Livestock Industry’s Future Depends on You

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• Open Policy Best with Ag Naysayers
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Your land is your life. It’s your legacy. Choose the soybeans that have a legacy all their own: FS HiSOY®. The first proprietary soybean brand, HiSOY has been a part of the land for nearly 50 years. Offering the latest in trait technologies and elite genetics, HiSOY varieties continue to be the choice for industry-charting yields. So grow proud and pass it on.

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More Meat and Poultry Sales a Plus for Soybean Farmers

Through the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council and U.S. Meat Export Federation, the Illinois soybean checkoff sponsors programs to expand U.S. poultry and pork exports. Funding animal protein promotions overseas adds value to Illinois soybeans, and helps keep the economic and employment benefits of U.S. meat processing within the state’s borders.

Animal Agriculture is Economic Engine for Illinois

The livestock and poultry industries provide significant income, jobs and tax revenue in Illinois. And despite the challenges caused by the 2012 drought, soybean checkoff research finds that there’s room for growth for animal agriculture in many local areas across Illinois.

Transportation Regs Become a Moving Target

While Iowa, Wisconsin and other neighboring states take advantage of agricultural exemptions in the new federal transportation bill extension, Illinois will see what the public thinks before implementing any exemptions. That can make it tough for Illinois farmers to move soybeans and other commodities efficiently and within the limits of the law.

High Feed Costs Prompt Producers to Confirm Quality

Higher feed costs are prompting livestock producers to look for soybeans with higher protein and amino acid content to better manage their costs. Read how soybean farmers can help by selecting high-yielding varieties that also meet customer needs.

Soybeans Bring Biodiesel and Feed into Strong Economic Mix

Continued profitability of biodiesel ensures demand for soybeans, a market for soybean oil and a ready supply of soybean meal for livestock customers. Just ask the officials at one biodiesel plant near Gilman, Ill., who have found success working with all of the components.

Advocate for Animal Agriculture

Being a good neighbor involves more than just knowing what goes on around the corner from your farm. And paving the way for livestock expansion should begin with openly addressing neighbors’ concerns before, during and after the public hearing. Learn how Illinois soybean farmers are, and can continue, to advocate for animal agriculture.
Partnering with Illinois Livestock Producers Through Thick and Thin

Most Illinois soybean farmers have dealt with the agronomic impact of the 2012 drought on production -- collectively, we know the effect the weather had on our crops and land. As we prepare for next year and put this year behind us, we need to remember that our largest customer, the livestock industry, will continue to struggle with the ramifications of the 2012 drought.

Pork, poultry and cattle producers will continue to feel the sting of sharply higher grain and soybean prices on their bottom lines. As our No. 1 soybean market, Illinois soybean farmers must do what we can to help animal agriculture through thick and thin. As the graphic here illustrates, more than one billion bushels of U.S. soybeans go into feed.

Animal agriculture is the Illinois soybean checkoff’s top funding focus. In this issue of Illinois Field & Bean, you can read about some of the efforts we have underway to help the livestock industry not only in the short-term, but for the long-term benefits of both industries.

For example, Illinois soybean checkoff dollars are invested through the U.S. Meat Export Federation and USA Poultry and Egg Export Council to grow international meat and poultry exports. Illinois soybean meal is fed to U.S. animals, and the meat shipped overseas. The value-added sales add up to enhance profitability throughout the supply chain.

The Illinois Livestock Development Group’s economic impact study confirms the advantages to the state of Illinois. In this issue, you can read more about some of those regional impacts. Nationally, author Peter Goldsmith, University of Illinois ag economist, finds livestock farms contribute $3.5 billion and 25,000 jobs to Illinois’ economy. When you combine Illinois livestock farms with meat and dairy processing companies, together the economic impact is much greater: 99,000 jobs and $27 billion, representing five percent of the state’s economy.

I encourage Illinois soybean farmers to look around their local areas. Think about how you might reach out to neighbors who may be struggling through tough times. If you have success stories to share about enhancing those partnerships, please contact ISA at ilsoy@ilsoy.org.

Merry Christmas,

Bill Wykes, ISA Chairman
Pork and Beans – A Good Combination

I don’t think that I have ever been to a picnic or potluck where pork and beans have not been served. It’s a dish that combines two great ingredients into a tasty delicacy.

Much like pork and beans go together for a perfect combination, soybeans and pork production are a great duo as well.

The importance of pork production to soybean production has been well documented by the state and national soybean associations. Hogs are the number two consumer of soybean meal. The soybean industry is interested in protecting and expanding this important market, while the pork industry is dependent upon a consistent, quality, affordable feed supply. Soybeans are an important part of the food chain ensuring that quality pork ends up on consumers’ tables.

We grow a lot of soybeans in Illinois and by no mere coincidence. We raise a lot of pigs as well. Raising soybeans and hogs is part of a sustainable cycle that is actually positive for the environment. Farmers raise soybeans, which are then processed into soybean meal, which is then fed to pigs. Pigs produce manure, which is used to fertilize crops such as soybeans, and the cycle begins again. This nutrient cycle gives both soybean and hog farmers a comparative advantage compared to other parts of the country and world where this is not the case.

The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) and the Illinois Pork Producers Association (IPPA) have partnered on numerous activities and programs that benefit both of our members. In 2008, IPPA launched Pork Power with the goal of helping fight hunger in Illinois. IPPA has partnered with ISA, along with the Illinois Corn Marketing Board and the Illinois Association of Meat Processors, in this effort. Since its inception, Pork Power has generated more than 314,000 pounds of donated pork – enough for more than 1.25 million meals – for families throughout Illinois.

ISA also has supported IPPA’s recent DaBurger efforts in promoting ground pork to consumers in the Chicago market. This promotion has encouraged Chicago consumers to try pork in a new way – pork burger – while also promoting the use of ground pork with consumers. These opportunities allow farmers to have conversations with Chicago consumers about food and issues related to farming, which is a great tie-in with Illinois Farm Families efforts to engage consumers.

These are great examples of the value of soybean and pork groups working together, but it is important for that working relationship to also be present at the local level. Soybean farmers should be ready and willing to show support for pork production in their local communities.

This year’s drought has impacted both soybean farmers and pork producers and created yet another challenge to overcome. As we look to the future, Illinois’ soybean and pork industries will be dependent upon each other for continued success.

Soybean farmers should be ready and willing to show support for pork production in their local communities.

Tim Maiers is the director of public relations for the Illinois Pork Producers Association. Maiers also farms in western Illinois.
More Meat and Poultry Sales a Plus for Soybean Farmers

By Laurie Redman-Steen

Yemen, Jordan, Japan, India, Peru and Mexico all have one thing in common: the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) is funding market-access expansion efforts in each country.

Through the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) and the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), the Illinois soybean checkoff sponsors programs to expand U.S. poultry and pork exports. Doing so adds value to Illinois soybeans, and helps keep the economic and employment benefits of U.S. meat processing within domestic borders.

"By exporting soybeans in the form of meat and poultry, we help keep our crush and processing plants, jobs and livestock operations here in Illinois," says David Niekamp, soybean farmer from Coatsburg, Ill., and ISA board representative to USAPEEC.

Niekamp says the approach to expanding market access differs by country, and depends on local culture, traditions, religious beliefs — even urban myths. For example, during earlier market expansion efforts in Russia, USAPEEC had to overcome a rumor the U.S. only exported left chicken legs, allegedly because left legs were injected with hormones.

"We brought Russian inspectors over to tour U.S. processing plants," says Jennifer Geck, USAPEEC manager of allied industry relations. "When budgets allow, we bring opinion leaders or government officials in to tour U.S. poultry farms and processing plants. They see high U.S. standards for themselves, then go home and share what they learned."

Promoting U.S. Poultry in Yemen and Jordan

The soybean checkoff funds technical U.S. chicken seminars in Yemen and Jordan with importers, retailers, distributors, hotels and restaurants, and meat processors. USAPEEC also holds consumer seminars where women are trained and educated about using U.S. chicken.

USAPEEC coordinated a public relations campaign in Ye-
men, placing recipes and stories in influential women’s magazines. “We used a nutritionist to develop recipes for the country’s flavor preferences,” says Geck. “We have in-country consultants so the seminars are given by someone who is part of the culture and speaks the language.”

USAPEEC’s goals in Yemen and Jordan include increasing the number of U.S. chicken importers, as Brazilian chicken has a strong presence in the Middle East.

“In 2009, there were no U.S. chicken importers. Now there are four Yemeni companies,” says Geck. “We increased in Jordan the total number of importers and convinced a major meat processor to switch from Brazilian to U.S. chicken. It’s all because of ISA funding.”

Overcoming Challenges in Japan, India and Peru

Success also is seen in other parts of the world. ISA supports a USAPEEC staff veterinarian in Japan, who has made big strides toward solving problems. “Formerly, when there was a low pathogenic avian influenza detection in a U.S. state, Japan would impose a ban on all U.S. poultry imports. Thanks to the veterinarian working with Japanese animal health officials, Japan now restricts only poultry from the affected state,” Geck says.

In India, which has prohibitively high import tariffs but huge market potential, USAPEEC is partnering with the country’s poultry industry.

“We’re working to show them that we don’t want to put them out of business. We want to work together to grow poultry consumption,” says Greg Tyler, USAPEEC vice president of marketing. “India’s poultry industry isn’t large enough to meet the country’s needs, and the fast food industry is growing so rapidly that demand will continue to skyrocket. India will need imports.”

Culture is the challenge in Peru. “To Peruvians, ‘fresh chicken’ means they choose a live chicken at an open-air market and have it slaughtered. In their culture, fresh chicken isn’t frozen,” says Geck. “We’ve been doing retail campaigns in Peruvian supermarkets. We hire a chef to prepare different recipes that are cultural favorites, and we offer samples so consumers can taste that frozen chicken tastes the same as fresh.”

Funding Multi-Year Campaign in Mexico

ISA helps fund a multi-faceted marketing campaign in Mexico to increase per capita consumption of pork in that country, according to Chad Russell, USMEF’s Mexico regional director. “We are using local and national television advertising, print ads in popular women’s magazines, bus and subway ads, and point-of-sale materials in 500 supermarkets,” he says.

The campaign targets mothers between 25 and 45, primarily in Mexico City, Monterrey and Guadalajara. “We did focus group testing with Mexican consumers to make sure we had the right messages,” Russell notes. “We focus on the flavor and pleasure of eating pork.”

Before launching the campaign in July 2011, USMEF did a baseline survey. A follow-up survey in July 2012 evaluated one-year results:

• The amount of pork purchased increased 30 percent – from 2.6 pounds to 3.4 pounds per purchase.
• The percent of respondents who consumed pork in the last month increased – from 52 percent to 76 percent.
• The number of people who consumed pork at home increased four percent.
• The number of consumers who mentioned the nutritional benefits of pork increased – from 34 percent to 65 percent.
• The percent of people who spontaneously associated pork with “good taste” doubled – from 38 percent to 76 percent.

“Mexican consumers have a much more favorable view of pork compared to a year ago,” says Russell. “Per capita consumption is increasing, along with imports of U.S. pork. From January through August 2012, U.S. pork exports to Mexico were up 14 percent compared to 2011.”

Russell doesn’t think Mexico’s domestic pork production can expand to fill the demand. “They have small farmland parcels that don’t lend themselves to large livestock operations. They also have issues with adequate water supplies, and the climate is more arid,” he says.

ISA’s Niekamp agrees. He traveled to Mexico as part of an ISA trade mission earlier this year. “Mexico is limited by land and climate, and they can’t easily grow great volumes of soybeans and corn. So in cases where Mexican farmers have land available to expand their livestock operations, feeding those animals becomes another potential market for U.S. soybeans,” he says.

Both Russell and Niekamp believe the situation in Mexico is ideal for marketing more U.S. pork. “Per capita meat consumption is still very low, but increasing every year. About 38 percent of the pork consumed in Mexico comes from the U.S.,” says Niekamp. “Mexican consumers also enjoy the cuts of meat that aren’t as highly valued by U.S. consumers.”

“We are confident the U.S. can capture the lion’s share of an expanding market,” adds Russell.
The 2012 drought dried up much of the feed supply for the Illinois livestock industry, and the economic ripple effect from the subsequent higher prices will be felt throughout the state. Livestock and poultry provide significant income, jobs and tax revenue in Illinois.

Animal agriculture powers local economies, as can be seen here with statistics from a University of Illinois study commissioned by the Illinois Livestock Development Group (ILDG). ILDG receives funding from the Illinois soybean checkoff. More than 30,000 livestock farms and a couple hundred processing companies employ 99,000 people, accounting for $1 out of every $20, or five percent, of the state’s economy.

“Despite the challenges caused by the drought, there continues to be room for growth in the local animal agriculture industry,” says John Hagenbuch, soybean farmer from Utica, Ill., and ISA vice chair for animal agriculture. “Global demand for meat and poultry products continues to increase. Strong in-state demand and access to export markets means Illinois can take advantage of that growth potential.”

Livestock Sales by County

Clinton County leads Illinois in animal agriculture output and hog production.

Direct sales: $1.23 million
Jobs: 1,089
Taxes: $13 million

PORK
Western Illinois is home to a significant amount of pork production.

DAIRY
In Stephenson County, dairy production generates:
Dairy sales: $43 million
Jobs: 577
Taxes: $2.5 million

The nearly 100 meat processing plants in Cook County ensure a nearby market and Illinois jobs. And only 25 percent of their supply is raised in Illinois.

BEEF
DeKalb County leads the state in beef production.
Beef sales: $24 million
Taxes: $1.9 million

Jasper County residents depend on animal agriculture for 9.9 percent of their personal income.
Direct sales: $32 million
Jobs: 232
Taxes: $2.8 million

Illinois farmers will have to wait a little longer for new favorable transportation legislation. While Iowa, Wisconsin and other neighboring states have taken advantage of agricultural exemptions in the new federal transportation bill extension called Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), the Illinois state government is more discriminating, and plans to open up a public comment period before implementation.

The exemptions in MAP-21, which were federally authorized to take effect in October, must still have state approval for implementation. They include:

- During planting and harvest times, drivers transporting ag commodities within 150 air miles from the source, or farm supplies within 150 air miles from a distribution point, are exempt from hours-of-service requirements. The previous exemption only allowed for 100 air miles.
- Covered farm vehicles are exempt from the following federal motor carrier safety regulations: commercial driver’s license (CDL) standards, controlled substance testing, physical examinations, hours of service and inspection/repair/maintenance regulations.

**MAP-21 exemptions would have helped Ed Beaupre, who was recently fined for not having a CDL while driving his single-axle straight truck. He was pulled over at an Illinois State Police checkpoint near his local grain elevator.**

MAP-21 exemptions would have helped Ed Beaupre, who was recently fined for not having a CDL while driving his single-axle straight truck. He farms on the eastern border of Kankakee and Iroquois counties, and was pulled over at an Illinois State Police checkpoint near his local grain elevator.

“I watched semi-trailer trucks whizzing past, while farmers were targeted for all sorts of violations,” says Beaupre. “I also was fined for being over the weight limit. I don’t have a scale on my 1973 truck and unfortunately have to eyeball it. I realize I was in the wrong, but it’s frustrating when we’re trying to do the right thing.”

Several neighboring states’ governors signed proclamations that for a limited time during harvest, farmers may load an extra 10 to 12 percent.

“We’re trying to figure out how to increase efficiencies and improve infrastructure to compete on a level playing field with other states and to remain competitive in the world marketplace,” says Paul Rasmussen, soybean farmer from Genoa, Ill., and ISA vice chair for transportation. “It is estimated that if we increased from the 80,000-pound limit to 97,000 pounds (assuming additional axles for brake support and safety), that roughly 20 percent more grain would get hauled with the same number of trucks. It would increase efficiency of hauling grain from the field to wherever it is going – a farm, the local elevator or the river.”

Unfortunately for farmers, a new truck weight reform proposal put before the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure last February is stalled. The committee decided to commission a three-year study, which kills the prospect for higher truck weights on interstates until 2015.

ISA stays involved in transportation legislation efforts to ensure the interests of farmers are represented, that farmers continue safe operations, and that the many regulations and changes are understood. “Technology, laws and regulations keep changing,” says Rasmussen, who farms in DeKalb County. “We have to constantly keep up, be aware of what is going on and adjust.”

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**Ed Beaupre does not have a scale on his 1973 truck so he estimates his load weight.**
Higher feed costs are prompting livestock producers to take a closer look at soybean quality and composition. Soybeans with higher protein content can help producers better manage costs. John Hagenbuch, soybean and hog farmer from Utica, Ill., and ISA vice chair for animal agriculture, sees the connections between the sectors every day. He says livestock producers are focusing more on seeking the greatest protein and amino acid content available.

“With a high protein content, excellent digestibility and a favorable balance of essential and non-essential amino acids, it is not surprising soybean meal is considered the gold standard for animal nutrition,” says Hagenbuch. “But if we are not getting the protein our animals need from the soybean meal, we may turn to other, cheaper sources of amino acids to supplement our rations.”

He says Illinois soybean farmers can be part of the solution by simply planting the right varieties. “Choosing soybean varieties with high yield and high protein and oil quality potential can help give livestock producers an easier way to meet their animals’ nutritional needs,” says Hagenbuch. “If we make better seed choices, Illinois soybean farmers can better support livestock producers and help all of American agriculture stay strong.”

"VIPS is a great, unbiased resource for farmers to compare varieties from multiple seed companies at once,” says Dan Farney, soybean farmer from Morton, Ill., and ISA secretary.

Find the Best Quality Varieties

The Illinois soybean checkoff funds university research to identify the best varieties for farmers. The Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS) contains information on hundreds of varieties tested in plots across the state. Data are compiled online (www.vipsoybeans.org) to help farmers choose the best soybean varieties for their needs and their customers. Characteristics tested include yield, protein and oil content, and disease and pest resistance.

“VIPS is a great, unbiased resource for farmers to compare varieties from multiple seed companies at once,” says Dan Farney, soybean farmer from Morton, Ill., and ISA secretary.

Promote Quality to Livestock Producers

ISA is investing checkoff dollars in a current project to establish protein and oil content benchmarks in nearly every county in the state. The goal is to confirm Illinois soybeans provide what customers want and identify how Illinois soybean farmers can exceed expectations.

ISA is testing soybean samples from elevators, crush plants and processors during the winter. The results will be added to the VIPS database and shared with the animal ag industry.

“The information researchers will be able to extract from soybean samples and present via VIPS is an example of how checkoff dollars are leveraging technology that helps American agriculture deliver more value,” says Farney. ◆
SOUTH AMERICA IS TAKING OUR PLACE.

Scary thought, isn’t it? The good news is we can do something about it every time we choose a soybean variety to put into the ground. If we start getting closer to 35 percent protein and 19 percent oil, our beans would be a lot more attractive to domestic livestock producers and foreign markets—and we’d help stop the loss of export share to Brazil and other foreign competitors. It’s time to talk with your seed dealer or Certified Crop Adviser about protein and oil. Then visit VIPsoybeans.org to validate your seed selection and ilsoy.org for more information.
Soybeans Bring Biodiesel and Feed into Strong Economic Mix

Illinois soybean farmers have made a strong investment in the biodiesel industry through checkoff dollars during the last decade. And that investment has paid off.

The most recent state-available data show a record 200 million gallons of biofuels were produced in 2010 and nearly 7,500 Illinois jobs were supported through biodiesel production. Continued profitability of biodiesel ensures demand for soybeans, a market for soybean oil and a ready supply of soybean meal for livestock customers.

“Research conducted through the checkoff shows how these two areas of demand relate to each other across the nation. In fact, biodiesel, according to the research, helped save livestock producers an estimated $4.8 billion between 2004 and 2009,” says Lyle Wessel, soybean farmer from Waterloo, Ill., and ISA vice chair for industrial utilization.

In Iroquois County, the relationship between a local biodiesel plant and a feed mill is an example of how building a market for soybean oil increased the availability of meal for livestock feed. Incobrasa Industries, Ltd., in Gilman, Ill., is the only one of five biodiesel plants in Illinois to produce biodiesel from 100 percent soybean oil, rather than from a mixture of feedstocks.

“Soybean oil produces a biodiesel suitable for all seasons without any filter plugging issues associated with cold weather,” says Kerry Fogarty, quality control manager for Incobrasa.

Incobrasa’s biodiesel plant opened in January 2007, and is the most recent expansion of the company that includes a crush plant, soybean oil refinery and packaging plant.

“Biodiesel is an outlet for the oil from Incobrasa’s crush plant. We cut down on transportation costs since everything happens on-site. We always have a continuous supply of consistent feedstock, which is the best recipe for producing high-quality biodiesel,” says Fogarty.

Incobrasa extracts the oil, which is approximately 20 percent of the bean, to make biodiesel. The remaining protein-rich meal goes to poultry producers, feed mills and livestock producers.

Cissna Park Co-op in Cissna Park, Ill., sells nearly all of its soybeans to Incobrasa, and buys 15 tons of soybean meal a month to grind into feed rations for goats, cows, chickens and pigs. Chuck Schmidt, manager, says the co-op uses the greatest percentage of soybean meal for hog rations, about 400 pounds per ton of feed.

“We can deliver beans to Incobrasa and get the meal as backhaul on the same day,” says Schmidt. “We have a niche clientele of smaller livestock operations within a 45-mile radius, and they are pleased with the availability and price of the feed we deliver.”

Checkoff-funded research shows biodiesel raises demand for soybean oil, which, in turn, lowers the price of soybean meal. Source: United Soybean Board

Photo by Ken Kashian, Illinois Farm Bureau
Being a good neighbor involves more than just knowing what goes on around the corner from your farm. Last fall, Rob Shaffer, soybean farmer from El Paso, Ill., and ISA treasurer, attended a Livingston County Board public information hearing on behalf of producer Patrick Harms. A hog farmer from Saunemin, Ill., Harms was interested in expanding.

“Patrick is a third-generation farmer who needed approval to build two new, 4,500-head wean-to-finish buildings,” says Shaffer. “Before the hearing, I sent a letter to all 30 Livingston County Board members supporting his expansion.”

According to Jim Kaitschuk, executive director of the Illinois Pork Producers Association (IPPA), Harms already has a number of other hog barns in the area.

“The two new barns would be used to finish pigs for another local pork producer. The expansion would help keep both farms moving forward,” says Kaitschuk.

But the request was more complicated than just building barns. The process for construction begins with filing a notice with the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA). The notice triggers a review process that involves the affected county board, which may then request a public information meeting. After a public meeting, the board may submit an advisory recommendation to IDOA, which makes the final decision.

“The Illinois Department of Agriculture does a very good job of refereeing,” says Shaffer, about what can be controversial in some communities. “It also helps when there is farmer support – when ISA, Farm Bureau, the Illinois Livestock Development Group (ILDG) and Illinois Corn Growers Association work to let members know what’s happening.”

**Answer Neighbors’ Questions**

Kaitschuk says paving the way for livestock expansion should begin with openly addressing neighbors’ concerns before, during and after the public hearing. In this case, neighbors had questions about barn design and technology, the construction process, the hog production process, what would happen to the manure and water use.

“Patrick did additional well testing to determine what the draw would be, and he shared that information with the neighbors,” says Kaitschuk. “At the meeting, we also explained the sustainability of manure and how it would be used as fertilizer, how it would be injected at proper rates so there’s no impact on the ground or surface water, and how local grain would be used to feed the hogs.”

Shaffer believes Harms did everything right in requesting his expansion and working with neighbors. “He has never had a manure spill. He planted trees. He is trying to be a good steward and good neighbor,” he says. “The Livingston County Board decided not to make a recommendation, and the Department of Ag approved the expansion.”

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**Here’s Help for Advocating for Animal Ag**

“When it comes to addressing worried neighbors or anti-animal agriculture activists, remember that you have forgotten more about animal agriculture than they know,” says Rob Shaffer, who also serves as ILDG chairman. “Stay calm. Be confident, not combative.”

Shaffer offers valuable lessons he learned during the process:

- When dealing with the media, whether radio or television, boil your message down to a 20-second sound bite.
- Economic development – more jobs, a larger tax base – resonates.
- Activists may not want to hear your side, but you still need to tell it.
- Learn more through the links found at www.ilsoy.org in the animal agriculture section.

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**Patrick Harms (left) held an open house to educate local residents about his pork production operation. Harms talks here with one of the people who came to learn more about barn design and technology.**
Help ISA with 50th Anniversary

ISA directors and staff are seeking help from soybean farmers across the state, as planning for ISA's 50th anniversary in 2014 gets underway. ISA would like to use memories and photos from Illinois farmers that illustrate soybean production history across the state from as far back as possible, as well as memories and photos that show ISA activities during the last 50 years. ISA was created in 1964 as a membership organization to provide legislative representation for the state’s soybean growers. The year-long anniversary recognition will officially kick off at the 2013 Farm Progress Show in Decatur. Please scan high-resolution photos and send them to Angel Flesher, along with any notable memories. Contact Flesher at fleshera@ilsoy.org or call 309-808-3600. You also can lend ISA photos that Flesher can scan and return. Mail information and your return address to ISA at 1605 Commerce Parkway, Bloomington, IL 61704.

2013 Resolution: Join ISA to Get These Benefits

Are you a member of ISA? Just because you pay into the checkoff does not mean you are part of the growing group of Illinois soybean farmers seeking legislative and regulatory representation. As a member of the association, you also will receive the following benefits:
- $100 biodiesel coupon.
- Voucher good for the treatment of 100 units of soybean seed with Optimize or Tag Team LCO to all new and renewing 3-year members.
- Optional soybean weekly update via email.
- Monthly ISA Farmer Leader newsletter.
- Policy representation/advocacy in Springfield and Washington, D.C.
- Meeting and seminar registration discounts.
- AchieveLinks Program – Reward points earned that can be redeemed for such items as vacations, merchandise and once-in-a-lifetime experiences.
- Ford Partner Recognition X-Plan Vehicle Pricing/Recognition Vehicle Plan.
- Chrysler Affiliate Reward Program – Purchase or lease a select new Chrysler, Dodge or Jeep and receive consumer incentives.
- Cabela’s gift cards – Save 10 percent at purchase, redeem at full value.

YOU CAN’T GROW CORN IN WINTER.

But you can gain a competitive advantage with ProPricing® grain contracts.

Talk to your Cargill® Farm Marketer to learn how you can benefit from professional grain trading expertise with Cargill ProPricing contracts.
Access to multiple transportation modes provides Illinois soybean farmers significant advantages for reaching domestic and global markets. The infographic illustrates the magnitude of Illinois’ transportation infrastructure. However, many of these pathways to customers such as U.S. livestock farmers are deteriorating quickly. ISA invests checkoff dollars in research and education to help find ways to protect and improve Illinois roads, bridges, waterways and railways. Learn more from the transportation infrastructure video, www.youtube.com/ilsoybean.
Funded by the Illinois soybean checkoff.

Partner News

IDOA Issues Buy Illinois Challenge

The Illinois Department of Agriculture earlier this year launched a new Buy Illinois Challenge, which encourages every Illinois household to dedicate $10 of their weekly grocery budget to Illinois products. Department officials say that if every household made the pledge, more than $2.4 billion a year would be generated for the state’s economy. Illinois residents can visit www.buyillinoischallenge.com/ to make the pledge. Any Illinois food or agribusiness company that processes, produces, packages, distributes or is headquartered in the state qualifies to use the logo. Retail establishments and restaurants may also use point-of-sale material. For more information about use of the Illinois product logo, visit www.illinoisproductlogo.com/.

FACT: Illinois ranks first among all states with $162 billion in food processing sales. (Source: Dunn & Bradstreet Market Insight, April 2012)

Crop Sciences Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for ISA's crop sciences scholarship are now available. ISA, with funding from the soybean checkoff, will offer up to 10 scholarships worth $4,000 each for the 2013-14 school year. Scholarships will be awarded to students entering their junior year and majoring in crop sciences at Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, University of Illinois and Western Illinois University. The IAA Foundation administers the program. Guidelines, applications and activities templates are available at www.iaafoundation.org. Direct any questions to the program administrator at 309-557-2230 or charms-garman@ilfb.org. Completed applications must be postmarked on or before Feb. 1, 2013.

Beyer Joins ISA as Animal Ag Lead

Leah Schleef Beyer was recently chosen as the new ISA animal ag lead. Beyer works with FLM in its Indianapolis, Ind., office. She is a native of Onarga, Ill., and a graduate of the University of Illinois, with a bachelor's degree in ag economics and a master's degree in ag education.

Following graduate school, Beyer worked as a 4-H youth development educator for Purdue University. Most recently, she formed her own consulting business and mainly worked with the Indiana Soybean Alliance and Indiana Corn Marketing Council on public affairs and stakeholder engagement. Beyer and her family grow corn and soybeans on a farm in south central Indiana. The winner of the 2010 Indiana Farm Bureau discussion meet, Beyer also is a graduate of the Indiana Ag Leadership Program.

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids Marks 25 Years

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Farm Safety 4 Just Kids (FS4JK). The organization has promoted farm safety to more than six million people through local programs and education since 1987. According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, from 1998 to 2009, the rate of all farm youth injuries decreased by 59 percent. The following are a few reminders to help prevent tragic statistics on farms:

- Always lock access doors to grain storage structures.
- Lock out power to all types of grain-handling equipment.
- Always use the buddy system when unloading or loading grain.
- Never permit children to ride in grain wagons or enter grain storage areas.
- Always know where all family members are at all times when grain is being loaded, unloaded, moved or otherwise handled.

Photo submitted by Leah Schleef Beyer

Photo by Ellen Reeder

Harvest may be over, but grain handling safety should be observed throughout the year, according to Farm Safety 4 Just Kids.
Sprout something extra this year!

Cash in on your soybean crop and make the most of every acre. Visit www.SoybeanPremiums.org to find first purchasers, locations and details for programs such as non-GMO contracts and food grade soybeans. Programs are available throughout the United States.

Click on “Find a Premium Program” to see all of the latest opportunities in your area.

Funded by the soybean checkoff.
SOYBEAN CUSTOMERS

As the world’s largest pork producer and processor, Smithfield Foods produces packaged meats for domestic and global markets. Soybeans are an important ingredient in providing optimum nutrition for their animals. Keira Lombardo, vice president of corporate communications, says strong, increased consumer interest in meat production is changing the way companies operate and communicate, with the focus being on transparency.

Sustainably Produced Soybeans Important to Smithfield Foods

What do you do to focus on sustainability?

In the late 1990s when our operation was criticized regarding environmental performance, we saw an opportunity to make significant, necessary changes to help us become an environmental leader. We revamped internal departments and created new positions to oversee environmental practices, policies and procedures. In 2001 we began implementing an environmental management system (EMS) at all of our Murphy-Brown hog production farms, the first U.S. hog farms to go through the process and the world’s first livestock production company to receive EMS certification. With the success, we expanded the program to other areas of the business.

Are your customers voicing concerns about sustainably produced ingredients?

Our customers – retail supermarkets, restaurant chains and foodservice companies – ask about sustainability all the time. Our sow housing, antibiotic use, nutrition and employee engagement programs weren’t even on their radar several years ago. Now these sustainability issues drive daily decisions about every aspect of our business.

Your goal is to provide “Good Food. Responsibly.” What is an ingredient supplier’s role?

Providing “Good Food. Responsibly.” means ensuring every aspect of our production (animal care, community involvement, employees, environment, food safety and quality and value creation) meets certain goals. Our suppliers directly help fulfill these goals by providing sustainable products and services. We recently developed a Supplier Code of Conduct, which provides our suppliers (including vendors, contractors and consultants) with specific, measurable criteria to meet and exceed the sustainability standards our customers demand. It also sets forth specific business conduct requirements for all suppliers who do business with Smithfield Foods.

What does a soybean farmer need to do to be seen as a sustainable food/ingredient supplier?

Balanced animal nutrition, including feed quality and consistency, is fundamental to achieving our animal care goals. Soybean meal is a main component of a balanced ration for optimal health and performance. We hold every load of soybean meal to the standards outlined in the Supplier Code of Conduct. We recently developed a Supplier Code of Conduct, which provides our suppliers (including vendors, contractors and consultants) with specific, measurable criteria to meet and exceed the sustainability standards our customers demand. It also sets forth specific business conduct requirements for all suppliers who do business with Smithfield Foods.

More than 70 percent of Illinois soybean meal used in livestock feed is fed to hogs. A significant number of those hogs are Smithfield’s, so their customers are our customers. It is important we farmers do our part to show our sustainability efforts proactively,” says Don Guinnip, soybean farmer from Marshall, Ill., and ISA second vice chair for sustainability.

Sustainably produced soybeans help Murphy-Brown, the livestock production subsidiary of Smithfield, produce quality pork while protecting the environment and preserving family farms. Pictured here holding soybeans is Don Butler, director of government relations and public affairs at Murphy-Brown.
Simple Farm Tour Leaves Big Impressions

Consumers have questions about food and farming. Illinois farmers can start the conversation by reaching out to their own non-farm neighbors to answer them. Even a small effort like an hour-long farm tour with children can make a difference, leave a lasting impression and build local relationships.

Rob Shaffer, soybean farmer from El Paso, Ill., and ISA treasurer, found that to be the case during harvest last September. Illinois Farm Families sponsored “Meet a Farmer Day” at the Normal Children’s Discovery Museum, and a local family won the prize to visit Shaffer’s farm.

Dave and Emily Owens and sons, William and Timothy, from Downs, Ill., visited Shaffer while he was combining corn near Lake Bloomington. They drove out to the field, and the family took turns riding in the cab of the combine. The young boys were very excited about a chance to ride in the combine.

The parents were just as eager to talk with Shaffer and introduce their sons to the basics of farming. Farm families may take simple pleasures for granted, but even a pile of corn or soybeans spilled onto the field can become a fun play area for children, as the Owens family quickly learned.

The Owens family left the visit with soybean books and other items that are both fun and educational. Like Shaffer, any soybean farmer can share day-to-day activities and find common ground with neighbors. And hopefully, those neighbors will share their positive experience with other consumers.

Farm tours can be very simple, and still valuable in answering consumer questions. “Meet a Farmer Day” at the museum, funded in part by the Illinois soybean checkoff, gave families a chance to meet and talk with central Illinois farmers. The event allowed families to learn about local soybean ties to food and animal agriculture, and let rural and city neighbors discuss questions about food and farming.

Photos by Amy Roady
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