It’s Time to Think 2013 Seed

• Consider Your Buyers in Seed Selection
• Weigh IP Production Options
You don’t just see a field.
You see the future of your operation.
One we’re helping you protect. With a new herbicide-tolerant trait system that will build on glyphosate. Improving performance to move farming ahead. Enlist.com
Start Thinking Seed Selection

You may not be thinking about 2013 seed selection just yet, but industry experts say there is no better time to give it some thought. Update your selection criteria to enhance future profit potential.

IP Soybeans a Solid Added-Value Option

Have you ever considered whether growing IP soybeans is a market opportunity for your farm? Get some tips from farmers involved with IP production who say the hard work and risk are worth the effort.

Savvy Selection Increases Sustainability & Profits

Sustainability efforts must start with making the right seed choices. Learn more about Illinois soybean farmers who are using sustainability in seed selection.

Consider Customers in Seed Selection

Yield may top your seed selection priority list, but who ultimately buys your beans should enter into your decision-making process. Depending on the sales point, what you plant may have an impact on your cash price, your profitability and perhaps even the future of the industry.

Are Locks and Dams a Ticking Time Bomb?

You may take for granted that the soybeans you raise find their way into the export market. But the aging U.S. inland waterway system jeopardizes future transportation options. A checkoff-funded study finds deteriorating locks and dams may be a ticking time bomb.

Conversations with Consumers are Critical

Social responsibility is often defined as a balance between the economy and the environment. Find out how you can help lead the soybean industry with an eye on social responsibility. Illinois soybean farmers can participate in a variety of image building projects funded by the Illinois soybean checkoff.
With my year as 2011-12 chairman coming to an end and now a full year into ISA’s revamped strategic direction, I am pleased with the progress we have made. Our vision and mission, backed by specific values and goals, have allowed us to target strategy for measurable results.

I’ll highlight some of the milestones we have marked during recent months:

• ISA established and prioritized target areas for investment. Topping the list is animal agriculture. To better learn how Illinois soybean farmers could partner with livestock and poultry producer needs, we have invested checkoff dollars to coordinate roundtable events for industry stakeholders. We have funded joint promotions with international meat and poultry groups and taken steps toward a healthier livestock sector to ensure a market for our soybeans and to strengthen our local and state economies. ISA has taken the lead to focus on real results.

• ISA supports international relationships and market development. Keeping the pathways to increased sales open is just as important as producing good soybeans. We not only work to maintain current markets, but also to open new markets and advocate for equitable policies and freedom to operate. We welcome trade teams from China, Taiwan, Japan, Brazil and others. I traveled on the first-ever Illinois soybean mission to Cuba this spring. While the U.S. is the primary supplier of whole soybeans to Cuba, U.S. soybean farmers are losing soybean meal and oil market share to competitors. As a result of this trip and others like it, we enact steps that lead to increased exports around the world.

• ISA works to ensure Illinois soy reaches destinations efficiently. Transportation underpins every aspect of the Illinois soy industry from farms, grain elevators and soybean processors to livestock operations, food processors and export companies. As a major hub for river, railway and highway transport, Illinois offers transportation advantages over other states. We continue to evaluate container shipping, truck weight limits, infrastructure and shipping quality.

• ISA focuses on soybean yield and quality. With checkoff funding, we have created a new quality initiative, the Yield Challenge and the Illinois Soybean Summit. We are working on protein and oil levels and enhancing soybean meal composition. During the last two years, the Yield Challenge respectively reported increased yields of 5.2 percent and 6.45 percent over the norm. This past March, the Summit provided exploration of ways to improve soybean production and meet growing global demand.

These are just some of the examples of our recent activities. ISA by the year 2020 would like to see 600 million bushels of high-quality Illinois soybeans utilized per year, as we implement best management practices to maximize profitability and increase soybean production in a sustainable manner. The plan is in motion. I look forward to seeing what the next years hold for Illinois soybean farmers.  

Matt Hughes
ISA Chairman

ISA Practices
Targeted Strategy for Measurable Results
Protein and Oil Content are Important Seed Selection Factors

When I market my soybeans to the CGB Enterprises processing plant in Mount Vernon, Ind., I am paid according to the number of soybean bushels I deliver. I also receive from the plant an analysis of the protein and oil content of my soybeans. I don’t receive any premiums or discounts based on the results of that analysis, but I do know exactly the value and composition of the soybeans I produce.

Since serving on the ISA board, my awareness of the importance of protein and oil content has expanded significantly. I believe I have a better understanding of what our customers need, whether those customers are domestic animal feeders that want more protein or soybean exporters that look for higher levels of oil like they see from our South American competitors.

I don’t identity preserve any soybeans at this time, except, of course, seed beans. But I have begun to select soybean varieties with higher protein and oil levels, even though I am not rewarded with premiums for choosing such varieties. I also now send soybean samples by variety each year to an independent lab for protein and oil analysis. I consciously look for varieties with higher yield potential and higher protein and oil.

I have found the easiest and most effective way to search for what I want is through the Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS), which is supported by Illinois soybean checkoff dollars. The database contains oil and protein ratings for available soybean varieties. Here’s how it works: I grow about five different maturities, ranging from about 3.7 to 5.0. I go into the VIPS database, pull up soybean varieties by maturity, and then pare down my variety selection search by looking for pest and disease resistance or tolerance factors.

I have come up with my own formula that I use to choose varieties based on protein, oil and yield. I have established baselines for our operation in terms of acceptable protein and oil levels. Once I review what is found in the VIPS database, I check seed company data for yield trends. I then choose those varieties with higher levels of protein and oil combined with yield potential.

Since I also am a seed company sales representative, I share VIPS with my customers. Many of them do not use the online database, but they review the hard copies of data I provide.

I can honestly say I really have not found any drawbacks to using VIPS to select soybean varieties with higher protein and oil content. That can make it tough to decide whether or not to grow that variety.

But the bottom line is this: protein and oil should be important seed selection factors for all of us if we want to keep our domestic and international customers in mind. It is our growing responsibility to produce higher protein and oil content soybeans that yield well to remain profitable on the farm and competitive in the global marketplace.

Doug Winter is a soybean farmer from Mill Shoals, Ill., and serves as treasurer for the Illinois Soybean Association. He has a cash grain farm in partnership with his brother, Richard, and grows yellow food-grade and commercial corn, commercial soybeans and seed soybeans.

By Doug Winter
Considering 73.9 million U.S. acres were planted to soybeans in 2012 from hundreds of variety choices, the decision on what to plant in each field can be complicated. Experts remind farmers to look to multiple sources for help, including university data, on-farm trials, personal field records and seed company representatives. And although top selection criteria may vary by geography, priority remains on yield potential, maturity, disease and agronomic characteristics.

“We look at individual fields instead of the whole operation, and work with farmers to determine the best product for each field,” says Darrin Schultz, sales representative for Pioneer Hi-Bred in northeast Illinois. He first reviews soil type and drainage to narrow the selection. Then, he works with customers to identify any past soybean disease and insect problems. “It depends on the needs of the farmer and the field,” he says. “Our area has seen issues with charcoal rot, brown stem rot and sudden death syndrome, so we consider those resistance ratings. We also send samples to a plant clinic to test which soybean cyst nematode race is present.”

“One of the best things a farmer can do is scout his fields carefully to know year after year what problems he has,” adds Seth Naeve, University of Minnesota Extension soybean agronomist. He agrees submitting samples to a plant clinic is the only way to properly identify specific diseases and pest problems to choose appropriate varieties.

**Consider All Characteristics**

“Our goal is to provide farmers with a selection of varieties with good defensive packages, with the idea that it leads to good offense and yields,” says Don Rhoades, Burrus Hybrids agronomist. “Sudden death syndrome is the number one disease that concerns us. White mold in northern areas, brown stem rot in southern Illinois and frogeye have popped up, too, in some areas.”

Another philosophy of Rhoades is to look at past history to try and predict the future. He advises keeping good records...
by field, especially for fields in rotation schedules, to know which problems each field has had. Such information aids variety selection.

“Pick maturity ranges that are best adapted to your region,” says. “Planting a range of maturities can spread out the harvest schedule and potentially manage some disease issues.”

Other agronomic characteristics such as plant height and standability, canopy width, emergence scores and shatter ratings also play into the decision, especially where field conditions and management practices are concerned.

“Some of our higher yielding varieties take a bit more management,” says Rhoades. “Farmers need to watch planting rates because higher yielding varieties tend to lodge more when populations exceed recommendations. We also may not suggest these varieties on wider rows.”

Naeve is working with other Extension agronomists on a new research project funded by the United Soybean Board (USB) to study the interaction between management and variety selection. Sites in nine states are testing top-yielding genetic bases to determine if they perform considerably better with seed company-recommended, high-input management systems like increased fertilizer, elite seed treatments, prophylactic fungicide applications and more.

“Farmers always look to maximize yields,” he says. “This project should help figure out if there is synergy with some varieties when we push management systems harder with more inputs.”

Check Test Results

Checking trial results also is an important part of the process, although Naeve cautions some limitation on even unbiased data sources. Not all seed companies enter all available varieties.

“The best predictor of how a variety will do is its performance at multiple locations in multiple years because growing seasons are never identical,” reminds Naeve. “Environmental characteristics like rainfall patterns and heat are a bigger driver of how varieties will perform than local parameters like soil type. On-farm testing can be full of errors.”

Other challenges with on-farm testing include not enough space or time to test a large number of varieties. Farmers may find it is nearly impossible to replicate tests in a statistically significant way. Any slight difference in bushels farmers see on strip tests may just be due to location. In addition, university trials are performed on productive sites, so checking the average of several sites is preferred to looking at one site close to home.

Funded by the Illinois soybean checkoff, the Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS) tests farmer-nominated varieties throughout the state, evaluating yield, disease resistance and adaption to local weather patterns, and analyzing protein and oil levels. Data are compiled online to help farmers choose varieties. The Illinois Soybean Yield Challenge provides another opportunity for participants to experiment with yield-boosting strategies.

Avoid Snap Decisions

Ross Prough, soybean farmer from Greenfield, Ill., and ISA vice chair for yield, double-checks industry trial results, even though most of his next-year decisions already have been made.

“I struggle with the fact that I barely get my crop planted, and my seed rep is already asking me to book for next year,” Prough says.

Pioneer’s Schultz confirms that August and September is prime time for making seed selections. “About a month or two before harvest, farmers start taking notes about how their varieties have progressed throughout the season,” he says. “We encourage them to look at what is in their fields ‘right now’ and try to visualize what they need for next year.”

But what they see may not be an option again. “I may have a good experience with a certain variety one year, but it changes so often it may not be available the following year,” Prough says.

Seed companies constantly research new and better varieties to make room in their lineups.

“When I sit down with customers late summer and early fall, the first thing they ask is what is new,” Schultz says. “They have favorites from the current year, but they typically ask for at least one or two new varieties.”

Naeve believes variety selection is the most important thing farmers can do to increase yields, quality and efficiency, but doesn’t think farmers spend enough time with the decision.

“There is an evolution within seed selection,” he explains. “Seed industry consolidation, early order programs and volume discounts offer benefits to being loyal to one company and relying heavily on seed rep recommendations. But there is value in taking time to consider all options.”

Let Proper Diagnosis Put You on the Right Path

Carefully scouting fields is critical to knowing what resistance traits to look for in soybean varieties. Take the extra step to send damaged plant samples to a clinic for proper diagnosis. Contact the Illinois plant clinic to find out its protocols, submission guidelines and fees:

University of Illinois Plant Clinic
http://web.extension.illinois.edu/plantclinic/
S-427 Turner Hall
1102 S. Goodwin Ave.
Urbana IL 61801
217-333-0519

Farmers prep for 2012 soybean planting. Seed selection for 2013 will begin in August.
Ron Moore has seen and heard firsthand the difference quality can make to Illinois soybean buyers and livestock producers. He and his wife, Deb, recently served as one of several hosts for a two-day tour designed to show international customers the marketing cycle of the soybeans they buy, from farm to final destination. Moore farms with his brother, Larry, near Roseville, Ill., where they raise corn and soybeans. He also has a 200-head beef cattle operation.

“Customers – whether international or domestic – want quality and consistency,” says Nicole Boettger, ISA livestock strategy lead. Animal agriculture is the top funding priority for Illinois soybean checkoff dollars. “By encouraging consistent quality and creating brand awareness, we position Illinois soybean farmers as thought leaders in the industry.”

Illinois is the second largest soybean producer in the country, growing 416 million bushels in 2011. USDA statistics show more than half the total value of the crop is exported as whole soybeans, meal or soybean oil. Almost five percent of the U.S. soybean crop is exported via containers. Other soy is exported in the form of meat and poultry products.

“The export market for whole soybeans is very important, but it is equally important to support value-added U.S. meat exports,” says Rob Shaffer, soybean farmer from El Paso, Ill., and ISA secretary. “When we add value, we bring jobs and economic development to Illinois.”

Quality is king, whether shipping whole soybeans or soy that has been fed to livestock. Animal producers seek consistency from available protein, as they must balance rations to the minimum levels provided. Shaffer says if producers knew actual levels, they could make better decisions.

Visitors representing countries around the world learn firsthand about Illinois soybean production, transportation and exports during a recent tour in the state.

Top 2011 Soy-Related Export Customers ($ IN MILLIONS)

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Soybean numbers from U.S. Soybean Export Council. Pork numbers provided by USDA as compiled by U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).
Take Advantage of Production Learning Opportunities

As the 2013 seed selection process gets underway, Illinois soybean farmers will be faced with several new products and technologies to help extend soybean yield potential. Illinois soybean checkoff dollars are invested in research and programs that can help farmers make the best seed selection decisions, including summer learning tours and other activities.

“Yields are a farmer’s biggest concern,” says Dan Farney, soybean farmer from Morton, Ill., and ISA Production Committee chairman. “We haven’t increased soybean yields like we have in corn, so checkoff research is important to help us meet growing worldwide demand for soybeans while increasing profitability. We encourage farmers to learn more about what we are doing.”

While several summer field day opportunities have passed, soybean farmers can consider participating in a couple of late summer events funded, in part, by the soybean checkoff:

**ISA/Farm Journal Soybean College**
– July 25, Heyworth, Ill. – A practical, hands-on training session, Soybean College will help farmers advance production skills, increase yields and improve profitability. The event will be led by Farm Journal Field Agronomist Ken Ferrie, and includes general instruction and breakout sessions in the field. Participants will hear from industry-leading farmers and researchers about topics that can affect profitability. The one-day event includes lunch and a steak dinner. Registration fees are $100, and registration is limited to the first 200 farmers to sign up. Look for the link on the www.ilsoy.org home page.

**University of Illinois Agronomy Day**
– August 16, Urbana-Champaign, Ill. – Agronomy Day provides the opportunity to learn about new university research. Project leads will discuss soil fertility, insect management, crop production, weed control, corn and soybean genetics, plant diseases, farm economics and agricultural engineering. Agronomy Day begins at 7 a.m., with field tours departing every half hour to make stops at multiple research plots. Lunch is available for a nominal charge. The exhibition tent will feature exhibits from university programs, commercial vendors, research posters and student clubs. More information and registration can be obtained from Sandy Osterbur at 217-333-4424 or saosterb@illinois.edu.

Summer learning tours provide farmers with opportunities to learn the latest approaches to increase soybean yields.

Dan Farney, soybean farmer from Morton, Ill., and ISA Production Committee chairman, says, “We haven’t increased soybean yields like we have in corn, so checkoff research is important to help us meet growing worldwide demand for soybeans while increasing profitability.”

**Soybean Pipeline Preview**

Several new production tools are in the pipeline to help enhance yield potential:

- **Priaxor Fungicide.** BASF’s new Priaxor fungicide combines Headline fungicide with the new Xemium active ingredient. BASF reports more than 75 trials have shown Priaxor-treated soybeans produce higher yields than untreated acres 87 percent of the time. Priaxor reduced Septoria brown spot severity by nearly 17 percent compared to untreated soybean acres.

- **Roundup Ready 2 Xtend traits.** Monsanto’s new soybean product, with tolerance to glyphosate and dicamba herbicides, will be available in 2014. In addition, Monsanto says its Vistive Gold soybeans with no trans fats and reduced saturated fats is nearing registration, along with SDA soybeans, which offer a plant-based source of Omega-3 fatty acids.

- **Pioneer Accelerated Yield Technology.** Pioneer Hi-Bred continues to promote Accelerated Yield Technology beans that have helped yield champion Kip Cullers smash records. Pioneer also has introduced high oleic oil soybeans with no trans fat, less saturated fat and the highest amount of heart-healthy monounsaturated fat available in soy.
Identity preserved (IP) soybeans may conjure up thoughts of hard work and risk. But two Illinois farmers who have been growing IP soybeans for decades say that doesn’t have to be the case. Both have learned to manage the risk to create income opportunities.

Matt Hughes, soybean farmer from Shirley, Ill., and ISA chairman has grown a number of different IP crops over the years. This year, 75 percent of his soybeans are being grown for seed production and 25 percent are non-biotech soybeans being grown under contract for Solae.

“Seed production is the ultimate IP option. If you can grow seed beans, you can handle any other IP opportunity,” he says.

While growing soybean seed can mean growing some of the best-yielding varieties, it can also mean taking on the risk of growing a variety that is untested in Illinois, according to Hughes. Part of the challenge with growing non-biotech soybeans is higher cost of production. Crop inputs are more expensive and chemistries are older, which means sometimes they don’t work.

“In every case, think things through,” he says. “Make sure premiums and other perks cover potential yield lag, additional input costs and extra labor and management.”

Hughes belongs to AgGuild of Illinois, LLC, a 47-member group that provides resources and opportunities to farmers in a specific geographic area who want to grow IP crops. The guild began as an ISA initiative, and merged with other commodity organization groups 13 years ago.

“Raising a high-quality IP product and being able to deliver extra service how and when the customer needs it still provides the best opportunities,” Hughes says.

Tim Seifert, soybean farmer from Auburn, Ill., and ISA second vice chair for high quality, has been raising soybeans for seed since 1980.

“Raising IP crops is a good way to add value to my farm. Soybeans I raise are going in bags other farmers will plant next season. That’s my incentive for doing the best job possible.” – Tim Seifert

Besides the premiums, Seifert says there are other advantages to growing IP soybeans. He crop-shares with two-thirds of his landlords, so the premiums represent extra profit in their pockets as well. In cases where he cash rents, the premiums help him afford a higher rent.

“My fields look nice, the yields are high, and that’s attractive to potential landlords,” he says.

Seifert’s advice for those considering growing IP crops is to start backward. “Ask yourself if you have the patience and discipline to take on the challenge,” he says. “Do you have the time? Do you have proper equipment and bin space? Figure out how much you need to be compensated to make it worth the risk and effort. Do your homework and know the risks before you enter an agreement. Often the reward is worth the risk, but sometimes it might not pencil out.”

Farmers interested in learning more about IP soybean production opportunities may visit the ISA membership-funded website, SoybeanPremiums.org.
Reducing input use, saving fuel and increasing product quality to satisfy requirements of domestic and overseas customers are all factors in increasing sustainability on today’s farms. But those sustainability efforts must start with making the right seed choices.

“Most farmers do sustainable things all the time, but they don’t think of themselves as operating sustainably,” says Don Guinnip, soybean farmer from Marshall, Ill., and ISA second vice chair for sustainability. “Whether they’re saving soil, saving money or saving fuel by reducing a trip across the field, farmers are implementing sustainable practices every day.”

For Guinnip, some soil isn’t as productive as other parts of Illinois. “Technologies available in seed enable us to reduce input costs to increase our profitability,” he says.

Traits of the most value are those that allow him to double-crop or no-till soybeans. He says glyphosate-resistant varieties offer him more flexibility, helping him maintain residue and conserve moisture. In the future, Guinnip would like more choices — like 2,4-D resistance — to address some weed challenges farmers face in his area.

“Sustainable seed selection isn’t necessarily top of mind for most farmers, so I think part of our job is to make sure farmers recognize the things they’re already doing,” says Ron Moore, soybean farmer from Roseville, Ill., and ISA vice chair for sustainability. “While there are many factors that contribute to sustainability, I think it all starts with decisions that make us financially viable and tailoring production systems to what works on each farm.”

Besides the herbicide traits that allow Moore to reduce tillage, an important part of his toolbox of resources includes seed with disease-resistance traits developed through conventional breeding methods. He looks forward to being able to grow more varieties with healthy consumer-friendly traits, too. “We have a responsibility to produce a healthy food product for consumers, and farmers take that responsibility very seriously,” he notes.

Moore also considers development of varieties with higher protein and oil to be of critical importance. “If we are producing food for nine billion people, they will need protein — either plant or animal — and we have to provide food for a variety of tastes and markets,” he says.

Jeffrey Thompson, senior soybean research manager for Pioneer Hi-Bred, says developments in seed technology affect sustainable seed choices. Farmers have an increasing number of options, ranging from herbicide tolerance to insect and disease resistance, and seed companies work diligently to develop new yield-protecting technologies.

In addition, the number of inputs delivered via seed treatments is rapidly growing. “Every year we test aggressively and develop recommendations based on our independent evaluation and research, offering new products to bring value to customers and contributing to sustainability efforts,” he says.
Consider Customers in Seed Selection

While choosing high-yielding soybean varieties for your fields may be the primary seed selection criterion, soybean industry watchers remind farmers they may need to keep customers and other factors in mind. Depending on the sales point you choose, what you plant may have an impact on your cash price, your profitability and perhaps even the future of the industry.

“First, no farmer should select a biotech soybean variety that has not been approved for importation by major foreign importing countries,” says John Baize, soybean industry consultant. “I still recommend that farmers select soybean varieties that have above-average protein content. The U.S. needs to improve the overall protein content of its soybean crops to make U.S. soybeans more desirable to foreign buyers. Every farmer needs to select higher protein varieties, even if they do not directly receive a premium. The alternative is to see protein levels continue to decline and have foreign buyers pay less.”

“Livestock feed and soy product manufacturers utilize the protein and oil components of our soybeans. Many varieties offer both high-yield and high-quality content,” says Mike Marron, soybean farmer from Fithian, Ill., and ISA vice chair for market access/advocacy. “Since South American soybeans are naturally higher in protein, it could affect our market share.”

Peter Goldsmith, University of Illinois agricultural economist says that while global buyers may not be willing to pay more for higher protein soybeans, Illinois soybean farmers may be able to increase protein and oil without sacrificing yield. He encourages farmers to take advantage of the data available in the Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS).

“There are varieties available in seed peer groups that do not sacrifice yield or yield stability. VIPS allows farmers to review peer groups by location, company and maturity and show how one variety stacks up against others in terms of yield, protein, oil and more,” he says. “Seed sales can be very local, and seed sales can be very local, and seed needs to be profitable with the seed they choose and know for sure what their chosen market ultimately wants.”

ISA has created a new soybean checkoff-funded quality initiative and hired Kevin Brooks as soybean quality support lead to explore ways to improve Illinois soybean oil and protein levels.
New County Groups Enhance ISA Membership

County-level soybean groups are forming to help recruit ISA members. The ISA Membership Task Force approved creation of the groups earlier this summer. Funded by ISA membership dollars, these grassroots organizations will focus on pursuing favorable farm legislation.

Ross Pauli, soybean farmer from Edwards, Ill., and current president of the Peoria County Corn/Soy Promoters, is spearheading development of the first three groups in Kane, McLean and Tazewell counties. Pauli will partner with county directors throughout the process to identify area leaders, present the concept, and complete group development and implementation.

Pauli also is working with three existing corn and soybean groups to establish “Make Your Mark” barbecues. These events will allow farmers, agribusiness representatives and students to dialogue with legislators. Attendees will be eligible to join ISA at a special, discounted rate of $145 for a three-year membership. Visit www.ilsoy.org/membership for more details.

Have you Added your Voice for Soy?

The legislative environment for agriculture remains uncertain, but Illinois soybean farmers can have a say in how legislation affects farming. In fact, getting involved in the state and federal legislative process is now easier with Voice for Soy, ISA’s online legislative action center.

ISA members and other soybean stakeholders can visit the Voice for Soy website, register as users, and learn how to defend freedom to farm. Registered Voice for Soy users receive updates on legislative issues and are provided with all the tools to take action. Visit www.ilsoy.org/voiceforsoy, and take a few minutes to complete the registration process.

From steers and cows, pigs to sows, and chicks to chickens, animal ag creates big demand for U.S. soy — eating 98 percent of your soybean meal. And that’s no bull.

Our Soy Checkoff Progress Powered by U.S. Farmers
U.S. soybean farmers have long enjoyed a competitive advantage over South America where transportation is concerned. But the aging U.S. inland waterway system jeopardizes that advantage. In fact, a recent checkoff–funded study suggests the system is a ticking time bomb, and that could ultimately weaken soybean basis levels in the country.

“The perspective that the lock and dam system is a ticking time bomb is based on the fact that 36 percent of the structures are more than 70 years old, and more than five percent of the 255 locks are more than 100 years old,” says Mike Steenhoek, Soy Transportation Coalition (STC) executive director. The study was commissioned by the United Soybean Board (USB) in cooperation with the STC and checkoff dollars. “The advancing age of the locks and the increasing hours of outages for maintenance and repair are an increasing concern.”

The study finds deteriorating conditions of U.S. locks and dams could cause failures and “severe economic distress” for farmers, threatening their future ability to compete on a global scale. Up to 89 percent of soybeans exported through the lower Mississippi ports, such as the Port of New Orleans, arrive at those ports via the locks of the U.S. inland waterways.

“The purpose of the study was to highlight the current and future role of our nation’s lock and dam inventory in facilitating the movement of agricultural freight, investigate the current condition of U.S. lock inventory, and provide a picture of the economic impact on agriculture – particularly on a local level – if such a failure occurred,” says Steenhoek.

Without significant investment and improvements to infrastructure or other changes, the impact would ripple across the economy, reports the study. For example, the area most vulnerable to a failure at the LaGrange Lock on the Illinois River would be parts of the 11th congressional district, which includes Joliet, Bloomington, Kankakee, LaSalle and Streator. If a failure occurred, the area would lose $4.3 million. The price of soybeans would drop locally by $2.45 per ton, or 7.4 cents per bushel.

“A failure at the LaGrange Lock on the Illinois River could drop soybean prices more than seven cents a bushel.

“Authors of the study conclude any failure could cost about $150 per ton for freight traversing a lock, impact the global soybean market and cause the United States to lose export share to other countries. The study clearly illustrates the importance of the system to our economy.”

— Dean Campbell
Conversations with Consumers are Critical

By Dan Farney, ISA Production Committee Chair

Talking with consumers today is every bit as valuable as the latest agricultural technology – and every bit as important to our bottom line. Our freedom to farm depends on consumers trusting us to do what’s best. Thankfully, most farmers understand this reality.

In an ISA-sponsored survey of state soybean farmers conducted this spring, 88 percent of respondents said, “Consumer support of farmers and farming is very important.” But with most consumers now several generations removed from the land, building relationships between farmers and urban dwellers can be a geographical, organizational and even cultural challenge.

To overcome the challenge, ISA is taking a lead through its work with the Illinois Farm Families (IFF) coalition. The coalition includes ISA, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Corn Marketing Board, Illinois Pork Producers Association and Illinois Beef Association. Funded, in part, through Illinois soybean checkoff dollars, IFF volunteers are busy:

- Hosting farm tours for Chicago-area moms, bloggers and media members.
- Connecting with consumers at special events, like Pork-a-pano-oo-la at the Lincoln Park Zoo and Meet A Farmer Day at the Children’s Discovery Museum in Normal.
- Speaking with city moms at “meetups” and get-togethers.

Engaging with consumers, answering their questions and easing their concerns requires a new way of speaking. Simply challenging incorrect assumptions won’t build trust in farmers or in how we operate. We must start a conversation and connect with consumers on shared values.

ISA and coalition partners regularly host consumer mindset training workshops where farmers learn how to “speak consumer.” Please consider getting involved. Call Amy Roady, ISA communications director, at 309-808-3610 to learn more about communications training or other opportunities available.

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Eats the meal from 602 million bushels of YOUR soybeans

That’s half of all U.S. soybean meal. In fact, 98 percent of U.S. soybean meal goes to feed domestic poultry and livestock. That’s why animal ag is your number one customer. It’s true, chicks dig soy.

Learn more at www.BEYONDtheELEVATOR.com

Source: USB Market View Database

July 2012
Illinois soybean farmers hit the road earlier this summer with a series of events to educate the general public about soybeans and their importance to the foods people put on their plates. Throughout the summer, the soybean checkoff-funded “What Food Gets Fed” program will take the lead in educating urban consumers by conducting mobile tours around the state. The tours offer a variety of fun, hands-on learning activities that are targeted at kids, including soybean planting, a soybean bag toss, interactive games and more.

The mobile tour is a follow-up to “What Food Gets Fed” awareness activities from a year ago. Advertisements were placed in local grocery stores, illustrating for shoppers how Illinois soy may be used in various food products those shoppers purchase. This year's mobile tour will be supported with in-store advertising displays offering pork coupons in nearly 60 grocery stores in and around Champaign, Peoria and Springfield, Ill. Some events have already occurred, and others are scheduled for later this summer:

**Children’s Discovery Museum** Normal June 16
**Illinois Valley Food Center** LaSalle June 23
**Lincoln Park Zoo** Chicago June 30
**Ag Fair Barnyard Scramble** Martinsville July 12
**Heart of Illinois Fair** Peoria July 13-21
**Illinois State Fair** Springfield August 9-19

Illinois soybean farmer participation in these events is encouraged. ISA leaders report that farmers so far have found these events are ideal venues to meet and greet consumers and help them understand the vital role soybean farmers play in local communities. More events will be added. Contact Michelle McCarthy at 262-563-5074 if you would like to volunteer to help. For an updated list of events and locations, visit WhatFoodGetsFed.com.

**What’s Animal Ag Worth to Us?**

CHECKOFF STUDY SHOWS IMPACT OF ANIMAL AG ON FOOD BILLS, EXPORTS, ECONOMY

If more regulations lead to higher input costs for U.S. poultry and livestock farmers, who would notice? Farmers? Consumers? People who work in the animal ag sector?

A recent soy-checkoff-funded study shows everyone would.

That study evaluated the impact increased pressures on animal ag could have on the retail price of meat, milk and eggs. It shows that if regulations cause animal-ag input costs to rise by 25 percent, the effects would include:

- **AN INCREASE IN CONSUMER FOOD BILLS OF UP TO $16.8 BILLION ANNUALLY.**
- **A $1.1 BILLION DECREASE IN THE VALUE OF U.S. EXPORTS.**
- **A LOSS OF NEARLY 9,000 AMERICAN JOBS.**

IMPACT REACHES BEYOND RURAL AMERICA

The most recent statistics compiled by the soy checkoff show the U.S. poultry and livestock sectors support 1.8 million jobs and generate more than $289 billion for the U.S. economy annually.

“This could have a big impact on everyone – it’s not just the dozen eggs you and I buy at the grocery store,” says United Soybean Board (USB) Chair Vanessa Kummer, a soybean farmer from Colfax, N.D. “The poultry and livestock sectors not only support the U.S. export market, but also make our economy stronger here at home by creating jobs and tax revenue.”

YOUR BIGGEST SOY CUSTOMER BEYOND THE ELEVATOR

Animal agriculture continues to be the biggest user of U.S. soy. Poultry, livestock and fish consume 98 percent of the meal from your soybeans.

“We have to be sensitive to the issues that poultry and livestock farmers face and try to ensure they can stay in business,” says Lewis Bainbridge, a soybean and cattle farmer from Champaign, Ill. "It’s much easier and more profitable for us to feed our soybeans to animals here in the United States and export the chicken, pork and beef than it is to load our soybeans onto a ship.”

To learn more about why soybean farmers should support their biggest customers beyond the elevator, visit www.BeyondTheElevator.com.
Partner News

DaBurger on Chicago Sports Venue Menus

DaBurger can be found on more and more Chicago-area sports venue menus. The specialty ground pork sandwich, whose introduction was supported in part by Illinois soybean checkoff dollars, has been a hit during Chicago Bears games at Soldier Field. Now, thousands of the sandwiches have been sold at Chicago Blackhawks hockey and Chicago Bulls basketball games at the United Center, as well as at U.S. Cellular Field where the Chicago White Sox baseball team plays.

Illinois Pork Producers Association (IPPA) representatives decided to focus on Chicago to educate urban consumers and get more pork products in their hands. Ultimately, IPPA wants to get ground pork in the meat case. When consumers ask if they can make pork sandwiches at home, the product would be available at the retail level. IPPA is talking with grocery stores in the Chicago area about possible promotions.

U.S. Chicken Moves Back into Yemen

The Illinois soybean checkoff-funded promotion program for U.S. chicken parts in Yemen has finally opened the market back up for direct U.S. chicken shipments to the country, breaking the spell of Brazil’s grip on this market. The USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) says 245 metric tons of U.S. broiler meat worth $250,000 were shipped to Yemen during early 2012 and for the first time in several years.

Conducting in-house technical seminars and educational workshops in Yemen, USAPEEC has been able to address both the trade and consumers with messages about U.S. chicken availability, versatility and quality.

USAPEEC now plans to work on enhancing the presence of U.S. chicken meat in the Yemeni market, as well as on developing local import interest in U.S. products. The group will share information and educate buyers about chicken cuts and products available.

Nominate a Farmer for Conservation Legacy Award

The American Soybean Association (ASA) Conservation Legacy Awards recognize U.S. soybean farmers who distinguish themselves through their outstanding environmental and conservation practices while continuing to farm profitably.

ASA is currently seeking nominations, and will award winners in three regions. In addition, a national winner will be selected from the three regional winners. All U.S. soybean farmers are eligible to enter. Entries are evaluated based on soil management, water management, input management, farmstead protection and conservation and environmental management.


America’s Advanced Biofuel Goes Pedal to the Metal

Biodiesel is America’s only advanced biofuel available nationwide, and now the biodiesel industry has an ad campaign to showcase the “road to energy independence.”

The ad campaign is the second time the industry has taken to media to tell its story. Ads center around land speed record holder Brent Hajek who clocked 182 miles per hour. The Oklahoma soybean farmer shattered the previous record in a stock Ford SuperDuty diesel truck running on B20.

The multi-million dollar project includes national television and web advertising, and regional print and radio advertising. Two, 30-second spots will air across the nation on Sunday morning network news public affairs shows, beginning in mid-July. The campaign is funded in part with soybean checkoff dollars. View the ads at www.AmericasAdvancedBiofuel.org.
SOYBEAN CUSTOMERS

To produce Plenish high oleic soybeans, Pioneer Hi-Bred works closely with farmers trained in growing specialty crops under identity preserved conditions in targeted geographies. Pioneer is involved with contract production and product testing for 2012, and works on foodservice and consumer products with edible oils companies like Stratas Foods.

Tom Bandler, Stratas Foods general manager for branded products, discusses the market:

Why did your company choose to get involved with high oleic soybeans?
The improved, healthier oil that high oleic soybeans provide allows food companies like ours to market enhanced, improved products that benefit foodservice operators and consumers. High oleic soybean oil provides a reliable solution to the need for healthier oils with zero grams of trans fat, less saturated fat and increased functionality for our customers.

What uses are you finding are a good fit for business?
We primarily target foodservice operations at this time, as they are looking for enhanced oils to provide them with the functionality they need and the healthier benefits their customers want. They also have found some of the initial zero trans fat frying options did not perform well in the fryer or have flavor differences, so customers are willing to test soybean-based oils again.

What does the future look like in terms of demand for these or similar soybeans?
Soybean oil has been a staple in the foodservice industry for years. It fell out of favor with the start of trans fat labeling in 2006, but we continue to see demand from foodservice operators who like the taste, functionality, price and availability of soybean oils and are excited to see high oleic come to the market. Operators realize high oleic soybean oil offers some significant benefits versus high oleic canola oil options: a wider geographic growing area for a more reliable supply, cleaner flavor profile and the potential for more economical pricing as crop production grows.

What feedback do you receive from your customers?
Market signals are strong for high oleic soybean oil, which is currently being tested by several food companies and chains with positive results. From sensory taste panels to cleanliness issues in restaurants and shelf-life stability for food manufacturing companies, we find that Plenish has the stability, flavor and nutrition the food industry needs and consumers expect.

How can farmers get involved with these soybeans?
We see strong interest from farmers in the targeted geographies for growing high oleic soybeans. They understand the need for new market opportunities and the fact that Plenish high oleic soybeans have the yield and agronomics they need on their farm. We have several growers from 2011 who signed up to plant all their acres to high oleic in 2012, and we look forward to continuing to expand our geographies and varieties in the coming years.

While contracting opportunities were not available in 2012 for Illinois soybean farmers, we continue to build the market and look to move west into Illinois in the very near future. Pioneer is working on varieties to meet the specific needs of Illinois farmers with the yield and agronomics they expect and need. Watch for additional details in the future.
Food Execs Get Taste of Soybean Sustainability

Food companies are creating sustainability standards for ingredient suppliers. Illinois soybean farmers want to be part of the conversation. During the first leg of a three-state, checkoff-funded sustainability tour in May, Central Illinois soybean farmers welcomed food purchasers and sustainability executives from Kraft, Unilever, Kellogg’s and Sodexo to demonstrate how modern technology and agronomic practices that increase productivity also reduce environmental impact. Several ISA directors, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts officials were on hand to answer questions.

Greg Myers (center) described how cover crops, along with no-till and strip till, keep soil in place, preserve moisture and protect water quality. The Fairbury, Ill., farmer plants this field directly into a rye cover crop (1).

Strip till was demonstrated on each of the Illinois farms. Execs saw how this minimum tillage practice disturbs only the portion of the soil that contains the seed row. Reduced tillage practices familiar to soybean farmers were seen by tour guests as progress toward sustainability (2).

Farmers describe no-till soybeans as one way to dramatically reduce soil erosion. This no-till field was next to a clean-till field, so execs were able to see the difference in soil moisture an inch below the soil surface (3).

Agricultural soil conservation and agronomic practices anchored the conversation at the John Traub farm near Fairbury, Ill., which is located in the Indian Creek Watershed. Execs learned that soil conservation started in the U.S. in the 1930s and about how soil conservation has evolved over the years. Traub answered questions about herbicide resistance and seed company rules regarding saving seed (4).

John Traub gave guests a first-hand look at strip-till and no-till fields in a side-by-side comparison (5).

NRCS agent Kent Bohnoff presented information about the Mackinaw River Watershed protection at the Franklin family farm near Lexington, Ill. The Franklin farm began working with The Nature Conservancy in 2003, and is a great example of how farmers reduce nutrient runoff from tiled fields, install wetlands and restore savannahs (6).
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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