Illinois Farmers Work to Maintain Market Access

• ISA Introduces New Action Center
• Creative Customer Relations Open Doors
By improving agriculture, we can improve lives. In the hands of farmers, better seeds can help meet the needs of our rapidly growing population. And they can help farmers do so while protecting the earth’s natural resources. That’s why we’re working with farmers and partners worldwide to make agriculture truly sustainable. To get more from each acre, each raindrop and each seed. And to improve the most valuable resource of all: people’s lives.

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n Arabic, that roughly means customer relations is one key to market access. Just as you and I probably can’t read the language, our soybean customers worldwide can’t understand how we provide high-quality soybeans, red meat and poultry unless we take the opportunity to translate for them.

I was fortunate in February to travel on a study mission coordinated by the U.S.A. Poultry and Egg Export Council (USASEC) to Dubai, a group we support with soybean checkoff dollars. This is a new market for U.S. poultry producers. And since U.S. poultry is our number one soybean meal customer, the market is of great long-run importance to Illinois soybean farmers.

We began our learning journey at the Port of Savannah in Georgia; the number four port in the United States. The port has grown by adopting a lot of new technology and new business practices that really helped them advance quickly. For example, they have plans to invest $1.2 billion in improvements that will not be a drain on the taxpayer. The port will be able to take advantage of expansion at the Panama Canal and the bigger ships that will come in when the expansion is complete in 2014. Seeing this port for myself really allowed me to understand the need to advance the U.S. transportation infrastructure for us to maintain market access.

We also visited with poultry experts at the University of Georgia, where we learned more about poultry consumption of soybeans and soybean products. Once in Dubai, it was evident that U.S. poultry exports can expand to this region of the world. While we traditionally ship dark meat, importers in Dubai are interested in the whole bird. We learned that Brazil already is catering to these customers’ needs. If we want to serve this market and capture more market share, we need to adapt better to Dubai’s poultry demand. One customer told me he was glad we were in his country to meet with him there.

If I learned anything in Dubai, I found out it is good to visit other countries and see how our products are used firsthand and experience the culture. That is the only way to understand the language. Such visits also underscore the importance of freedom to operate issues in this country. If we build customer relations to enhance market access, we must have clear pathways on the production side to build up supplies to meet growing worldwide demand.

In this issue, you can learn more about ways ISA is working to keep our customers informed. We not only visit international markets to build relationships, we host trade teams from other countries onto our farms so they too, can see for themselves how we do business. I’ve learned that market access is a crucial issue for Illinois soybean farmers, regardless of the language.
Death & Taxes: Far from Certain

When our country was in its infancy, Statesman Benjamin Franklin penned the phrase, “The only thing certain is death and taxes.” For years, that quote held true.

Taxing bodies, large and small, have levied taxes, and frequently sought the rich — in particular, those that were both rich and dead. I’ve often thought that our government targets this group as they neither vote, nor do they write letters to their representatives.

During the last 10 years, the estate tax legislation was on a series of relatively predictable annual changes. All that changed in December 2010 when Congress passed estate tax legislation that included the following:

- Top tax rate of 35 percent.
- $5 million per taxpayer exemption for lifetime gifts and transfers at death.
- Portability, which allows the $5 million exemption (in the case of a married couple) and the estate of the second spouse to die to utilize any unused portion of the first spouse’s exemption (certain requirements apply).

Without further legislation, these changes will end after December 31, 2012. The top tax rate will revert to 55 percent, the exemption will revert to $1 million, and the portability provision expires.

While these changes apply to federal estate taxes, many states enact their own legislation. The federal estate tax exemption increased to $5 million per taxpayer, but the Illinois exemption is only $2 million. No provision for portability exists under Illinois estate tax.

Your gross estate may include the value of your home, possessions, investments, bank accounts, retirement plans, business interests and proceeds from life insurance you own on your life as well as that on others for which you have power to change a beneficiary or borrow against a policy. Someone with a home and retirement assets could be well within the federal estate tax exemption, but subject to Illinois estate tax.

Someone with a $3 million taxable estate may not be subject to federal estate tax, but may face an Illinois estate tax of more than $167,000. With the state of affairs at both the federal and state level, little is certain or predictable when it comes to “death and taxes.”

Estate planning is more than just minimizing taxes or making sure an estate is distributed as desired to heirs. It is a process designed to identify the best way to accumulate, preserve and protect wealth by implementing a plan to meet all objectives. A well-prepared plan can help with lifetime management issues and help pass on assets at death.

A number of estate planning tools are available. An estate planning team may include an attorney, tax professional, trust administrator, insurance professional and financial advisor. With a little foresight and planning, a tangible plan can be developed that offers the certainty of meeting needs today and flexibility to deal with uncertainty ahead.

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Soy Market Access
Critical on Many Fronts

By Barb Baylor Anderson

It’s not rocket science to know that creating, maintaining and servicing markets for U.S.-grown soybeans is essential to improving overall producer profitability. But to keep the pathways open, soybean producers have found they must advocate for equitable public policies and the freedom to operate on various production, trade and, increasingly, sustainability fronts.

“We export soybeans and products all over the world, and every customer has different needs and also barriers that can affect our sales potential,” says Mike Marron, soybean farmer from Fithian, Ill., and Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) vice chair for market access and advocacy. “We join with a number of global partners to maximize market access opportunities.”

Those partners include the American Soybean Association (ASA) and U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC). Lawrence Sukalski, soybean farmer from Martin County, Minn., and ASA director, adds, “As U.S. farmers raise more soybeans, we must be profitable and sustainable to continue that trend. ASA has worked hard with state associations and industry groups to open markets. We invite more farmers to become ASA members and help with that effort.”

Kim Nill, technical issues director for the checkoff-funded USSEC, currently is monitoring three issues that could affect U.S. soy sales; Europe’s Renewable Energy Directive (RED), corporate sustainability standards, and overseas approvals of new U.S. biotech events.

Renewable Energy Directive

Europe’s RED requires that vegetable oil feedstocks used to manufacture European Union (EU) subsidized biodiesel must be produced in a sustainable manner.
as defined by the European Commission. The RED allows for the European Commission to accept a nationwide determination that oil from U.S.-origin soybeans is a sustainable feedstock for EU biodiesel manufacturing.

The threat is that oil from U.S. soybeans could be barred from biodiesel production until an agreement is negotiated. Nill notes U.S. soybean oil already has been forced from food uses due to mandatory biotech labeling. Individual certification might not be achievable for all U.S. farms, either, as some farm practices will not be certified as RED-sustainable.

**Corporate Sustainability Standards**

Corporate sustainability standards is another area which could affect market access. For example, Unilever has announced plans to source only sustainable soybeans by 2014 and only sustainable oil by 2020. Unilever is a member of the Round Table on Responsible Soy.

“During the past five years, a variety of groups have begun work to create standards that would define sustainable agriculture, says Nill. “If U.S. farms must comply with each standard for U.S. soy to be procured by companies, it could significantly increase production costs.”

Nill cautions such standards could reduce marketability, inspire tedious international standards or even result in implementation of U.S. standards or laws that might not meet world trade rules.

ISA farmer-leaders recognize the concerns, and have developed a new booklet to help educate customers. “Illinois Soy: Sustainability from the Ground Up,” highlights five sustainability focus areas: social responsibility; environmental stewardship; labor practices; labor relations and worker conditions; best management practices; and good business practices.

“This booklet will help reassure important global customers that Illinois farmers are committed to producing soybeans sustainably,” says Matt Hughes, soybean farmer from Shirley, Ill., and ISA chairman. “This publication also will be a valuable tool for ISA board members in helping differentiate Illinois soybeans when they meet with customers here and abroad.”

**New Biotech Event Approvals**

Nill says the approval of new biotech events continues to plague the industry. During the past five years, the U.S. government has become slower in granting new approvals. China’s import approval process is notoriously slow. Nill says China and other countries could simply decide to plant biotech soybeans without even applying for import approvals.

“USSEC has long spoken to government officials worldwide about the economic harm caused by slow, non-science-based import approval processes,” says Nill. “We need to publicize the huge societal costs that delayed or foregone value-added soybean innovations have imposed on the world’s food and biodiesel supplies.”

**Other Issues**

Foreign market concerns are not the only access issues that face U.S. farmers.

“Some of the market access issues we face are in our own backyards,” says Sukalski. “Our roads and bridges are in need of repair, and our lock and dam system must be upgraded. We need to improve our transportation capabilities to remain competitive worldwide.”

Transportation is a priority for Illinois soybean farmers. ASA seeks enactment of a surface transportation reauthorization bill, infrastructure investment proposals that fund and streamline waterways construction, and funding for dredging on the Mississippi River.

**What’s Next for RR1?**

Monsanto’s Roundup Ready 1 (RR1) soybean patent will expire in April 2015. Already, market watchers are speculating the expiration could cause problems from U.S. soybean trade disruption to market manipulation.

The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) has taken a lead on the issue. A panel discussion is planned for BIO 2012 in Boston, June 18-21.

“The industry is working on an ‘accord’ agreement that would provide a means for seed breeders to sell stacks with RR1 and other biotech events,” says Tom Redick, GEEC LLC, attorney for USSEC. “The accord would be a voluntary, but binding, contract that would serve as a framework for the transition from proprietary to generic trait. It would require member companies to maintain necessary international regulatory approvals for patented products so U.S. export commodities could continue to be sold without obstacles.”
Illinois Animal Ag has Significant Impact

Animal agriculture is worth real dollars on a local, state and national level in terms of jobs and economic activity. Those dollars also add up to millions in tax revenue.

The Illinois Livestock Development Group (ILDG), which is supported by the soybean checkoff, contracted with Peter Goldsmith to update a study about the economic contribution from the state’s animal agriculture industry. Goldsmith is associate professor of agribusiness management and director of the University of Illinois Food and Agribusiness Management Program.

“In terms of economic impact, the livestock industry is a $3.5 billion industry,” states the report. “The production sector of the livestock industry contributes $3.5 billion of total impact and more than 25,000 jobs to the state’s economy. When combined with meat and dairy processing the entire complex produces more than $27 billion of total impact, equal to five percent of the state’s economy and 99,000 jobs. This number has increased by about $6 billion from the 2004 study. The industry continues to serve as an economic engine in both rural and urban areas of the state.”

Important Customer

Illinois farmers may think the responsibility for what happens to the soybeans they sell ends at the elevator, but that is not true. The ILDG report confirms that Illinois would benefit from additional animal agriculture industry growth, which is the top customer for Illinois soybeans.

“Illinois soybean farmers have put major emphasis on trying to draw livestock production back into the state,” says Doug Winter, soybean farmer from Mill Shoals, Ill., in the southeast part of the state, and ISA treasurer. “There are obvious economic benefits. It just makes good sense to have livestock feeding operations close to the source of grain production.”

Winter would like to see the livestock industry grow. “Demand for our product – particularly for soybean meal – is important to us as grain farmers,” he says. “Animal agriculture helps maintain demand for our products and the prices we have been able to enjoy the past couple of years.”

“ISA has really stepped up,” says Nic Anderson, ILDG business developer. “When more than 90 percent of their product is consumed through livestock, Illinois soybean farmers can’t forget about the livestock industry’s importance.”

ILDG also is supported by the Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Milk Producers Association and Illinois Pork Producers Association.

Good Policy

The ILDG report finds that livestock production in Illinois provides processors with a substantial base (25 percent) of supply. “Without this base, processors would be less incentivized to remain in the state. Transportation costs for Illinois producers would rise, making it difficult to compete, if processors were to leave. Good industrial policy is good livestock policy. Maintaining a strong processor base in the state (nearby) gives Illinois farmers local markets for their products and a competitive advantage compared with more distant producers,” says the report.

“When livestock operations want to expand in an area, we should support that growth,” says Rob Shaffer, soybean farmer from El Paso, Ill., and ISA secretary. Shaffer also is a cow-calf producer and serves as ILDG chairman. “We know a thriving livestock sector not only helps ensure a market for our soybeans, it also is good for our local and state economies.”

“Every $1 million of livestock product output in Illinois creates:

- $2.4 to $2.9 million in total economic output
- $390,000 to $450,000 in family income
- 22 additional jobs

Source: Promar International Animal Agriculture Economic Analysis, 1999-2009
Whether due to large acreage, time limitations, or memories of walking beans, scouting has become less common in Illinois soybean fields. But following a mild winter and early spring, entomologists recommend farmers rethink that strategy for 2012.

“In general, many farmers don’t have the time or resources to scout like they should,” confirms Mike Gray, University of Illinois Extension entomologist. “Bean leaf beetle adults, soybean aphid eggs and Japanese beetle grubs all overwinter in the Midwest. Survivorship was likely high last winter, and aphids and bean leaf beetles will move into fields with crop emergence. Farmers should make in-season management decisions based on the actual presence of pests, rather than make ‘insurance’ applications.”

Illinois soybean checkoff dollars are invested in research and survey projects focused on bean leaf beetles, soybean aphids and Japanese beetles. Efforts concentrate on monitoring pressure and identifying economic solutions.

University of Illinois Extension Entomologist Mike Gray recommends farmers:

- **Scout regularly.** Establish a pattern of scouting soybean fields every week to 10 days to catch potential outbreaks.
- **Get into fields.** Don’t just survey end rows. Field edges tend to contain higher insect densities, so check in the field.
- **Know the threats.** Learn to identify common pests, and know where to confirm treatment thresholds.
- **Monitor potential problems closely.** If insects and signs of damage are present, check the field more frequently to watch for hotspots and beneficial insects.
- **Stay connected.** Stay in touch with area agronomists and pest reports to monitor local outbreaks. Be on the lookout for insects that have attacked neighboring fields.

- **Remember weather influences pests.** Dry spells, heavy rainfall and temperature fluctuations all can dramatically impact insect populations. Consider the weather forecast before treating.
- **Treat the pests in that field.** Although insurance pest treatments are becoming more common with high commodity prices, treating just for the pests in a field minimizes the potential development of resistance.
- **Use resources as needed:**
  - Illinois Agronomy Handbook, extension.cropsci.illinois.edu/handbook
  - ISA links to checkoff-funded research, http://www.ilsoy.org/isa/profitability/research/

“I try to go through my fields at least once a week through much of the season. That allows me to make decisions like adding insecticide to my second herbicide application.”

— Dan Farney

“Although I had seen Japanese beetles in my soybeans before, last year was the first time I had to spray for them,” says Dan Farney, Morton, Ill., soybean farmer and ISA Production Committee chair. “I will be watching for them again.”

Summer weather conditions will play a key role in determining pest threats, says Gray. A mild summer would support the development of soybean aphids, while hot, dry conditions would favor outbreaks of two-spotted spider mites. Scouting is the only way to know what insects have invaded and if fields require treatment applications.

“I found the Japanese beetles when scouting last year,” says Farney. “I try to go through my fields at least once a week through much of the season. That allows me to make decisions like adding insecticide to my second herbicide application.”

When deciding whether or not to treat, Farney relies on his retail agronomist and expects return on the investment. “I want to know there is a good chance of getting an economic return any time I treat for insects or diseases,” he says.

Photo by Ken Kashian, Illinois Farm Bureau
Sustainability was a primary focus of the 2012 National Biodiesel Conference held in Orlando, Fla., earlier this year, including a first-ever sustainability symposium.

“Sustainability was a hot topic,” says Bill Wykes, soybean farmer from Yorkville, Ill., and ISA vice chair. “It was really interesting to see sustainability applied to so many areas, from resources and the environment to individual operations. It was also interesting to see how far the industry has come and witness how our soybean checkoff investment is paying off.”

Paul Teutul, Sr., the iconic founder of New York’s custom motorcycle shop Orange County Choppers and star of the Discovery Channel series American Chopper, revealed his latest custom-built chopper and one-of-a-kind biodiesel vehicle at the Biodiesel Vehicle Showcase. Motorsports enthusiast and soybean farmer Brent Hajek also showed off his land-speed record-setting Ford F-250 at the showcase. The event featured other biodiesel-powered vehicles in a variety of applications as well.

American Chopper Series star Paul Teutul, Sr., talks to conference attendees about his unique biodiesel chopper.

The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) honored a number of industry leaders during the conference including Krysta Harden, chief of staff for USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. Harden was presented with the Pioneer Award.

“The mood was very upbeat, very excited,” says Rebecca Richardson, ISA industrial lead and MARC-IV regulatory and education specialist. “Full implementation of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), along with biodiesel production passing one billion gallons, made for an exciting year and was reflected at the conference.”

For more details about the conference, visit http://blog.biodieselconference.org/.

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**Common Illinois Soybean Insect Pests**

**Bean leaf beetle**
- **Description:** Green, yellow, tan or red with a black triangle behind the head
- **Damage:** Feeding on leaves, occasionally on blossoms or pods
- **Threshold:** Before blooming – 30 percent defoliation and 5 beetles per foot of row
  - Bloom to pod fill – 20 percent defoliation and 16 beetles per foot of row
  - Late in the season – damage to 5 to 10 percent of pods, leaves still green and 10 beetles per foot of row

**Japanese beetle**
- **Description:** Metallic green with bronze wing covers
- **Damage:** Feeding on leaves and flowers
- **Threshold:** Before bloom – 30 percent defoliation
  - Bloom to pod fill – 20 percent defoliation

**Two-spotted spider mite**
- **Description:** Extremely small greenish yellow to dull orange with two irregularly-shaped black spots on either side of the body; webbing on the underside of leaves
- **Damage:** Small discolored spots (yellow or white stippling) most noticeable on the underside of leaves; severely damaged plants become bronzed and lose leaves prematurely
- **Threshold:** Before pod set – 20 to 25 percent of leaves discolored
  - After pod set – 10 to 15 percent of leaves are discolored

**Soybean aphid**
- **Description:** Colonies of very small greenish-yellow insects on the underside of leaves and stems
- **Damage:** Fluids sucked from plants reduces pod set, stunts plants and transmits viruses
- **Threshold:** About 250 aphids per plant

*Descriptions and threshold information courtesy of the University of Illinois.*
Part 3: Understanding Sustainability

Sustainable Practices Improve the Environment

Like a lot of farmers, Ron Moore has made gradual, but dramatic changes in the way he farms over the years – improving yields and overall productivity, while at the same time reducing erosion and cutting back on fuel required to raise soybeans.

And like a lot of farmers, Moore had not stepped back and added up the long-term, positive impact gradual changes had made on the environment until he began working with Illinois soybean checkoff-funded efforts to identify sustainability improvements on Illinois farms.

“It is amazing how much we are doing environmentally that we don’t realize toward improving sustainability,” says Moore, soybean farmer from Roseville, Ill., and ISA vice chair for sustainability. “Many farmers don’t put these changes in the context of sustainability. They put them in the context of reducing erosion or using less fuel. But in the end, these and other practices improve the sustainability of agriculture and the environment.”

ISA worked with The Keystone Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture and others to outline sustainability improvements by U.S. soybean farmers during the past 20 years, including:

• Energy used to raise a bushel of soybeans is down 65 percent, while CO2 emissions per bushel are down 38 percent.
• Soil erosion has fallen 93 percent.
• Land use efficiency has jumped 26 percent as soybean yields have climbed.

Farmers also notice broader payoffs from improved land stewardship.

“One of the nice things I have seen is a higher population of red-tailed hawks. In the past couple of years, we have noticed bald eagles. All of that is anecdotal evidence that we can produce more, using fewer resources, while improving biodiversity,” says Moore. “Illinois soybean farmers have a strong story to tell about sustainability of their farming practices. We have made great strides, and more improvements are ahead.”

Justin King, Natural Resources Conservation Service district conservationist in Bond County, agrees. “There will be less tillage and more use of cover crops to help break compaction, stop soil erosion and add nutrients for the following year’s crop,” he says. “We’ll see better ways of utilizing nitrogen, so efficiency will go up and environmental impact will go down.”

Moore points out Illinois farmers continue to work hard, both individually and through associations such as ISA, to adopt and improve practices that ensure sustainability. ISA is part of the KIC 2025 (Keep it for the Crop by 2025) alliance to increase food production while protecting water resources from nutrient impairments.

“As we globally grow toward nine billion people, it is important for us to produce more on the same acres instead of bring new, fragile ground into production,” he says. “Yield gains will come from seed technology, genetics and improved fertilizer use. Through research we hope to find avenues that allow us to raise more beans per acre. These are things on the horizon that will allow us to increase yields dramatically and improve overall sustainability.”

“Illinois soybean farmers have a strong story to tell about the sustainability of their farming practices. We have made great strides, and more improvements are ahead.”

– Ron Moore
While planting time is crunch time, it also is one of the prime times for Illinois soybean farmers to begin to open their doors to prospective international customers. ISA directors welcome an average of 30 trade teams from around the world to their farms every growing season.

“International customers want to see and be on farms where Illinois soybeans are grown,” says Dale Crawford, soybean farmer from Sullivan, Ill., and ISA Marketing Committee chair. “I have learned from traveling to other countries and meeting with our customers that nothing can replace the opportunity to meet in person with us and see our crop growing on the farm. Many of our customers have a high regard for personal relationships, and I think it pays off.”

Illinois traditionally has been known as a reliable, high quality soybean-supplying state. Illinois produces more than 14 percent of the nation’s soybeans, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that about 13 percent of the country’s soybean exports originate in Illinois. In the 2010-11 marketing year, that represented $2.35 billion.

“The key way to making jobs happen is through exports,” Illinois Governor Pat Quinn noted last summer in recognizing ISA with the Governor’s Export Promotion Agency of the Year Award; the state’s highest recognition of export achievements. “Our soybeans are second to none.”

ISA allocates Illinois soybean checkoff funds toward helping grow that international demand. For example, SoyIllinois provides buyers with extensive data on the advantages of sourcing Illinois soybeans. ISA also helps teach foreign buyers about how to originate Illinois soybeans and products, about sustainable farming practices in Illinois and about the quality of Illinois soy.

“U.S. soybean exports have been at or near record highs in recent years, and I think we can attribute some of that to customer visits,” says Crawford. “Illinois is in a good location to educate trade teams. We have a river direct route to the Gulf and railyards near Chicago where buyers can originate identity-preserved soybeans in containers. Illinois is well suited to take advantage of the market, and we must continue to do what we can to make that happen.”

Where in the World does Illinois Soy Go?

Illinois farmers over the last few years have hosted teams from China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Morocco and several European countries. In February, ISA hosted a Chinese buying team that signed a purchase agreement while in the country. USDA notes China is the U.S.’ top customer, importing 895 million bushels, or about one-quarter of the last crop.

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<th>Country</th>
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<td>China</td>
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The soybean checkoff funds international marketing efforts in more than 80 countries worldwide and feature market development, communications and education activities.
Just call 309-808-3607 and ISA CEO Craig Ratajczyk will be happy to explain how businesses and corporations that partner with the Illinois Soybean Association have the opportunity to magnify their messages across the state – reaching more than 50,000 Illinois soybean farmers and 1,900 ISA members.

The ISA partnership program offers opportunities to align interests in soybean value chain development, research, legislation and connect to ISA members. Three levels of partnership are available to meet your organization’s needs.

So call or email to lock in the best opportunity for your business or corporation. Craig Ratajczyk, 309-808-3607 or craigr@ilsoy.org.
Study Aims to Keep Illinois Soybeans Shipshape During Transit

Do soybeans shipped via container arrive in foreign ports with the same quality as they leave Illinois? A new study funded by the Illinois soybean checkoff and conducted by Informa Economics in cooperation with the Illinois Crop Improvement Association, intends to find out. The study is tracking the internal environment of containers from point of loading in Illinois to final destinations, to see if Illinois soybeans meet high quality standards.

“Hopefully, the results will show we can provide a better product to the market, create more demand for Illinois soybeans and increase market share,” says Ron Kindred, soybean farmer from Atlanta, Ill., and ISA transportation vice chair.

Kindred says the need for more information was highlighted during a late February trip to Asia, where he was part of an ISA investigative delegation to learn more about overseas container shipping opportunities and other key trade topics.

While meeting with end-users in Taiwan, Kindred and the rest of the Illinois delegation learned that trading partners want two things: soybeans with higher protein and oil content, and soybeans that are delivered with less foreign material (FM).

Kindred notes container shipments offer competitive advantage over bulk shipments when it comes to reducing FM. “But we have opportunities to raise the bar,” he says. “We also have opportunities to serve the identity-preserved market with containers.”

“We want to know what happens inside a loaded container once it leaves Illinois,” says Scott Sigman, ISA’s transportation and export infrastructure lead. “We know there are external climate changes, but what happens inside the box? It’s like a box of cereal where contents settle during shipping. We are particularly interested in knowing the effects of heat and humidity.”

Containers can spend several weeks traveling via truck, rail and ship in weather that ranges from equatorial conditions at the Panama Canal to the frigid north Atlantic and everything in between. Researchers are using a new container security device that plugs into a data logger to measure food security, temperature, moisture, “jarring” of the container (using an accelerometer that measures three axes in six directions) and light (another proxy for security—if the container is opened, light increases).

In addition to information collected by the data logger, samples are taken at the shipping origin and at destination to evaluate beans to note any quality changes that may occur from loading to discharge. Containers are photographed during transit, when possible, to document conditions. Researchers are monitoring container placement as well. Preliminary results quantifying Illinois soybean quality are expected in August.

“We want to know where the container is and what is happening to it at all times,” says Sigman. “To our knowledge, this is the first study of its kind in the public domain, and the results will help Illinois soybean farmers differentiate their product and quantify that they can deliver. This is a great example of the value of the soybean checkoff.”

What happens to soybeans in containers as they travel from Illinois to international markets? Preliminary study results in August may provide more information.
Soy 2020 Forum Analyzes Illinois’ Agriculture Investment Climate

Illinois continues to be a strong market for agriculture investment, according to industry leaders participating in ISA’s spring Soy 2020 meeting on April 12. “Illinois’ diverse economy with processing, specialty foods, export channels and limited livestock provides growers higher income opportunities that are not available in the Western Corn Belt,” says Marcia Zarley Taylor, DTN executive editor and Soy 2020 speaker. “While global competition for exports has increased, especially from Brazil, the basis for soybeans continues to be very strong in Illinois.” Maintaining this competitiveness will be key for the continued success of Illinois soybean farmers and will be dependent upon a regulatory and tax environment that is conducive to continued investment. ISA explores opportunities to invest to ensure Illinois soy is the highest quality, most dependable, sustainable and competitive in the global marketplace. The spring Soy 2020 program featured speakers from DTN, Rabobank, 1st Farm Credit Services and the United Soybean Board (USB).

Voice for Soy Makes Advocacy Easy

Reaching legislators in Springfield and Washington, D.C. is about to get easier. ISA’s new online advocacy tool, Voice for Soy, turns Illinois soybean farmers into effective advocates. The website, www.ilsoy.org/voiceforsoy, just launched, and ISA members and other interested farmers and industry stakeholders are encouraged to register and make a difference.

Voice for Soy is designed to bring farmers up to speed on key issues that affect soybean profitability and farmers’ freedom to operate. More importantly, it provides an easy way for farmers to add their voice, even while they are busy farming.

“When an important bill hits the floor, timing is critical,” says Mike Marron, soybean farmer from Fithian, Ill., and ISA’s market access and advocacy vice chair. “Voice for Soy will boost ISA’s effectiveness in keeping soybean farmers informed and at the ready.”

Taking action and connecting with state and federal representatives is simple. When an issue requires action, email alerts will be sent to all Voice for Soy advocates. Simply click through to a draft letter, which is ready to be customized and sent to appropriate elected officials.

Marron says working together with other farmers and farm groups on common issues amplifies the impact of Voice for Soy. ISA members are encouraged to invite their friends and neighbors to join. Visit www.ilsoy.org/voiceforsoy to sign up, take action and shape the future.

Illinois Farmer Completes DuPont Young Leader Training

Members of the 29th American Soybean Association (ASA)/DuPont Young Leader class, including Ben Moye from Ridgway, Ill., finished up primary leadership development training in conjunction with Commodity Classic in Nashville, Tenn., earlier this year. Moye and others participated in motivational presentations by farm broadcaster Andrew McCrea and Life Lessons Leadership Coach Bob Ash. Young Leaders also heard from world-record soybean producer Kip Cullers and Pioneer Corn Yield Contest winner David Hula.

The ASA/DuPont Young Leader Program provides leadership training designed for soybean farmers interested in developing their skills to represent the ideals of soybean farmers domestically and internationally, and pursue leadership positions at the state and/or national level. The program is managed by ASA and sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont Business.
USMEF Showcases Hong Kong Market

With nearly 50 countries battling for market share, Hong Kong is one of the most fiercely competitive beef and pork markets in the world. Fifteen representatives of U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) member organizations, including ISA farmer leaders Mark Sprague, New Canton, Ill., and Bill Raben, Ridgway, Ill., visited Hong Kong, South Korea and southern China during a recent USMEF market education program to learn more.

“It was an exceptionally educational trip for me — one that truly opened my eyes,” says Raben. “Although I don’t raise livestock, I grow the grain that is fed to hogs and cattle. A healthy animal ag sector is essential to the success of the soybean industry. I am pleased to see that we are making great strides with U.S. pork in both Hong Kong and China, and with the beef we ship to Hong Kong. If we can get past beef restrictions in China, we’ll have even more opportunities.”

INTSOY 2012 Builds Relationships

INTSOY 2012, the internationally recognized short-course for processing and marketing soy for meat, dairy, baking and snack applications, will be held in June at the University of Illinois National Soybean Research Laboratory. Attendees from around the world will learn about new soy products and innovative technologies and emerge armed with soy-incorporating skills.

Marino José Pichardo Pannocchia, who attended in 2011, says, “We found a great supplier of soymilk for our market in the Dominican Republic. Prior to our participation in the short-course, we had been unsuccessful in finding a U.S. supplier... two thumbs up for providing us with such great help in this area.”
Keeping the leadership pipeline full is a strategic challenge for every aspect of life, whether it is on the farm, local school or church board or the ISA board. ISA is always looking for new skilled and committed young leaders to step up and grab the reins, as seasoned and experienced leaders fulfill their terms of service.

I recently read an article titled, Lyrical Wisdom: Leadership Lessons from Bob Dylan. While Dylan’s name certainly is not synonymous with farming success, inspiration is found between the lines of his songs. One of the lyrics quoted was, “You better start swimming or sink like a stone, cause the times they are a-changing.”

Times and circumstances faced by Illinois soybean farmers are changing. Worldwide demand for protein is growing, along with competition for meeting demand. Midwest soybean farmers used to be first in line to feed a hungry world. Now we are one of many. Illinois also used to enjoy a robust livestock industry. That is no longer the case. Yet animal agriculture remains the top consumer of soybean meal, and soybean meal makes up about 61 percent of the price farmers receive for their crop.

While ISA needs local soybean producers who are creative and analytical to serve, there are other ways to get involved. Attend a farm show, respond to calls for grassroots action, stand up for animal agriculture in your community, support ISA’s efforts to increase weight limits on local roads and bridges, and become an ISA member.

Another one of Dylan’s lyrics quoted in the article was, “I believe in you, even though I be outnumbered.” As a leader, it is often necessary to put your reputation on the line to stand up for what you believe. Some of the greatest advancements in history were moved forward by new leaders making a leap in faith believing they could make a difference.

Are you ready to take a leap? We encourage – no, challenge – you to get involved.

Leadership Tips to Count On

1. **Lead by example.** If you want others to follow your lead, demonstrate the ability to follow.
2. **Become a better listener.** Practice active listening. When others know you will hear them out before you speak, they are more likely to listen to what you say when you do speak.
3. **Give credit where credit is due.** Nothing goes further in building a rapport than recognizing someone’s accomplishments on a timely basis.
4. **Focus on the big picture.** Don’t choose the “Ready, Fire, Aim” pattern of leadership. By keeping attuned to the main goal, rather than day-to-day tactics, your aim will improve.
5. **Think like a newly minted immigrant.** When our forefathers arrived, they saw the business world with fresh eyes and look what happened. If you adopt this mindset, you may identify opportunities others have overlooked.
Customer Profile

SOYBEAN CUSTOMERS

Dale Drendel, Illinois dairy farmer, talks about the value of the industry.

“"If you’re going to make milk, you need soybean meal.”

Soybean meal is a critical ingredient for Lindale Holsteins, a 160-cow milking herd owned by Dale Drendel and his wife, Linda, near Hampshire, Ill.

“Soybean meal has many advantages for us – fat, protein and bypass protein.”

Soybean products complement homegrown forages at Lindale Holsteins to balance the total mixed ration to a protein content of about 35 percent. Drendel uses several soybean products, including a 48 percent crude protein processed soybean meal, Soy Best, and soybean hulls. Soy Best, a mechanically extracted soy product, is higher in fat. The product is valuable to the dairy industry as a highly degradable protein that bypasses the rumen to be absorbed in the small intestine. Soybean hulls contribute fiber.

“For Illinois soybean growers, dairy farmers are some of our best local customers,” says Bill Wykes, soybean farmer from Yorkville, Ill., and ISA animal agriculture vice chair. “Domestic animal agriculture is the biggest end user of U.S. soybean meal. It is in our best interest to support the health and growth of Illinois livestock industries.”

“What can we get for what we need?”

It is a resounding question that Drendel and his nutritionist focus on while formulating a ration for a dairy cow’s needs. “It is tough to replace soybean meal,” says Drendel. “A $50 price move in soybean meal changes our costs by about 11 to 12 cents per head per day. Using our current ration and $17 milk prices, a $75 price move in soybean meal is the same value as a pound of milk.”

“We’re proud to be an Illinois family farm.”

Drendel grew up with a 50-cow dairy herd, and through the years the family farm has continually expanded. Today, he farms with his son, Jeff, who owns Team Holsteins with Kevin Kriegel, a valued farm employee. Their animals are housed with the Lindale Holsteins herd.

“We enjoy showing and seeing our accomplishments.”

As Holstein breeders, the Drendels strive to be a top herd in both type and production. They exhibit and merchandise animals and embryos across the country. Last year, their successes included Supreme Champion at the Ohio Spring Dairy Expo and Reserve Intermediate Champion at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville. While at the Illinois State Fair, they were honored with Champion Land of Lincoln Holstein, a prestigious award for an Illinois breeder.

“We enjoy talking with people about agriculture and showing them a dairy farm.”

Despite the busy show schedule, Lindale Holsteins is always open to new visitors and old friends. “We have had many opportunities to host people on our farm,” says Drendel. They have hosted community dairy breakfasts and filmed short dairy promotion videos, and are involved with Illinois Farm Families’ conversations with Chicago-area moms. Over the last few years, the number of farm visitors tops 6,000.

Dale and Linda Drendel
Overseas Missions Direct Checkoff Investments

When Illinois soybean farmer leaders get to meet with key international customers and see U.S. soy in action overseas, it helps them make targeted and wise checkoff dollar investments. Several Illinois soybean farmers have been in foreign countries this year, getting a firsthand look at how Illinois soy is used and what farmers can do to better meet future demand.

Taiwan Market Study
More and more food-grade quality soybeans are finding their way to Taiwan via containerized shipping. Illinois farmers observed containers being unloaded (1). ISA leaders visited Ming Food Trust’s tofu manufacturing plant to discuss sourcing non-biotech, food-grade soybeans (2). ISA is looking into opportunities to be a competitive supplier for the quality-driven company.

Dubai Export Project Tour
Illinois soybean farmers participated in the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council’s (USAPEEC) tour to learn more about U.S. poultry production, exports, promotions and product uses in Dubai. Poultry is the top consumer of Illinois soybean meal. Here Bill Wykes, Dale Crawford and ISA livestock industry consultant Nicole Boettger look at poultry products in a meat case (3).

At the Port of Savannah in Georgia, the leaders were able to follow the poultry export process from the U.S. East Coast port to Dubai, a growing market for U.S. poultry products (4).

Nutrition Solutions for Central America
Both new market and humanitarian assistance opportunities exist for Illinois soybeans in parts of Central America. That was the impression ISA farmer leader Doug Winter got following a recent educational mission to Nicaragua and Guatemala. Winter witnessed the results of work completed by the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) and the World Soy Foundation (5).

Colombia Market Study Mission
ISA is sponsoring a cobia soy feeding demonstration in Colombia as a follow-up to another successful feeding demonstration held in the country last year. ISA farmer leaders Mike Marron and Duane Dahlman talk with Martín Echevarría, owner of Antillana Cobia Farm, about the challenges he faces with feed costs (6).
Remember Using This?

For nearly 15 years, farmers have enjoyed the power and convenience of glyphosate resistant soybeans. But, like most great things, it can’t last forever without proper care. The threat of serious weed resistance is a real problem. Glyphosate resistant weeds have been documented around the world and in the United States. Therefore, Respect the Rotation and plant Beck’s LibertyLink® resistant soybeans. When you combine the new programs and high yields of Beck’s LibertyLink soybeans, Respecting the Rotation makes sense. Otherwise, you might want to sharpen that rusty old bean hook!

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