

# AMERICAN WINTER 2023 soybean

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People. Policy. Profitability.

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION



## TITLES IN THE FARM BILL TIME FOR A NEW FARM BILL

**SOY FACES**  
Young Producers and  
the Next Farm Bill

**SOY FORWARD**  
Soy Trade Connects  
to Farm Bill

**ISSUE UPDATE**  
Transportation Threats  
Beyond the Beltway

**INDUSTRY  
PERSPECTIVE**  
Challenges of Feeding  
Eight Billion People

  
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**Publisher** Jill Wagenblast  
**Associate Publisher/Marketing** Wendy Brannen  
**Editorial Director** Wendy Brannen  
**Managing Editor** Jordan Bright  
**Sponsorship/Ad Sales** Michelle Hummel, Chris Luelf  
**Database Management** Cathy Cullen  
**Graphic Designer** Andrea McCoy  
**Contributing Photographers** Joseph L. Murphy  
**Contributing Writers** Alexa Combelic, Allison Jenkins, Tom Steever, Jim Sutter

**ASA Staff Leadership**  
**American Soybean Association**  
Steve Censky, Chief Executive Officer  
**World Initiative for Soy in Human Health**  
Gena Perry, Executive Director  
**ASA Farmer-Leaders**  
President Daryl Cates, Columbia, Ill.  
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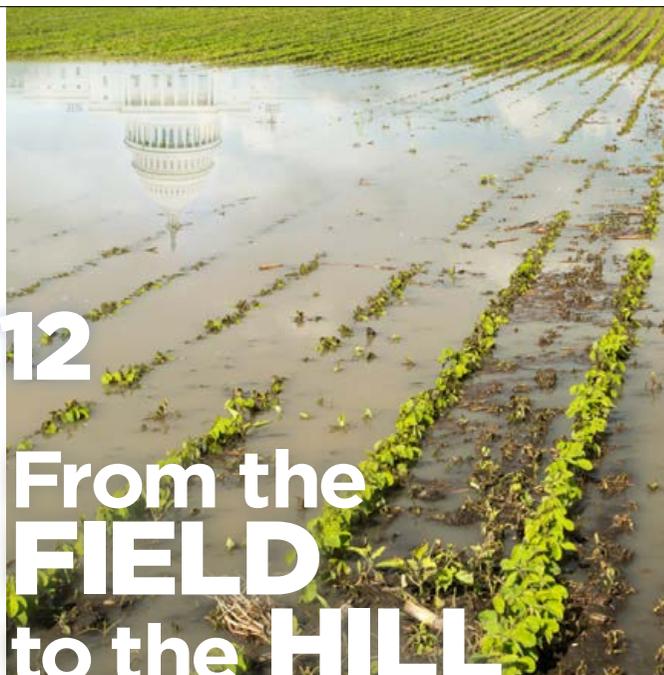
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The American Soybean Association (ASA) represents U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international policy issues important to the soybean industry. ASA has 26 affiliated state associations representing 30 states and more than 500,000 soybean farmers.

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# ASA leadership corner

In the pages ahead, we will dive into one of the most significant topics in agriculture going into the new year: the 2023 Farm Bill. That extensive legislation is critical to farmers of all kind across all states, with its influence—good, bad or indifferent—continuing directly for at least five years, or when the farm bill typically is reauthorized, and potentially longer through its lasting impacts. The American Soybean Association surveyed, met and listened to farmers for a long time before releasing soy's 2023 Farm Bill priorities last spring, and since then, we hit the ground running to circulate those priorities, prep for farm bill testimony opportunities before Congress and collaborate with like-minded agricultural groups to assure we are working in symmetry where it makes sense to meet soy's goals.

This groundwork for soy's needs has been a major priority for ASA's policy team, directors and states this past year. And, yet, our "regular" policy work in D.C. did not cease during the 2022 year—and undoubtedly will continue at a fast clip into 2023. We look forward to sharing with you in the coming months those projects and priorities we pursue—in addition to the farm bill—on your behalf over the next 12 months. However, I'd like to take a moment to recap here just a handful of our policy and advocacy accomplishments in 2022; they are as diverse as apples and oranges—or, we could more aptly say, barges and freight trains. Who knew this time last year that

transportation would face such complex and pressing crises?! Be sure to check out the policy update from our government affairs director over that area, Alexa Combelic, which is also featured in this issue.

Among the many efforts of which we were proud to act on your behalf this past year:

- Led, initiated and engaged in key coalitions in support of soy priorities
- Secured crop insurance double cropping expansion and streamlining
- Kept harmful tax provisions out of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and secured good ones, e.g., the Biodiesel Tax Credit extension
- Maintained close watch on climate activity in Inflation Reduction Act and at USDA and Securities and Exchange Commission
- Led advocacy efforts on biotech and crop protection
- Engaged on EPA topics, including biofuels, crop protection and WOTUS
- Engaged on fertilizer, crop protection and WOTUS in court proceedings
- Led outreach on the Hill regarding food and fuel
- Pushed for soybeans of other color (SBOC) grading change by USDA
- Supported aquaculture legislation
- Engaged in implementation phase of bipartisan infrastructure law

Stephen CENSKY



Stephen Censky, ASA CEO

- Supported legislation to stop rail labor strike
- Secured WRDA cost-share improvement
- Engaged in Mississippi River low water level concern and ocean shipping reform
- Pushed for confirmation of key trade nominees at USDA and USTR
- Released 2023 Farm Bill priorities in May 2022

And, on that note, we hope you will enjoy reading the pages ahead and hearing more about the next steps for ASA as we pursue soy's interests in the 2023 Farm Bill. We wish you the happiest of new years with health, safety, contentment and prosperity in your farming activities and amongst your families!

## Multi-state Sustainable Agricultural Production Project Announced

*Eunsung Kan, Ph.D., shows the biochar results of a unique process he has developed. Photo Credit: Tarleton State University*



A multi-institutional team of researchers led by The University of Texas at Arlington, with major partners Texas A&M AgriLife, Tarleton State University and the University of Missouri, is launching an effort to provide small and underserved farmers in Texas, Arkansas and Missouri with resources to increase their soybean production.

The project, “Climate Resiliency for the Farm and Market Development: Economically Viable Low-Carbon and Climate-Smart Practices for Soybean Farms,” will examine various innovative biochar treatments that will focus on reducing greenhouse gas, or GHG, emissions in soybeans.

Biochar is a manmade charcoal material composed of agricultural wastes that include manure, crop residues and forage grasses. It can be used as sustainable fertilizer and to filter a broad range of contaminants in wastewater and water, as well as to capture greenhouse and odorous gases such as carbon dioxide and ammonia.

The multidisciplinary project is funded by a grant of nearly \$5 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It seeks to establish climate-smart agricultural practices to increase sustainable production by reducing harmful emissions while simultaneously improving soil health and water capacity.

Woo-Suk Chang, Ph.D., University of Texas at Arlington associate professor of biology, will lead the project with co-principal investigator Eunsung Kan, Ph.D., a Texas A&M AgriLife Research biological engineer at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Stephenville. Kan is associate professor in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and also a research associate professor at Tarleton State University.

“We’re glad to collaborate across institutions and states on this project and assess our unique types of biochar across multiple regions with distinct environmental conditions,

soil types and management practices,” said Kan. “In this project, biochar will be assessed as a cost-effective and sustainable solution to lowering GHG emissions while increasing production potential in agricultural fields.”

AgriLife Research faculty at the Texas A&M AgriLife Centers in Stephenville and Vernon and Tarleton State University will play a key role in the biochar project.

To reinforce efficient and sustainable soybean production, the researchers will work with farmers to combine new techniques and innovative pilot projects, including traditional and new forms of biochar; no-till agriculture; cover crops; climate-smart soybean varieties; crop rotation and bio-inoculants.

Fourteen soybean producers from the three states have agreed to participate in the climate-smart practices put forth by the research team. They were selected based on conservation programs established by the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service with a focus on socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited-resources farmers and veterans to provide farming aid.

The intent of this recruitment is to enroll small-acreage and underserved producers to bring climate-smart changes in agriculture by eliciting the acceptance of innovative farming practices. Outreach and educational training will be provided by specialists and consultants to allow a solid foundation for success across the varied environments that have been pledged to the climate-smart farming initiatives.

*Source: Tarleton State University*

# ASA in action



**Daryl Cates**  
President  
Columbia, IL



**Josh Gackle**  
Vice President  
Kulm, ND



**Brad Doyle**  
Chairman  
Weiner, AR

## ASA Elects 2023 Executive Committee, Welcomes 13 New Board Members

During its annual meeting in St. Louis in December, the American Soybean Association elected the leaders who will guide the organization through 2023's top advocacy priorities, including the much-anticipated farm bill, among other policy issues.

Daryl Cates (IL), who previously served as ASA vice president, will serve as 2023 ASA president. Cates is a fourth-generation farmer, raising soybeans, corn, wheat and double crop beans on his family operation. He's been on the ASA board since 2018.

Immediate past president Brad Doyle (AR) moves to the role of ASA chairman. Former chairman Kevin Scott (SD) rotates off the nine-member executive committee and retires from the board.

The ASA board elected Josh Gackle (ND) as ASA vice president, a role that puts him in line to serve as the association's president in 2024.

In addition, the board elected Caleb Ragland (KY) as ASA secretary; Scott Metzger (OH) as treasurer; and Dave Walton (IA), Alan Meadows (TN), Ronnie Russell (MO), and Jered Hooker (IL) as at-large members of the executive committee.

In addition to Scott, ASA bid farewell to and celebrated the efforts of several other directors who retired, including Jerry Bambauer (OH); Gerry Hayden (KY); Brian Kemp (IA); Willard Jack (MS); Matt Stutzman (MI); and Ron Moore (IL). Moore served as ASA president in 2017, and Hayden served as WISHH chair from 2020-22.

ASA welcomed 13 new directors who began their nine-year terms, including John Fleming (NC); Janna Fritz (MI); Elaine Gillis (IN); Rusty Goebel (OH); Tanner Johnson (WI); Jeff King (KY); John Mark Looney (MS); Jim Martin (IL); Jordan Scott (SD); Jimmie Lee Shaw (SC); Justin Sherlock (ND); Pat Swanson (IA); and Russell Wolf (MO).

## 2023 DIRECTORS



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**Jamie Beyer**  
Wheaton, MN



**Stan Born**  
Lovington, IL



**Wayne Fredericks**  
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**Janna Fritz**  
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**Dennis Fujan**  
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**Brandon Wipf**  
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# 2023 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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Magnolia, KY



**Scott Metzger**  
Treasurer  
Williamsport, OH



**Jered Hooker**  
At-large  
Clinton, IL



**Alan Meadows**  
At-large  
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**Ronnie Russell**  
At-large  
Richmond, MO



**Dave Walton**  
At-large  
Wilton, IA



**Ken Boswell**  
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**Heather Feuerstein**  
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**John Fleming**  
Halifax NC



**Mauricio Garcia**  
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**Elaine Gillis**  
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**George Goblisch**  
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**Rob Shaffer**  
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**Pam Snelson**  
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**Bill Wykes**  
Yorkville, IL



**Casey Youngerman**  
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## EXECUTIVE STAFF

**Stephen Censky**  
ASA Chief Executive Officer



# ASA in action



ASA said farewell to retiring Industry & State Relations Executive Director Bill Schuermann (left), pictured with ASA outgoing Chairman Kevin Scott, during the December meetings.



NAIFB TRADE TALK

ASA then-Vice President Daryl Cates visits with Rod Snyder, EPA's senior agriculture advisor; Doug Jones, EPA Region 7 agriculture advisor; and EPA Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention Dr. Michal Freedhoff in Kansas City during NAIFB Trade Talk.

At its December board meeting, ASA bid farewell to and celebrated the efforts of the organization's retiring directors. Pictured (from left): Outgoing Chairman Kevin Scott (SD); Willard Jack (MS); Brian Kemp (IA); Jerry Bambauer (OH); Gerry Hayden (KY); incoming Chairman Brad Doyle; Matt Stutzman (MI); and Ron Moore (IL).



RETIRING DIRECTORS

(From left) Polly Ruhland, USB CEO, Ralph Lott, USB chair, Jim Sutter, USSEC CEO, Doug Winter, USSEC chair, Brad Doyle, ASA then-president, and Steve Censky, ASA CEO participated in a celebratory program commemorating the 40th anniversary of the U.S. soybean industry's collaboration with China. Photo Credit: USSEC



US SOY IN CHINA 40 YEARS



NEW DIRECTOR

Fresh off his first ASA board meeting as a new director, South Carolina's Jimmie Lee Shaw talked soy and the many challenges facing farmers today with Southeast Farm Press' John Hart.

ASA's Wendy Brannen joins Clean Fuels Alliance America's Paul Winters and North American Renderers Association's Anna Wilkerson at the annual BioFry in October, providing tasty chicken fingers with a side of biodiesel/renewable diesel and soy knowledge for Hill staff.



BIOFRY

## FOOD SECURITY



ASA CEO Stephen Censky speaks on a panel hosted by the Mosaic Company at the World Food Prize Borlaug Dialogue in Des Moines, Iowa. The "Innovating Agriculture to Advance Food Security" panel highlighted the role of agriculture in boosting food security in an increasingly unstable world as U.S. farmers face a number of other challenges. Photo Credit: Joseph L. Murphy

Grower-leaders Alan Meadows (TN) (left) and Andrew Moore (GA) share their group's questions with a sponsor panel during an interactive exercise that was part of Bayer's Partnership Day Professional Development at the December ASA board meeting.



PARTNERSHIP DAY



## YOUNG LEADERS

The 39th ASA Corteva Agriscience Young Leaders class recently began its leadership journey at Corteva's Global Business Center in Johnston, Iowa. This year's class includes Lane Anders (AL); Steve Breeding and Lacey Dixon (DE); Sarah Tweet Landers (IL); Alexandra Miller (IA); Andrew and Mary Lauver (IA); Daniel Anderes (KS); Catlin Young and Aaron Vinson (KY); Robert Wasmiller (MI); Tim and Renae Braun (MN); Gary and Tina Schoenfeld (MN); Skyler and Ashlyn de Regt (MS); Bill Parks (MS); Aaron and Chandra Blase (NE); David Thomas (NC); Stephanie Cook (ND); Dustin and Casey Converse (OH); Austin Heil (OH); Kody and Shelby Leonard (OK); Jena Hanna (SC); Jeff and Emily Kloucek (SD); Will and Robin Hutchinson (TN); Jake Steffes (WI) and Daniel Chiappetta (Ontario, Canada).

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# ISSUE update

By Alexa Combelic, ASA Director  
of Government Affairs



*Critical low water levels on the Mississippi River during peak harvest in 2022 backed up 3,000 barges and saw drastic price increases for barge transportation. After the sweeping wins that were delivered in the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act at the end of 2021, most in Washington, D.C. anticipated a relatively light year for infrastructure policy in 2022. However, Mother Nature, labor contract negotiators, and typical end-of-year politicking meant this was certainly not the case.*

## Mother Nature and Rail Issues Dominated End of Year Infrastructure Policy

In the early days of 2022, ASA spent time identifying priorities for the biennial Water Resources Development Act, or “WRDA.” This legislation authorizes myriad Army Corps of Engineers projects along our inland waterways. The 2020 WRDA gave inland waterways users their biggest win in years: a change to the cost-share allocation formula for Inland Waterway Trust Fund, or “IWTF,” projects from an even, 50/50 split between the federal government and IWTF user fees to a 65% cost-share footed by the federal government and the remaining 35% funded through the IWTF—albeit with an expiration date of 2030. As inland waterways users continue to clamor for updated dams and expanded lock chambers along the Mississippi River system, this funding change was critical to ensuring projects could be slated for construction and completed in a more swift and cost-effective manner. The 2022 WRDA saw to it that the positive changes that were included in the 2020 bill

would be permanent by removing the 2030 expiration date. This means the Army Corps will be able to plan for decades ahead using the new funding formula, allowing planning and design to commence for future projects in perpetuity.

Unfortunately for waterways operators, the legislative wins from 2022 were shadowed by critical low water levels on the Mississippi River. During peak harvest, this event backed up 3,000 barges and saw drastic price increases for barge transportation. The Mississippi River serves as a transportation artery for over \$17 billion worth of farm products annually, and the disruptions caused by the drought will take time to return to normal. The White House was in close contact with ASA throughout much of harvest season to understand the impacts of this. While there was no silver bullet solution for such an extreme low water event, the government funneled resources into spot dredging and navigation support.

Growers who rely on multimodal transportation were further threatened this autumn by labor disputes on the freight railroads. After years of negotiations, unions and rail companies could not reach an agreement on new labor contracts. The threat of a rail strike further increased transportation costs and caused disruptions in the shipment of hazardous materials. Without resolution, Congress had to act as a last resort to avert a rail strike by codifying a labor agreement recommended by a government advisory committee.

What we learned this year is that the health of our transportation system can face a variety of threats beyond the D.C. beltway. Maintaining a strong multimodal transportation network and supporting diverse domestic market opportunities can alleviate the economic impact when unexpected bottlenecks and disruptions to the network arise.



# FROM THE FIELD TO THE HILL

Growers have opportunities to share input on a new farm bill in 2023

By Allison Jenkins

In 2012, Justin Sherlock found himself immersed in the political scene of Washington, D.C. The then-25-year-old from a tiny North Dakota town had made his way inside the Beltway, working as executive assistant for the National Farmers Union. It was a busy time for the organization, as Congress was in the midst of drafting a new farm bill. Part of Sherlock's job involved helping organize farmer "fly-ins" to Capitol Hill and planning a rally to encourage action from lawmakers.

But before the bill was completed, tragedy struck the Sherlock family. Justin's father, Jarrod, was killed in an automobile accident in August 2012. The younger Sherlock immediately decided to leave his big city



*Justin Sherlock on his Dazey, North Dakota, farm.*

career and returned to Dazey, North Dakota, to take over the row-crop operation his dad had started in the early 2000s.

"I had always wanted to farm, but I didn't think there was a way to do it since Dad was really just getting started," Sherlock says. "When he passed away, I knew at

that moment I needed to try to make it work, or it was likely never going to happen. Getting into farming from scratch is almost impossible."

Sherlock soon found himself on the receiving end of the farm bill he had helped to champion in D.C. He quickly learned the importance of its safety net, especially for beginning growers like himself. His farm has been hit hard by floods, freezes and other disheartening difficulties during the past decade. Crop insurance has been a lifeline more than once, says Sherlock, who raises soybeans, corn, pinto beans and barley on about 2,000 acres.

"The farm bill provides reassurance that if a disastrous year hits, there will be tools



ASA's policy team meets with House Ag Committee Chair Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson on the Hill while advocating for the farm bill and other soybean policy priorities. Pictured: Alexa Combelic, Ariel Wiegard, Rep. Thompson, Christy Seyfert and Virginia Houston.



available to help get me through until the next crop," says Sherlock, who serves on the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association board and was recently elected to the American Soybean Association board. "I truly think without the farm bill, especially its crop insurance and disaster pieces, I would not be in business today."

Now, as the 35-year-old prepares to plant his 11th crop, the next iteration of the farm bill is being negotiated amid a period of volatility for the agricultural industry. The sweeping package of legislation gets updated approximately every five years and authorizes a wide range of programs, from the farm safety net and food policy to conservation initiatives and rural

development. The current bill was enacted in December 2018 and expires Sept. 30, 2023.

"We have come through so many black swan events since the last farm bill—the China trade war, the COVID-19 situation, the Ukraine war, supply chain disruptions—and we've had some devastating natural disasters along the way," says Christy Seyfert, ASA's executive director of government affairs. "Farmers are also dealing with skyrocketing input costs and rising inflation and interest rates. These challenges reinforce the critical need for farm policy that is reliable and predictable and provides a strong safety net."

### House divided

Unfortunately, the shifting political landscape could hinder timely passage of a new farm bill, which has a projected \$1.3 trillion price tag. With a razor-thin Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives and Democratic control in the U.S. Senate, drafting the 2023 version will likely require even more bipartisan support than in the past. Rep. Glenn "GT"

Thompson, a Republican from Pennsylvania, will lead efforts as chairman of the House Ag Committee, while Sen. Debbie Stabenow, a Democrat from Michigan, will oversee the Senate's role as chair of its Ag Committee.

"Rep. Thompson has been very vocal about wanting an on-time farm bill, which is going to take a lot of work, relationship-building and education," Seyfert says. "There's a presidential election coming up in 2024, so I think there is a sincere interest among congressional leaders to get the farm bill moving, keep it moving and finish it this year. If they're committed to it, then we're going to do our part."

Indeed, ASA's farm bill preparations have been underway for more than a year. The organization conducted an in-depth farm bill survey of soybean growers in late 2021 and held 12 virtual listening sessions in 2022. ASA then used that input to develop a farm bill priorities document that reflects the wants, needs and concerns of soybean growers across the nation.

(continued on page 14)



ASA then-president Brad Doyle (AR) chats with Senate Ag Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow during a farm bill hearing in Arkansas in June 2022.

“We had that document prepared by last May and have already used it as basis for congressional testimony as well as media interviews and other presentations,” Seyfert says. “As the farm bill debate heats up this year, we’re going to continue sharing those priorities broadly, all in an effort to make a better farm bill for soybean growers.”

Protecting crop insurance, improving the farm safety net and expanding trade resources were the three most consistent messages gleaned from farmer feedback and will be among top priorities for ASA in its farm bill lobbying efforts, Seyfert says.

“These three areas are clearly near and dear to soybean farmers’ hearts, but we also have needs in other areas, such as conservation, rural development, biofuels, infrastructure and nutrition,” she says. “Soy is such a versatile crop, and there are opportunities for us throughout the farm bill.”

## Premier priorities

Continued access to affordable, effective crop insurance was top of mind for farmers who participated in ASA’s listening sessions and surveys, Seyfert says. Currently, some 90% of soybean acres are protected by crop insurance, a number that she says needs to

be maintained, if not improved.

Sherlock, who farms in North Dakota’s challenging “Prairie Pothole” region with its low-lying, flood-prone areas, couldn’t agree more. He says crop insurance often has been critical to continued viability of his operation, no more so than this past year when 30% of his acres were subjected to prevent-plant conditions.

“Crop insurance really does form the backbone of our risk management, and it works very well,” the young farmer says. “It’s effective, and farmers know how to use it. When we buy a policy, we know our coverage and how much exposure to risk we have. It helps provide stability to know I can farm again next year if this year doesn’t go as planned.”

While crop insurance may be considered the most important component of the farm safety net, commodity programs are also important risk management tools authorized by the farm bill. Elements of these programs are based on historical planted acreage, also known as base acres, and not dependent on current production. For the new farm bill, ASA wants producers to have the ability to voluntarily update their historical base acres to reflect more recent planting patterns.

Along with that change, ASA is asking for an increase in the soybean reference price that triggers the safety net benefit. Right now, the statutory reference price is set too low and should be re-evaluated, Seyfert says.

“The big test of the soybean safety net was the China trade war a few years back,” she explains. “At its height, hardly any farm safety net benefits were triggered. And that’s pretty incredible when you consider that our largest export market was shut off. Soybean farmers had to turn to the administration to help close the gap. Thank goodness there was a response, but it’s not something that we can count on all the time.”

The soybean industry’s complicated relationship with China also factors into the need for increased investments in global promotion of U.S. commodities. Among its farm bill priorities, ASA is asking to double funding for the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program, which are public-private partnerships between USDA and industry groups to promote U.S. agricultural exports. ASA is a collaborator with both programs, and promotional initiatives are carried out by other soy organizations, including the U.S. Soybean Export Council and ASA’s development program, the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health, or WISHH.

“Over 50% of the U.S. soybean crop is exported each year. And the giant among our export markets is China,” Seyfert says. “We want to continue to have access to that market, but at the same time, we want to diversify and strengthen our export markets and ensure we can meet supply and demand needs across the world. Doubling the funding for these programs would help us continue to build and grow globally.”

If this request is realized, \$69 million would be allocated annually for FMD and \$400 million

# FARM BILL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

1



Oversight Hearings

2



Budget Direction Provided

3



Legislative Drafts Developed

4



Consideration in Committees

6



Conference Negotiations

Consideration in Full House & Senate

5



7



Vote in Full House & Senate

8



Presidential Consideration

9



Implementation

The current farm bill, which was signed into law in 2018, remains in effect through the 2023 crop year. Oversight hearings as part of the next farm bill process began in 2022 and continue in 2023, with budget direction and additional steps starting in 2023. The farm bill comes up in Congress approximately every five years.



(continued from page 14)

for MAP. These increases are long overdue, says Virginia Houston, ASA director of government affairs who specializes in trade policy. She says MAP funding has not changed since 2006 and FMD funding has remained the same since 1997, even as global competition has grown substantially.

“We can definitely say FMD and MAP helped grow the Chinese market for U.S. soy into the success it is today,” Houston says. “Egypt is a great example as well. During the past five years, demand for U.S. soy there has increased by 178%. These programs clearly contribute to our success and are critically important to us, but they are in need of more funding. We’ve come a long way with the money we have, but there’s so much more we could do.”

Fighting for funding likely will be the biggest challenge most of ASA’s farm bill priorities will face, Seyfert says.

“No doubt, it’s a tough ask to get new money in an environment where folks are sensitive to expenditures by the taxpayer, but agriculture is a completely justifiable and worthwhile investment,” she says. “In fact, it’s critically important from a national security standpoint. You only have to think back to the empty grocery store shelves during COVID-19 to remember how important agriculture is.”



*Soy growers can provide input on the farm bill and other policy by visiting the Soy Action Center online at soygrowers.com.*

**ASA**  
American Soybean Association

Connect with your lawmakers today  
**soygrowers.com**

## New farm bill faces

Another concern is the fact that dozens of policymakers have never voted on a farm bill before: According to American Farm Bureau Federation, “Almost half of Congress, 260 members, were not in office when the 2018 Farm Bill was passed.” That disconnect means farmer and industry outreach is more important than ever, Seyfert says.

“I think the No. 1 hurdle that I have heard from Republicans and Democrats who are seasoned in farm policy is the enormous educational effort that is going to be required of the new Congress,” she says. “That’s both a challenge and an opportunity.”

As a farmer who turned from politics to production, Sherlock wholeheartedly agrees.

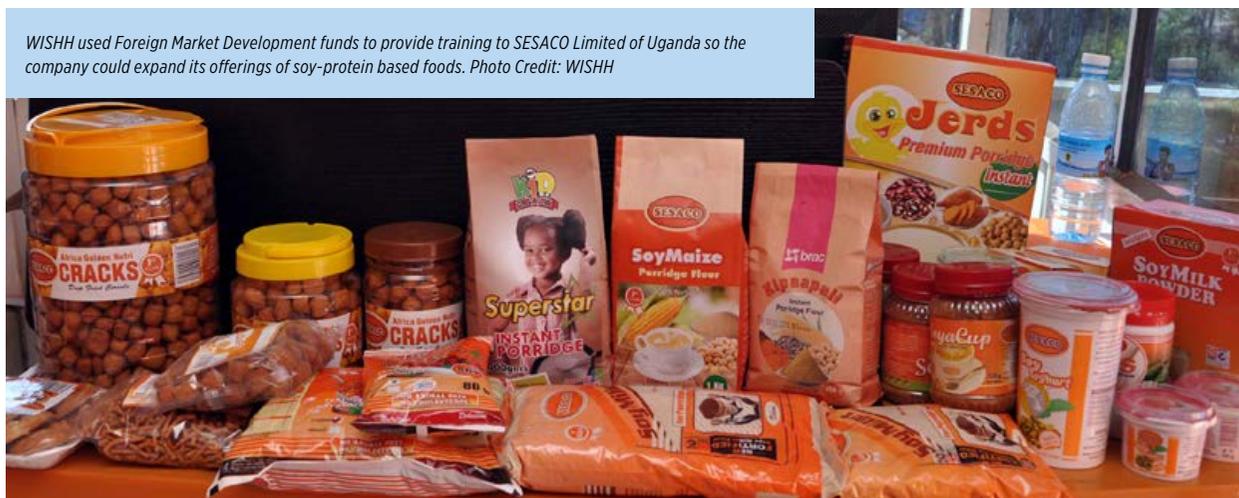
“Most government officials I have worked with, whether local, state or federal, really do want to hear from farmers because we’re the ones that these programs are meant to help. They don’t write

policies just for their sake,” he says. “They want to know what works and what doesn’t. The best thing farmers can do is come forward and share either success stories or frustration points they have with current farm programs.”

As farm bill development begins in earnest, soybean growers will have many more opportunities to give input about this all-important legislation, Seyfert says. She encourages farmers to keep an eye out for ASA’s “Action Alerts” and visit the Soy Action Center, an online engagement tool that connects them with members of Congress and provides information on policy campaigns, among other valuable resources. The site can be accessed at [soygrowers.com/soy-action-center](http://soygrowers.com/soy-action-center).

“Farmers are critically important in the farm bill process; policymakers need to hear from them,” Seyfert says. “At ASA, we will do all we possibly can as lobbyists in D.C., but when the farmers share their voices, it is a very powerful combination to have our work and their work go hand in hand.”

WISHH used Foreign Market Development funds to provide training to SESACO Limited of Uganda so the company could expand its offerings of soy-protein based foods. Photo Credit: WISHH



# Rooted in Relief

## In 90 years since the first farm bill, protecting American agriculture remains its primary goal

By Allison Jenkins

The farm bill has its roots in the economic and environmental crises of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl of the 1930s, when Congress developed measures to assist the struggling agricultural sector.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 as an integral component of his New Deal policies. The legislation's original goals were to keep food prices fair for farmers and consumers, ensure an adequate food supply, and protect and sustain the country's vital natural resources. In 1938, Congress created a more permanent farm bill that is typically updated every five years to reflect changing needs in farm policy and the nation.

While the farm bill has changed dramatically in the nine decades

since—evolving from relief for farmers into a comprehensive approach to farm and food policy—its primary goals are the same.

“The farm bill provides predictability in agricultural policy,” said Christy Seyfert, executive director of government affairs for the American Soybean Association. “That’s critical, especially today, because the needs in farm country are real.”

Members of Congress who sit on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the House Committee on Agriculture hold the primary responsibility of drafting farm bills. When each one nears its expiration date, the legislation goes through an extensive process where it is proposed, debated and considered by both chambers and then considered for enactment by the president.

Since the 1930s, 18 farm bills have been enacted. They have become increasingly expansive in nature since 1973, when a nutrition title was first included. Other prominent additions include horticulture and bioenergy titles and expansion of conservation, research and rural development provisions.

The current version is called the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. It has 12 titles, including Commodities, Conservation, Crop Insurance and Nutrition that account for 99% of total farm bill funding. Other titles are Trade; Credit; Rural Development; Research, Extension and Related Matters; Forestry; Energy; Horticulture; and the catch-all Miscellaneous.

The name and composition of the 2023 Farm Bill is yet to be determined. Stay tuned.

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# INDUSTRY

## perspective

By Tom Steever

## Challenges of Feeding Eight Billion People

### Soy leaders confident about feeding growing world population

Eight billion is a big number, and when it's in reference to the world population, it's a lot of mouths to feed. That milestone was eclipsed this past November, and while not unexpected, it gives pause to the most ardent optimists among food producers, including a farmer/leader of the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health

"The farmers who founded the American Soybean Association's WISHH program 22 years ago saw this population growth coming," said Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare, WISHH chair and a farmer in western Illinois. "They understood the developing trends in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and beyond, and as a result, they launched WISHH." WISHH is the long-term development arm of ASA, working in emerging and developing markets to create trade opportunities for U.S. soy through the improvement of food security, nutrition and health.

Helping to put the Earth's nutrient demands into perspective, Mac Marshall, vice-president of market intelligence for the United Soybean Board, leans on what he learned prior to his higher education. "When I was a kid, I remember the conventional wisdom was you'd have the population double every 40 years," said Marshall. "In my lifetime we've seen [the world population] go from four to eight billion."



WISHH Chair/ASA Director (IL) Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare (second from left) and USB Director/USSEC Chair Lance Rezac (KS) (third from left) visited Prosoya Kenya Limited while traveling with a USDA trade team in 2022. WISHH's partnership with Prosoya Kenya exemplifies how WISHH's long-term strategy to build new soy protein markets stands on three pillars: trade, development and global food security.

Marshall cites 2019 data from the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization that the daily supply of protein needed to feed this planet is about 83 grams per person, or 660 billion grams worldwide, which amounts to more than 725,000 tons of animal and vegetable protein every day. "Moving ahead to 2050, when the planet will have over 20% more people than it does now, if we continue along the trend that we're on, that means the supply share is going to grow by another 150 billion grams—more than 165,300 tons—daily." These figures are highly conservative, according to Marshall, because improvements in prosperity will translate to greater per capita protein consumption.

Part of the solution to meeting the nutritional needs of the growing population is found in U.S. soybean

fields, says Marshall. "Those [nutritional] needs and demands are going to get a lot stronger in the years to come as we add more and more mouths to the planet, so the question is how do we continue to feed them in a responsible way—and that's where I think U.S. soy is at the epicenter of all of this," Marshall said.

That's the case not only as human food but as feed for the world's poultry and swine, as well as aquaculture, which is expanding. "We're seeing growing demand for fish around the world," said Gena Perry, executive director for WISHH. "Fish is already a culturally appropriate source of protein in many countries, including many of the countries WISHH works in."

The growing demand for protein is gaining a response by way of significant investment in

the private sector. Agricultural commodities trader Bunge plans to invest approximately \$550 million to build a soy protein concentrate (SPC) and textured soy protein concentrate (TSPC) facility to meet the rising demand for plant-based foods, according to a recent company news release.

Construction in Morristown, Indiana, is expected to start in the first quarter of 2023, and Bunge plans to contract with farmers to establish a traceable soybean sourcing program starting with the 2025 harvest.

The facility is expected to ultimately process close to 4.5 million bushels (122,470 mt) of soybeans.

About half the soybeans grown in the U.S. are exported. Considering such high worldwide demand for U.S. soy, and U.S.

soybean growers' high dependence on export markets, Simpson-Dolbeare sees the need for attention to trade policy during upcoming farm bill discussions.

"U.S. soy producers have recognized the benefits of USDA's trade promotion programs, like the Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) that are part of the farm bill," said Simpson-Dolbeare, also an ASA director from Illinois. "Utilizing MAP and FMD funds, ASA through WISHH and the U.S. Soybean Export Council have leveraged those dollars to increase market access, address technical barriers to entry and create on-the-ground capacity and demand for U.S. soy."

If anything positive can be taken from the worldwide pandemic, Marshall believes it

might be a higher public awareness and admiration for food producers. "I believe there's probably a greater appreciation for global collaboration than ever before, a lot of that brought on through the misfortunes and discomfort of COVID, but it is getting us to shift our mentality," he said.

"I'm absolutely optimistic for the future. I feel very confident in the level of innovation and efficiency and desire to continue to help nourish a growing planet. I think if we take that approach and scan back out, we'll be in a good place for the years to come. But I never want us to get to a place where we become complacent and start thinking that food just happens without a whole lot of gears turning."



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## What do young producers want in the next farm bill? Legislation that helps protect legacies.



By Allison Jenkins

*Caleb Ragland, a ninth generation Kentucky farmer, says the safety net provided by the farm bill is imperative. Pictured here with his wife, Leanne, and sons Charlie, 12, Cory, 10, and Carter, 7.*

As the clock counts down to the farm bill's expiration in September, anticipation is growing about what the 2023 legislation will include and how it will impact food and agricultural producers.

In particular, young farmers—including Caleb Ragland of Magnolia, Kentucky, and Drew Peterson of Salem, South Dakota—are keeping close tabs on the process. With families to support and legacies to safeguard, both want to see policies that help protect their farming future.

"For the risk that farmers take, there needs to be a safety net," says Ragland, who serves on the Kentucky Soybean Association board and as secretary of the American Soybean Association board. "For me, that means keeping a strong crop insurance program, first and foremost. Without it, the risk would be more than many farmers could stand. It's not about guaranteeing profitability but guaranteeing stability."

Ragland, a ninth-generation farmer, expects this year's crops

to be the most expensive he's ever planted. The 36-year-old grows soybeans, corn and wheat with his wife, Leanne, and their three sons on about 4,000 acres.

"It won't be long until my oldest may want to get involved," Ragland says. "A safety net is vital, especially for young folks who don't have the equity or financial backing to get started. That's a big part of the farm bill's purpose: giving the American farmer confidence to put out a crop and know he can keep the lights on."

Farming is also a long family tradition for Peterson, who continues to work the land his great-great-grandfather bought in 1902. Today, the 37-year-old farms with his father, Steven, running a 900-head cow/calf and backgrounding operation while raising 4,000 acres of soybeans and corn.

"I'm fifth generation on this farm, and that's truly an honor," Peterson says. "You always have the next generation in mind. Nobody, including myself, wants to be one who loses the farm. I don't intend to be that one."

In fact, this past year, Peterson and his wife, Lauren, bought his brother's interest in the operation. The bold move not only solidifies their long-term commitment to farming but also underscores the importance of the farm bill's safety net.

"We took the plunge, and we're excited," said Peterson, who serves as secretary of the South Dakota Soybean Association, "but we are now deeply leveraged and need the support the farm bill provides. I can't operate without crop insurance, for instance, and the government cost-share assistance that helps us afford it."

In addition to protecting crop insurance and other risk management provisions, Peterson says he'd like to see additional incentives for conservation practices in the new bill.

"But keep them voluntary," he adds. "We do not want mandated practices. I would rather have a carrot than a stick."

Peterson encourages fellow farmers to talk with lawmakers



*Drew Peterson, pictured with his wife, Lauren, farms the land his great-great-grandfather bought in 1902 and says a farm bill that protects crop insurance and other risk management tools is vital to keep the tradition growing.*

about what they want in the next farm bill and says he's learned firsthand about the importance of such constituent contacts. He was elected as a first-time South Dakota state representative in November 2022.

"I'm thrilled to step into the arena as a voting legislator," Peterson says. "Having been on both sides of the process, I can truly say that elected officials want to know what we need and where we stand to help them make the right votes and put the right policies in place."

**"For the risk that farmers take, there needs to be a safety net. For me, that means keeping a strong crop insurance program, first and foremost. Without it, the risk would be more than many farmers could stand. It's not about guaranteeing profitability but guaranteeing stability."**

**- Caleb Ragland, soybean farmer from Kentucky**



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# SOY checkoff news

## Soy-based Solutions: How One Commodity is Addressing Global Issues



Photo Credit: United Soybean Board

With rising prices and pressing environmental issues, it's easy to question if solutions are possible. The answer? Well, it's growing in your fields.

"Farmers are constantly looking for new ways that our crops will be utilized, that we're not just waiting to see what happens to us from the world, but we're looking for ways that we can help," says Meagan Kaiser, United Soybean Board chair, farmer and soil scientist from Missouri. She's convinced that full use of crops will make a positive impact on the future.

The agriculture industry is no stranger to risk. Farmers have found that some risk equals tremendous rewards. "In agriculture, we think generationally, and so we kind of accept a lot of risks because we feel so connected to the outcome," says Kaiser.

With advancements in science and technology, U.S. soy has matched many industries as they take a leap for a better tomorrow, providing functional answers today to a variety of challenges. Soy can be a solution in food, packaging and fuel.

### Food

It's common to read the back label of packaged food and see soybean oil listed as an ingredient. It's also found in many food products as a complete source of protein, a fact that the checkoff promotes globally. Plus, efficient land, water and energy use from soybean farmers across the country have reduced greenhouse gas emissions and increased soil health tremendously. These sustainable practices help better our world while keeping food on tables.

### Packaging

Packaging is used for many different products and it's not new information that most materials used do not support the environment. Fortunately, soy can help here, too. "We can produce renewable, biodegradable plastics from our green crops," says Kaiser.

The development of soy-based plastics is just the beginning; many common products can be created with materials derived from renewable, biodegradable soy. This results in 1,000+ soy-based products on the market today.

From shoes to tires to artificial turf, your crop is helping solve a major environmental problem.

### Fuel

Soy is lending a hand to keep vehicles, equipment and planes running in a much cleaner manner, with biofuels. "I immediately think of the soy that we grow in our field being a drop-in replacement for biofuels into our tanks, helping not only mitigate the pain at the pump, but also help improve our carbon footprint," says Kaiser.

As fuel demand increases so does the need for soybean oil, helping farmers lead innovation in the biofuel industry and contribute to a renewable option for people across the country.

As soy continues to expand in the market, soy farmers are addressing some significant global problems with soy-based solutions that are available today. "We've got a job to do, and people are depending on us," adds Kaiser.

Soy means sustainability, ultimately helping our world become a better place for generations to come.

Source: United Soybean Board

(continued on page 24)



## Under the Microscope: Researching a Better Bean

U.S. soybeans, compared to soybeans of other origins, bring a lot of value to the table for end users, which brings returns to soybean farmers. Because of that, the soy checkoff continuously invests in research to keep U.S. soybean meal top of mind for end users.

So, what is most important for end users? One word: protein. That hasn't escaped the eyes, or microscopes, of the researchers focused on soybeans.

"Soybeans are a wonderful producer of protein and have set the gold standard for animal feed. But just because it's the gold standard doesn't mean that it couldn't be tailored further," says Doug Allen, USDA research scientist and principal investigator at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

Protein starts in the seed. So that's where scientists start their journey to a better and better bean.

### In the seed

To increase the value of soybean meal, many researchers start by looking inside the bean.

"We study the metabolism of soybeans that have been augmented through breeding, gene editing or transgenic approaches," says Allen.

Other researchers take a single bean and begin seed selections and variety trials—all with the goal of shuttling resources into the right amino acid balance to affect the protein quantity and quality.

"Different research strategies are equally valid and complementary. We need sustained research efforts to improve soybean yield and composition and to make crops more resilient to changing climates," says Allen.

### In the soil

While what's inside the bean plays a critical role in its value, how it's grown also has an impact.

"The capacity of soybeans to take up and use the nitrogen through partnering with microbes ultimately contributes to the high protein content in seeds," says Allen.

Allen works with the Subterranean Influences on Nitrogen and Carbon (SINC) Center at the Danforth Plant Science Center. SINC is dedicated to developing technology that will reduce the amount of chemical nitrogen fertilizer used in agriculture without sacrificing crop yield.

"Coming from the farm, I can appreciate that farmers are business-oriented and want to

maximize the return per acre while also being good stewards. That could mean having a cover crop to help rebuild soil and replenish nutrients, or better leveraging the microbiome for plant productivity and to save on fertilizer inputs and associated costs," says Allen.

Nitrogen fixation is critical to soybean growth and success. Their root systems are set up to fix nitrogen. Fungi like rhizobium and mycorrhizae increase the surface area of roots, allowing the roots to pull more nutrients from the soil into the plant. Kind of like adding an antenna to your TV.

### On the farm

While science works to increase protein for end users, the checkoff knows that yield for soybean farmers can't fall by the wayside. End users need protein from soybeans and soybean growers need yield from their crop.

"Soybean meal research will ultimately add value to the U.S. soybean," adds Allen. "Adding value to agriculture means adding value to the family farm and local economies, but also responsibly contributing to more sustainable agriculture for generations to come."

Source: United Soybean Board



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# WISHH works with international associations to build lasting potential for **U.S. soy** trade.



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*WISHH is a program of the American Soybean Association and is funded in part by the United Soybean Board and state soybean board checkoff programs.*

# WORLD

## soy

## ASA'S WISHH Program: Moving Soy Protein for Global Food Security

Growing populations combined with civil and climate strife around the world continue to strain food systems. U.S. soybean growers can help address the need for more affordable and accessible protein around the world while creating more food-secure communities. Although providing nutrient-rich soy to these communities increases profits for farmers, the ground level work it takes to create these new markets begins with ASA's World Initiative for Soy in Human Health program. Perhaps nowhere tells the tale of this intersection between food security and new soybean markets better than Nigeria.

Although Nigeria has a fast-growing economy, it is by far outpaced by a critical driver of food insecurity—its booming population growth. The country is expected to top more than 400 million people by 2050, becoming the world's third largest country. Business leaders in the country and WISHH partners continue to work across the agriculture value chain, establishing a more robust chain that can provide a healthy market for U.S. soy—and that also provides protein that can nourish a growing population.

WISHH tackles its work in Nigeria from many angles, including in sustainable food production. For example, ASA/WISHH's USB-funded thought leader meetings support WISHH's introduction to several industry leaders. One of these is the Global Cold Chain Alliance. GCCA, which supports temperature-controlled food storage, introduced WISHH to ColdHubs Ltd., which is headquartered in Nigeria. ColdHubs



*WISHH sent experts to Nigeria to work closely with ColdHubs Ltd., a solar-powered food storage company. Trainings designed to make storage more efficient and reliable have also helped diminish food loss, a serious threat to food security, the economy and the environment. This also strengthens the market for U.S. soy. Photo credit: ColdHubs*

provides safer food storage with a twist: Its technology is solar powered. This sustainable model decreases post-harvest food losses, which are estimated to impact 48 million people in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

WISHH representatives and ColdHubs founder Nnaemeka C. Ikegwonu agreed that working together to strengthen the storage of meat—particularly fish—would be of great benefit to the country. As these market sectors strengthen, so too can their reliance on U.S. soy for feed.

This past year, WISHH sent experts to Nigeria to work closely with ColdHubs. Using USDA Market Access Program and Agricultural Trade Program funds, WISHH quickly went to work with in-country trainings. These trainings focused on identifying and solving issues to make ColdHubs

more efficient and reliable.

Through these efforts, the ColdHubs were optimized for better energy use, with battery efficiency increased by 52%. Importantly, the units decreased cold air loss by 50%, which helps diminish the loss of food. Food loss is another serious threat to food security, the economy and the environment. This two-fold solution also means a stronger market for U.S. soy.

“The work WISHH does in countries like Nigeria is a perfect example of how WISHH is successful at improving food security and in turn moving more soy protein,” says WISHH Executive Committee Chair Roberta Simpson-Dolbear. “This ground level work helps make countries and markets more efficient and eager to import U.S. soy.”

# #SOY SOCIAL

## Check out what's trending in U.S. soy on social media

ASA Director Charles Atkinson (KS) supports #SoyBiobased—from his shoes and tires to his social media accounts! To kick off the new year, ASA launched a social media campaign highlighting the more than 1,000 current industrial uses for soy, the benefits of biobased and the vast opportunities for growth.



Minnesota Soybean Growers Association shared a photo of its leaders and an ASA industry partner meeting with Rep. Angie Craig's staff during Hill visits with Clean Fuels Alliance America.



Jim Sutter @tjsutter - Nov 15  
Honored to host customers at @USSEC's #CrushCon, & recognize 'Foodfluencers' making key contributions to nutrition & health at HungerCon. With 8B people to feed, the work of @AgBioWorld, @RashidaVapiwala & @ApoorvaGururaj towards #zerohunger is all the more important.



ASA Director Stan Born (IL) and USSEC CEO Jim Sutter reflected on USSEC's "CrushCon" and "HungerCon" events held in Dubai in November.



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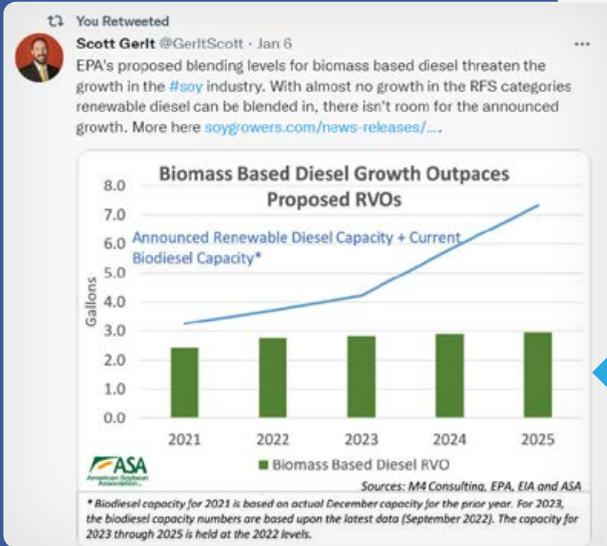
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Brownfield Ag News reporter **Carah Hart** tweeted from ASA's winter board meeting in St. Louis, including her interview with **Daryl Cates** (IL) as he took over as ASA president.



ASA Chief Economist **Scott Gerlt** sums up EPA's proposed blending levels and what they mean to the #RFS and soybean industry, including a link to his latest "Economist's Angle" column where he further breaks down the issue.

## Join us for SoyPAC in Paradise

The 2023 ASA SoyPAC Auction will be a paradise-themed event in sunny Orlando, Florida, featuring the best the "Parrot Head" tropical lifestyle has to offer in food, drinks and music. The wearing of Hawaiian shirts and other tropical apparel—even parrot headpieces—is encouraged.

Don't miss this fun-filled event to benefit ASA's SoyPAC.

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For more information and to register to attend the SoyPAC Auction visit [soygrowers.com/soypac/](http://soygrowers.com/soypac/).

The auction is held during Commodity Classic, March 9-11, 2023, in Orlando.

SoyPAC funds raised are for the benefit of political candidates and activities on a national level that support the soybean industry. Contributions to SoyPAC are voluntary and you have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Your contribution to SoyPAC must be personal—not corporate. Maximum annual individual contribution to SoyPAC is \$5,000. Contributions to SoyPAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Any suggested amounts are suggestions only and not enforceable; more or less than the suggested amount may be given; the amount given by the contributor, or the refusal to give, will not benefit or disadvantage the person being solicited. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of the employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year. Under federal law, only U.S. Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents (i.e., green card holders) may contribute to SoyPAC.

## Connecting Soy Trade to the Farm Bill By Jim Sutter

U.S. soybean farmers decided years ago that international markets are important. They opened their first international office in Japan in 1956 and since then have been busy working to develop diverse markets for U.S. soy in many places.

USSEC is the primary international marketing arm of the U.S. soy family and does its work with funding from various sources. This year USSEC's programs will touch 82 countries, and the total footprint is even larger when the work of the American Soybean Association's World Initiative for Soy in Human Health, or WISHH, and other soy groups is added. Their efforts have paid off, as 60% of the U.S. soy crop has been exported in the form of soybeans, soybean meal and soybean oil, and U.S. soy is the #1 ag export from the U.S.

Back to the funding topic: USSEC receives funding from the United Soybean Board, USDA's Foreign Ag Service, Qualified State Soybean Boards (QSSBs) and from USSEC's members. Given this is "farm bill season" and funding from FAS is a part of the farm bill, it is an opportune time to examine that funding. Recently, USDA announced FAS is awarding \$202.7 million to more than 60 U.S. agricultural organizations to help expand export markets for U.S. farm and food products through the Market Access Program, also known as MAP, and the Foreign Market Development, or FMD, program.

FAS Administrator Daniel Whitley describes these programs as "unique public-private partnerships in which USDA and the American agricultural industry

are working together to expand markets for high-quality, American-made farm and food products worldwide. With industry-matching funds, federal investments in these market development programs not only increase agricultural export revenue and volume, but also improve farm income and strengthen the U.S. economy."

While the programs sound similar in scope, they have two different mandates. MAP funds support U.S. producers with marketing and promotion activities around the globe, including market research, technical assistance and support for participation in trade fairs and exhibits, while FMD programmatic funds focus on the generic promotion of U.S. commodities rather than consumer-oriented promotion of branded products. Under MAP, FAS is providing \$175.6 million in initial fiscal year 2023 funding to 67 cooperators while FAS is allocating \$27.1 million to 20 cooperators. The average MAP and FMD participants provide more than \$2.50 in contributions for every \$1 in federal funding received through the programs.

The U.S. soy industry is the #1 recipient of FMD funding and among the top five MAP recipients; FAS makes its allocations based on a number of factors including organizational performance, size of the overall exports for the commodity and industry contributions or funds that are invested alongside the FMD/MAP funds. In this latter category, U.S. soy has a very strong performance thanks to the robust funding



received from USB, QSSBs and the industry.

The percentage of USSEC's total funding that comes from FAS funding has declined over the last few years—despite the fact that the allocation to U.S. soy from FAS has been growing slightly each year. This result is twofold: The funding FAS has available to invest has declined because USDA has pulled more of its costs out of the total FMD/MAP funding allocation, and the allocation hasn't grown for approximately 20 years.

Every five years when a new farm bill is completed, the amount of funding available for FMD/MAP is determined. We know ASA is working hard pushing for a significant increase in FMD and MAP funding for the 2023 Farm Bill, which we are hopeful will be completed on time. If the total FMD/MAP pie were increased, it would likely result in a larger allocation for U.S. soy, which would ensure we can continue to grow our global footprint and USSEC's work on behalf of U.S. soy farmers.

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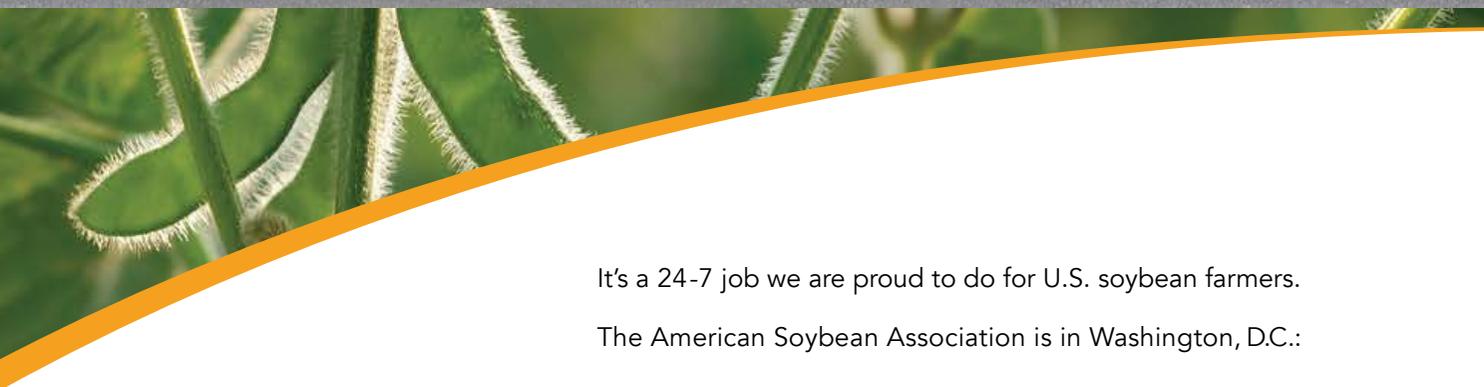
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