time now," said Kevin Scott, a soybean farmer from South Dakota and the chair of the ASA's COVID-19 Task Force. "As farmers, we are all faced with varying levels of anxiety resulting from a host of concerns: the coronavirus pandemic, weather issues, China trade problems and other farm stressors. But knowing there are issues compounding out there and knowing how to talk about them and work to reduce them are two different things. This survey cast a light on ASA's responsibility to try

to help," Scott explained.

The #SoyHelp campaign's resources and guidance helped to address concerns ranging from temporary stress to ongoing struggles with anxiety and from depression to thoughts of suicide. There are options for men, women, beginning farmers, veterans and other groups with specific needs or commonalities, including language and disability barriers. Some are specific to disasters, including COVID-19 and how the pandemic has increased the instances of or worsened the levels of stress. The North Dakota Soybean

# Getting to Know the Expert



**Lesley Lubenow**  
North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension Cropping Systems Specialist, Langdon Research Extension (REC)

## Where did you grow up?

I grew up outside of Morris, Minnesota. My dad was a small grains and soybean farmer. He had a small operation and sold out when I was entering high school.

## Where did you go to school?

I went to Chokio-Alberta Public Schools. It's a small consolidated school district. There were 19 kids in my class. When it was time to go to college, I chose Concordia College-Moorhead. I have B.A. in biology. After college, I attended

graduate school at NDSU, earning an M.S. in plant sciences. My project was nitrogen fertilizer recommendations in spearmint because we had a few growers in North Dakota at the time. Currently, I am working towards a doctorate in entomology. My project is flea beetle integrated pest management (IPM) in canola.

## Why were you interested in that field?

I have a love for the natural world and all types of life, so biology was a natural fit for me. I chose to specialize in agronomy because there were so

many opportunities to live in (a) rural place.

## What is your role at the Langdon REC?

My job is teaching people about the ag research from NDSU agriculture. I partner with county Extension agents and state Extension specialists to deliver their Extension programs. Plus, I do some applied research work.

## What kinds of crops are researched there?

At the LREC (Langdon REC), we research many kinds of crops: smalls grains, soybean, field pea, faba bean, flax, corn, sunflower, canola and hemp. We also are starting work on grasses/forages for saline soil remediation.

## Has that work changed over the years to reflect differences in crops and cropping practices?

Yes, we do special research projects on agronomy and plant pathology issues to respond to farmers' needs. At the LREC station, we have researched crop-rotation benefits of when to add soybean into a canola-wheat rotation. We have expanded into faba bean

and hemp research with interest in these new emerging crops. We have a large tile-drained research site to do long-term work on saline-sodic soil remediation.

## Are more soybeans being grown in that area?

In Cavalier County, it's my opinion that is really important to have a three-crop rotation to control disease issues in canola. Soybeans can be the third crop in that rotation. We are limited by yield potential, but I hope farmers can have higher net income with improved plant breeding for yield or lowering seed-cost market options.

## What do you like to do away from work?

I like spending time at home with my husband and our animals. Supper is usually something new at my house as I am cooking my way through cookbooks. I totally recommend it because meal planning is easy. I like listening to podcasts, growing flowers and vegetables, and looking at the stars. I like to dream about new places to travel.

—Story by Dan Lemke,  
photo provided by NDSU

Growers Association (NDSGA) and other state affiliates have local and regional resources available, including information about telehealth options, financial resources and government offices which are able to assist with farm-operation issues.

"ASA and the affiliate states, including North Dakota, are taking a proactive approach to stress in agriculture by giving farmers, ranchers and their families a pathway to many online resources and tools they need during this difficult time," said Nancy Johnson, NDSGA executive director. The NDSGA has provided these links and tools on its home page and also through its social media platforms. "Our aim is to provide

information and resources quickly, when they need it most."

Included with both the ASA and state-affiliate resources are links to self-assessments, professional services, and local healthcare facilities; hotlines for urgent needs, warmlines for helpful advice, and chat and text lines for instant access; and articles about symptoms, solutions, and starting uncomfortable discussions.

To learn more about #SoyHelp and to find both national and local resources, go to [www.ndsoygrowers.com](http://www.ndsoygrowers.com) and click on the green button that says "Farm Stress Resources."

—Story by staff, stock photo



## No SRE Appeal

While the world continues to keep an eye on COVID-19, biofuel groups, the American Soybean Association (ASA) and other interested parties were busy watching the deadline for the Trump administration to appeal the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals' case that struck down three small refinery exemptions (SREs) from the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). The Renewable Fuels Association, the American Coalition for Ethanol, the National Corn Growers Association and the National Farmers Union filed the 10th Circuit case to curtail SREs and to strengthen the RFS, but that unanimous court decision has been open to appeal.

The Trump administration elected to let the appeal deadline come and go, a move that was applauded by these biofuel groups. Two oil refineries have filed petitions to ask the federal appeals court to reconsider its decision restricting the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ability to grant waivers. In January, the court ruled that the EPA cannot legally extend exemptions to small refineries when previous, temporary exemptions expired. That court ruling is significant for how waivers may be treated in the future.

Initially, the administration had vowed not to join an appeal of the 10th Circuit Court's ruling for Renewable Fuels Association v. EPA. The administration then waffled, implying that it may choose to appeal, before letting the deadline pass. For months, the president has vowed to support the biodiesel industry and to push the EPA to restrict SREs.

## Phase One Deal Progress

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) announced continued progress with the implementation of the agriculture-related provisions of the U.S.-China Phase One Economic and Trade Agreement. The agreement entered into force on February 14, 2020.

Both countries signed a regionalization agreement that, in the event of detecting a highly pathogenic avian influenza or virulent Newcastle disease in a particular

region of the United States, will allow U.S. poultry exports from unaffected regions of the country to continue (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Regionalization Protocol Announcement). This action will help protect the increased access which American farmers have gained in China's poultry market. U.S. poultry exports have the potential to exceed \$1 billion per year.

China notified the United States of proposed maximum residue levels for three hormones which are commonly used in U.S. beef production. China's recognition of safe and science-based U.S. production methods particularly benefits trade with China for beef, a fast-growing market that imported \$8.4 billion worth of beef products in 2019.

For the first time since 2003, U.S. beef producers will be able to send nearly all beef products to China. U.S. pork producers will also be able to significantly expand the types of pork products which are shipped to China. According to the agreement, China expanded the internal list of U.S. beef and pork products, including processed meat products, which can enter Chinese ports. On the beef and beef products list, China removed all references to age restrictions; this move was in line with its February 24 announcement that conditionally lifted restrictions on beef and beef products from cattle that were aged 30 months and older.

The USDA estimates that American cattlemen could export up to \$1 billion per year under this improved trading environment. China also published an updated list of 938 U.S. beef and pork establishments which are eligible to export to China. The USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service export library has been updated to reflect these changes.

China updated its list of U.S. facilities which are eligible to export distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In 2015, U.S. producers exported \$1.6 billion worth of DDGS to China. This action, if coupled with the removal of other trade barriers, will allow U.S.

exporters to recapture this market.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration published a notice to facilitate the registration of animal feed manufacturing facilities for export to China. In addition, in response to delays caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, China announced a streamlined process for registering new U.S. feed products for export.

In addition, China's tariff exclusion process is in effect, and many importers report that they are receiving tariff relief for purchases of U.S. food and agricultural products. The USDA continues to publish guidance for U.S. exporters that are seeking to participate in this process.

"We are working with China on a daily basis as we implement the Phase One trade agreement," Ambassador Robert Lighthizer said. "We recognize China's efforts to keep the commitments in the agreement and look forward to continuing our work together on trade matters."

## Soy Growers Urge Congress to Support Locks and Dams

Soy growers are urging Congress to support funding that is vital for waterway improvements, specifically locks and dams, which allow soybean farmers to transport their crop and to remain competitive in the global market.

The ASA supports changing the cost-share for Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF)-financed lock and dam projects to the formula used for deep draft ports—75% general revenue and 25% IWTF—in the Water Resources Development Act legislation. These changes would allow projects to be finished faster and would reduce both the final project cost and the amount of time that communities must wait for the projects' resulting economic benefits.

Soy growers also urged House members to sign onto the bipartisan letter sponsored by Reps. Conor Lamb (Pennsylvania) and Brian Babin (Texas); the letter encourages conforming with the cost-share formula.

## Ag Groups Urge the Administration to

## Suspend Tariffs During the Pandemic

The ASA, as part of the Farmers for Free Trade (FFT) coalition, is urging the Trump administration to suspend all tariffs as people consider measures to stimulate the U.S. economy in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a letter to House and Senate leadership, as well as the secretary of the treasury, the ASA joined other ag groups asking U.S. leaders to suspend all 232 and 301 tariffs, calling it a "significant step" that can be taken immediately to help businesses and families affected by the recent economic disruptions.

The agriculture groups contend that the move would stimulate economies around the world at a time when markets for many agricultural products have fallen substantially.

## USMCA Delay

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) implementation can now be added to the list of events delayed across the globe right now, although this postponement is not from the pandemic, and not all parties are upset. Officials in the United States, Mexico and Canada did not meet a March deadline that was necessary to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement on June 1 as was originally planned.

July 1 is now the earliest that the deal could formally begin. USMCA rules state that the deal would enter into force "on the first day of the third month following the last notification" from each of the three countries certifying that they have met their obligations. Those countries must still agree to uniform regulations for auto rules and name panels for USMCA dispute settlement before the deal can be implemented.

Certain groups, including automakers, welcomed the news which buys them time to adjust to the agreement's new rules. The delay also provides a chance for the three countries to take more time to ensure that they are ready to comply with the deal, something a group of senators on the Finance Committee had asked the administration to consider.



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