FIELD DAYS COMING: AUGUST 4-6
Register at ILSoy.org/FieldDays

Know Your Nutrient Management Options

Discover Livestock's Economic Benefits

Tell Consumers Your Farm Story
The Time for Action is Now

While farmers still enjoy a great deal of trust and good will among the general public, they must continue implementing conservation practices and sharing their proactive approach to maintain that trust. Learn what the Illinois Soybean Association is doing to facilitate that discussion.

Follow This Grower’s Guide to Cover Crops

An increasing number of Illinois farmers will find they are not only purchasing soybean and corn seed for the next crop season, but also annual rye grass and radish seed. Cover crop specialists provide several considerations farmers should keep in mind for 2016.

ISA Helps Showcase U.S. Ag for International Pork Industry

ISA helped representatives of the international pork community learn about the efficiencies of Midwest agriculture as a major sponsor for an industry tour organized by the National Pork Producers Council for 2015 World Pork Expo attendees. Get a glimpse of what they saw.

Chicago Meat Company Adds Value, Delivers Quality

Illinois boasts a robust meat processing industry that adds value to livestock and poultry produced in the Midwest — top consumers of Illinois soybean meal. Read about one of the processing companies that successfully continues that tradition in the Windy City.

Does Conservation Affect Farmland Rent Negotiations?

It is never too early to consider new or updated on-farm management practices for the next season. But how do those decisions, especially conservation decisions, affect farmland rent negotiations? Illinois Field & Bean addresses both landowner’s and tenant’s questions.
Healthy Livestock Industry, Healthy Meal Market

Illinois soybean farmers may question why the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) invests checkoff dollars in the state’s animal ag industry. The answer is simple. A healthy livestock industry translates into healthy markets for soybean meal. Livestock and poultry farmers are our top customers. Raising and processing meat and dairy is an economic engine for Illinois.

Animal agriculture generates rural income, jobs and strong local tax bases, which benefit local economies, local roads and education. The industry has a $25.4 billion total impact on the state’s economy, and creates an additional $80 for every $100 invested. Animal agriculture employs more than 52,000 people in Illinois, and potential growth opportunities are ongoing.

Most Illinois soybeans are processed and fed as soybean meal. Roughly half of our state’s soybeans are crushed locally to feed U.S. livestock and poultry. Hogs are the largest consumer and eat 85 percent of the meal. The rest helps feed the domestic poultry and cattle industries and is shipped to feed animals around the world. The other half of the state’s soybean crop is exported as whole beans and crushed overseas, where the meal feeds more hogs and poultry.

Because of the relationship between animal agriculture and soybeans, ISA invests checkoff funds in expanding U.S. pork and poultry exports through participation in groups like the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) and the U.S.A. Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC).

Worldwide demand for meat and dairy products continues to expand, especially among developing countries. Illinois animal agriculture is able to capture some of that additional value with efficient access to export markets through our infrastructure of waterways, rail and roads.

You can read more about our efforts to support animal agriculture in this issue of Illinois Field & Bean, including our efforts to help raise awareness of the value of U.S. pork consumption in Mexico. You also can learn about our work at the end of the food production chain, where we help consumers understand livestock and poultry production. Presenting an accurate portrayal of agriculture with consumers is critical to our long-term success in meeting demand.

BILL RABEN
ISA Chairman

Checkoff FACT:
Soybean Farmers Support Livestock Farmer Needs

In addition to promoting animal agriculture, checkoff dollars are invested in providing technical expertise to pork producers in the areas of manure management and environmental protection. ISA also advocates for growth of the Illinois livestock industry as part of the Illinois Livestock Development Group (ILDG). ISA representatives speak in support of new production barns at hearings and share the benefits of animal ag with communities.
You’ve probably heard numerous speakers and industry experts advise farmers and ranchers to “You Tube-proof” their operations. The essence of the suggestion is to always work as though a consumer is watching over your shoulder. This doesn’t mean avoiding practices that could look questionable to untrained or unfamiliar eyes, but rather to be beyond reproach and avoid giving anyone any room to doubt your commitment to high standards of agriculture.

I want to urge you to take it a step further and apply this advice any time you write or talk about your farm, whether you’re chatting at your county fair or posting to your Facebook page.

Too often, we forget consumers generally have little to no knowledge about agriculture and food production. We are armed with statistics and citations, when we should be starting with a personal story about how much we care about our animals, employees and farm. And use simple explanations. I am guilty of relying on industry jargon, as I catch myself talking about “protein groups” or “commodity organizations” that likely have little meaning to the average consumer.

When producing content for our website or social media, I am continually reminding myself of what is important to communicate — that the agriculture community is made up of hardworking, dedicated farm families who are committed to caring for their land and livestock. We can’t lose that message in the weeds of data and details.

We also need to be mindful that nothing is really off the record in our digital world. Even if we’re just speaking with friends or tweeting from our personal Twitter accounts, anything we say can be repeated and potentially twisted, whether due to a lack of understanding or as an intentional goal of maligning modern agriculture. Before you share stories, frustrations or jokes that could be distorted to represent a lack of respect for agriculture or consumer concerns, take a step back. Could your words give someone a reason to question your values?

Whether the topic is animal care or GMOs, farmers are under a microscope. The choices we make about how to feed, raise and process livestock are being closely scrutinized, not just by animal rights activists as they produce campaigns designed to confuse the public, but also by casual consumers as they decide among products bearing a plethora of labels at the grocery store.

My advice is to recognize and embrace the microscope as an opportunity to always put your best foot forward and represent your industry well. If we want to build and maintain credibility among consumers as individuals who deeply care about our farms, we must constantly be beyond reproach in our actions or words.

You are constantly representing your industry even when you aren’t agvocating. Talking with you or reading your social media posts may be the only interaction someone has with a farmer, so make every conversation a positive one — and one you’d be proud to post on YouTube. ■

Hannah Thompson is communications director for the Animal Agriculture Alliance, an industry-united, nonprofit organization that helps bridge the communication gap between farm and fork. Learn more at www.animalagalliance.org.
GOING TO THE FARM PROGRESS SHOW? WE’LL BE THERE.

SEPTEMBER 1ST-3RD

SEE WHY SOYBEANS MATTER:

DAILY BREAKFAST
8 — 10 A.M.

DAILY ISG MEMBERS’ LUNCH (SPECIAL THANKS TO PIONEER, BASF & ASGROW)
11 A.M. — 1 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
1:30 — 2:30 p.m.

DOUBLE-CROP DEMO SITE: NEW FOR 2015!
ISA, Syngenta, Growmark and Lima Grain have teamed up to develop a wheat-soybean double-crop demonstration site. Visit lot 2141, Southwest Quadrant to see the latest innovations on maximizing yields & profits with double-crop soybeans.

Stop into our air-conditioned tent, get out of the heat and try your hand at our games to win prizes. Learn why your soybean checkoff and membership dollars matter—we’ll see you in Decatur!
The Time for Action is Now

...While the Public Still Trusts Us

> BY PAUL QUECK

Release of the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS) this summer shines a light on a sensitive subject — the impact of farming on the environment. The NLRS will focus on reducing nitrogen and phosphorus nutrient runoff from cropland and nonpoint sources into Illinois waters.

But what if most farmers were to ignore the call to reduce crop nutrient runoff?

Farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed know the cost of public outcry. While livestock play a big role, the most publicized crop-associated runoff in the United States began showing up in the Chesapeake Bay in the 1980s. Nitrogen and phosphorus runoff came from a host of causes, including non-ag sources and cropland, then created dead zones, algae blooms and other problems.

After years of expensive programs that didn’t meet cleanup goals, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) took over jurisdiction. And in 2010 it established total maximum daily load limits (TMDL) on runoff. In 2011, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and several ag trade groups sued EPA, challenging its jurisdiction in setting TMDLs.

A judge dismissed the suit in 2013, however AFBF appealed. In February 2014, attorneys general from 21 states, including more than a dozen in the Mississippi River watershed, filed an amicus brief in support of the AFBF challenge.

A major concern was that if the EPA could take over jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed — including the agriculturally rich Delmarva Peninsula — it also could do so in the northern Gulf of Mexico, with its large hypoxia dead zone fed by nutrients from the Mississippi River watershed.

CONSUMERS HAVE FAITH IN FARMERS

You might think that with all the publicity over the Chesapeake Bay and Gulf of Mexico, the public would have a fairly low opinion of farming’s impact on the environment.

Actually, polls show a favorable public view of farmers. A 2001 national survey found 54 percent disagreeing with the statement “farming is a major source of pollution in our nation today.” The survey further found participants largely undecided when confronted with statements about environmental damage by farming. Some 45 percent marked undecided on whether “present farming methods are polluting our water supplies,” while just 34 percent agreed and 21 percent disagreed. The survey was conducted by Ronald Wimberley, sociologist at North Carolina State University, in collaboration with researchers from 12 other universities.

Since the survey, the Chesapeake Bay and Northern Gulf of Mexico hypoxia problems have remained issues, and phosphorus runoff from cropland was implicated in toxic algae blooms in Lake Erie. Yet, a 2014 U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance survey found “environmental impact of farming and ranching” in the discussion of only 43 percent of Consumer Food Connectors — consumers who are considered most concerned about food issues.

FARMERS MUST WORK TO MAINTAIN TRUST

The bottom-line message of such polls is that farmers still enjoy a great deal of trust and good will among the general public. “It’s a valuable asset,” says David Droste, Nashville, Ill., soybean farmer and Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) director. “The challenge is to keep that trust.”

A good first step, adds Droste, is for farmers to continue implementing conservation practices. While reducing erosion and phosphorus loss are key for southern Illinois farmers, all Illinois farmers can take additional steps to improve nitrogen management. “Most of us can reduce nitrogen use and loss by applying it as the crop needs it,” he says.

Several ISA directors, including Carrie Winkelmann (right), met with farmers from the Delmarva Peninsula earlier this year to discuss their actions to improve nitrogen management in the Chesapeake watershed.
Droste encourages farmers to get involved in programs, such as the “Keep It for the Crop” 4R program offered by the Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (C-BMP). The 4Rs stand for right source, right rate, right time and right place. C-BMP is a coalition of agribusiness and Illinois agricultural organizations, including ISA.

Don Guinnip speaks with a sense of urgency about getting farmers to adopt better nitrogen and phosphorus management to reduce crop nutrient runoff. “We need to get out front in this issue and not end up as the farmers in the Chesapeake watershed did,” he says.

Guinnip, a Marshall, Ill., soybean farmer and ISA director, visited the Delmarva Peninsula in the Chesapeake watershed in April with several other Illinois soybean farmers. “Chesapeake Bay, the Lake Erie algae bloom and hypoxia in the Gulf should serve as a warning to us,” he says.

“We do not want to wait for legislative or regulatory action. We have the resources available in Illinois to be successful — with four ag colleges, C-BMP, Illinois Nutrient Research & Education Council (NREC) and N-W ATCH — to track Illinois soil nitrate levels. We also have a large group of professional certified crop advisers,” says Guinnip. “We can manage this on a voluntary manner, but only if we get determined buy-in from all Illinois producers.”

**TAKING ACTIONS ONE STEP FURTHER**

Success depends not only on farmers doing their part — but also on communicating their commitment and progress to environmental groups, policymakers and the general public.

On the national front, Nick Goeser, director of Soil Health Partnership, says the organization is working toward common goals with diverse organizations, including commodity groups, industry, foundations, federal agencies, universities and well-known environmental groups.

One of those groups, The Nature Conservancy, is a technical advisor for the partnership. “The group encourages sound soil practices and quantifies results from farmers taking positive actions. Improved crop productivity, environmental gains and economic growth all are benefits of progressive soil management strategies,” says Goeser.

“In terms of perception, the public is asking for more information,” he adds. “It’s our job to work together to engage and educate our farmers and non-agricultural public.”

As for consumers and the general public, ISA works with various organizations and the media to communicate farmer concern and action, says Amy Roady, ISA communications director, who also leads the association’s sustainability programs.

“Direct communication between farmers and the public can be very effective,” says Roady. “During a May Illinois Farm Families tour, Nick Saathoff, a corn and soybean farmer from Manteno, Ill., talked with urban moms about why he uses cover crops. He explained how cover crops help reduce erosion and nutrient runoff from his farm. Sean Arians with Precision Planting showed the moms how technology such as GPS can help farmers manage the amount of nutrients they use keep nutrients where they belong and track where they place fertilizer.”

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**ISA Shares Conservation Information**

ISA is committed to sharing information with people who care about the environment, and invests checkoff dollars in various programs to do so. “We work with various NGOs (non-governmental organizations), we reach out to media, and we bridge the information gap between farmers and consumers,” says Amy Roady, ISA communications director.
Yield, Composition, Profitability

BY MEGAN KELBEL

With the growing season well underway, Illinois soybean farmers can begin looking ahead to the next steps for 2015 fall and 2016 crops. An increasing number of Illinois farmers will find they are not only purchasing soybean and corn seed, but also annual ryegrass and radish seed.

According to 2013-14 survey data from the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC), adoption of cover crops has been on a steady rise since 2009. During that time, acreage has increased by 30 percent per year as farmers see firsthand cover crop benefits.

For Kevin Marshall, a fifth generation farmer from DeKalb, Ill., and owner of AgriFlite West, the trend makes perfect sense. “I first started with cover crops three years ago, “ he says. “In that time, I’ve seen the difference cover crops make on my soil and on my input costs. It is amazing to watch that progress.”

So how do you get started? Cover crop specialists say keep these considerations in mind: location, objective and planting.

LOCATION

Location dictates which species you are able to grow and how early you have to plant, according to Shalamar Armstrong, Ph. D., assistant professor of soil science and agronomy with Illinois State University. “Farmers planting cover crops should aim to have seed planted 60 days before the first frost, usually about September 15, to have a good stand,” he says. “This is where location is significant. Growers in southern Illinois can plant a little later, but those in northern Illinois have a shorter window, especially if their chosen cover crop will winterkill.”

It also is important to purchase seed made for the given region, says Dick Lyons, cover crop specialist with the Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (C-BMP). “There are multiple varieties for each cover crop,” he says. “The cereal rye grown in southern Illinois is much different than that grown in northern Illinois, so be sure to work with a trusted dealer and purchase seed early so you aren’t left with a less-than-perfect variety.”

Farmers also can use the Midwest Cover Crop Council’s online decision tool to determine the best cover crop for their region. By entering your location, cash crop and cover crop goals at www.mccc.msuiuc.edu/selectorintro.html, farmers can find a list of cover crops fit for their farms.

OBJECTIVE

Each cover crop has its own distinct function, just like the tools in a tool box. The species you select largely will be determined by the needs on your operation.

First time with cover crops. Lyons recommends farmers plant a species that will winterkill, such as radishes and oats. “These cover crops work well together and they both terminate over winter,” he says. “It’s best to start simple and build off that foundation.”

Keep nitrogen in the soil. Armstrong says radishes and cereal rye are top picks to sequester and scavenge nitrogen. “In my research over a three-year period, I’ve found these crops offer the best return from fall-applied nitrogen, with radishes returning 60 percent of the fall application and cereal rye returning 40 percent, 42 days after cereal rye...
Funded by the ILLINOIS SOYBEAN CHECKOFF

PLANTING
Just as with a soybean crop, farmers won’t have a strong cover crop stand unless they are proactive and approach planting with a plan.

Aerial seeding. Aerial seeding allows farmers to seed into a standing cash crop, making this a great option for farmers in northern regions who want to make the most of their limited time before winter, says Marshall. “I farm and aerial seed in DeKalb County, so aerial applications are the best fit for me,” he says. “They allow for uniform planting. No wheels on the ground means you don’t run the risk of adding to compacted soils.”

Interseeding. Interseeding is another option allowing farmers to establish cover crops early. This technique plants a cover crop into the established main crop. “Equipment manufacturers are adapting high-clearance sprayers to plant cover crops, allowing for easier and more direct application,” says Lyons. “Others are working on equipment to allow interseeding as early as V5-V7 corn stages.”

Drilling. Drilling entails planting cover crops after harvest and provides the best soil-to-seed contact. “A drill is used the day of or right after harvest, so this is best suited for farmers who have acreage in an early maturing crop,” says Armstrong.

Combining different species of cover crops can help farmers take advantage of complementary benefits.

SOY CCA ENVOYS OFFER PRODUCTION INSIGHTS
ISA is supporting a new effort this summer: Soy CCA Envoys who are a team of Illinois certified crop advisers (CCAs) dedicated to providing timely crop updates and recommendations on ILSoyAdvisor.com. Their insights are provided on ILSoyAdvisor.com. Here’s a sampling:

JEFF KEIFER > DEKALB COUNTY
PLANTING CONDITIONS:
We pushed planting dates, with some farmers planting the last week of April. Others, due to weather, planted in mid-May. Emergence has been fantastic.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JULY:
We were hit by hail and winds in early June, so there could be some damaged plants. I recommend fungicides if this wet, humid weather continues.

[Map of Illinois districts]

MIKE WILSON > WABASH COUNTY
PLANTING CONDITIONS:
From wet soil conditions to wide swings in daily temperatures, we had an interesting set of challenges; even so, we’ve gotten a great start to the crop.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JULY:
Scout for marestail. It has a large root system and is almost impossible to kill completely. Look for waterhemp. It can emerge even after canopy.

Learn More about Cover Crops
Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (C-BMP), with in-kind support from ISA and other commodity groups, will host a cover crops informational meeting, Aug. 27 in Oneida, Ill. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff with the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and local farmers will address cover crop planning and management, financial considerations and incentives and the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. To RSVP, email Kara Downin at Downin@il.nacdnet.net.
A new era of weed control is here

The Enlist™ Weed Control System is an advanced herbicide and trait system that delivers exceptional weed control.

Andy Asbury, an Enlist field specialist with Dow AgroSciences, offers a closer look at the system: Enlist traits, Enlist Duo™ herbicide with Colex-D™ Technology and the Enlist™ Ahead management resource.

Enlist traits in elite soybean varieties

Enlist traits give soybeans tolerance to Enlist Duo herbicide, a proprietary blend of new 2,4-D choline and glyphosate. In addition, Enlist soybeans and Enlist E3™ soybeans offer more weed control options in one convenient system, including tolerance to glufosinate herbicides.

In future seasons, Enlist soybeans will be available in elite varieties from Mycogen Seeds. As always, yield performance remains the primary focus for all new products. Dow AgroSciences has many years of yield data showing no yield penalty associated with Enlist™ traits.

Proven performance of Enlist Duo herbicide

The two modes of action in Enlist Duo work within a program approach to deliver season-long weed control and help prevent weed resistance. Growers can maximize yields by eliminating nutrient-robbing weeds from their fields.

The innovations introduced with Colex-D™ Technology help growers and applicators address challenges beyond controlling tough weeds. This powerful new herbicide offers four key benefits – ultra-low volatility, minimized potential for physical drift, low odor and improved handling characteristics.

The drift reduction from Colex-D Technology combines with low-drift nozzles to cut drift by as much as 90 percent compared with a tank mix of traditional 2,4-D and glyphosate. In addition, near-zero volatility — up to 96 percent less than traditional 2,4-D — helps keep Enlist Duo™ in place to improve control.

Enlist Aheads helps manage and prevent resistance

The system also includes Enlist Ahead, a benefits-based management resource to help growers and applicators get the best results from the Enlist system — today and in the future.

“Ultimately, the Enlist system is going to offer growers peace of mind and a great weed management package to maximize yield potential,” says Asbury.

Brought to you by:

**Mycogen Seeds**

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YOU WERE MEANT FOR THIS.

When all the planting, feeding and protecting grow into more than just your yield. More than a job well done — it’s a realization. That this is what you were meant to do. We’re with you. It’s what Mycogen Seeds is all about. A shared passion for the life of your land. For the life that you love.

Visit Acres of Possibility.com to maximize the potential of your corn and soybeans.
ISA HELPS SHOWCASE U.S. AG FOR INTERNATIONAL PORK INDUSTRY

Visitors from China, the Philippines, Romania and even the United States got an up-close look at the many facets of U.S. agriculture June 1-2, 2015. ISA helped representatives of the international pork community learn about the efficiencies of Midwest agriculture as a major sponsor for an industry tour organized by the National Pork Producers Council for 2015 World Pork Expo attendees.

The visit touched all of ISA’s funded target areas: animal agriculture, transportation, yield, quality and profitability and freedom to operate.

TRANSPORTATION

ISA hosted a barge tour on the Mississippi River near Andalusia, Ill., and Buffalo, Iowa. John Longley, farmer from Aledo, Ill., and ISA director, along with Scott Sigman, ISA transportation lead, explained the importance of river transportation for getting Illinois soybeans and soybean meal to customers around the world.

FREEDOM TO OPERATE

Although no photos were allowed, participants saw an anaerobic digester that converts manure and other organic waste to electricity, fertilizer and cattle bedding, highlighting livestock and crop production sustainability. BioTown Ag near Reynolds, Ind., produces 120 megawatt hours of electricity daily.

YIELD, QUALITY & PROFITABILITY

Cargill Pork showed visitors this standard wean-to-finish hog barn near Dallas Center, Iowa. They explained common barn technology and contract opportunities that allow efficient pork production.

The Waukee, Iowa, HyVee displayed finished U.S. meat products as they are delivered to consumers.

This Co-Alliance feed mill in Reynolds, Ind., uses about 50 tons of soybean meal and 15,000 bushels of corn daily to produce 700 tons of hog feed. The facility started production in early May, and will increase to near full capacity within a few months.

The Pig Adventure at Fair Oaks Farms in Indiana includes interactive educational activities like this farm overview touchscreen, as well as farrowing, gestation and growing barns. The Dairy Adventure features a carousel-style milking parlor and calf hutch. Tour participants agreed that Fair Oaks Farms presents a great model to follow in their countries for educating consumers about today’s agriculture.

ISA Director John Longley (left), Aledo, Ill., discussed his farm, soybean yields and soybean meal prices with tour participants during the barge tour, shortly after a visit to John Deere Harvester Works and the John Deere Pavilion in Moline, Ill.
Chicago Meat Company Adds Value, Delivers Quality

Although the Chicago Stockyards are no longer a destination for livestock, the legacy of meat production in the Windy City continues through processors like Chicago Meat Authority. And just as feeding hogs, cattle and poultry adds value to Illinois soybeans, Chicago Meat Authority adds value to meat and poultry.

“We carry the proud legacy of the Chicago Stockyards that helped make the city what it is today,” says Chicago Meat Authority President Jordan Dorfman. “We provide quality meat to customers, adding value by delivering customer-centric products.”

WHAT DOES CHICAGO MEAT AUTHORITY PRODUCE?
For 25 years, we’ve been serving two types of customers. We sell beef, pork and chicken as an ingredient to further processors like beef jerky, corned beef and deli processors. We also sell portion meat products to the hotel, restaurant and institution sector. Our meat ends up in name-brand jerky and deli products and national restaurant chains.

WHERE DOES THE MEAT COME FROM?
Since meat is no longer harvested in Chicago, we buy selected cuts from harvesting and packing plants across the Midwest, including Illinois. We purchase truckloads of cuts like loins and ribs, and further cut them to customer specifications at our Chicago plant.

HOW DOES CHICAGO MEAT AUTHORITY DEFINE QUALITY?
The single most important factor is providing the safest, highest-quality food we can. We realize that starts with farmers raising healthy animals to harvest. We purchase cuts from animals raised for meat, rather than breeding. We evaluate products on four criteria: condition, cut, consistency of offering and quality of eating experience.

WHAT VALUE DOES CHICAGO MEAT AUTHORITY ADD?
We deliver consistent quality. We partner with customers to understand what they need, and fulfill those requests on time. We go beyond selling a commodity and our long-term customer relationships reflect the value in that philosophy. Plus, we employ nearly 400 well-trained people who embody our commitment to customers.

Illinois boasts a robust meat processing industry that adds value to livestock and poultry produced in the Midwest — top consumers of Illinois soybean meal. Part of the quality Dorfman describes starts with consistent, high-quality feed like high-protein soybean meal. In turn, such processors are a critical link in the supply chain. Turning meat into portions and products that are manageable for specific needs multiplies the economic contribution agriculture makes to the Illinois economy. Here is Dorfman’s perspective:

Illinois Field & Bean | JULY 2015

Checkoff FACT:
Animal Ag is Illinois Economic Engine
According to university research funded in part by the Illinois soybean checkoff, the animal ag industry accounts for $1 out of every $20 of the state’s economy. Illinois is home to more than 30,000 livestock farms and a couple hundred processing companies like Chicago Meat Authority that cumulatively employ nearly 100,000 people.
Moms Think Differently About GMOs

Illinois Farm Families asked 37 Chicago-area moms how they felt about GMOs and biotechnology before and after a biotechnology-focused farm tour and trip to the Monsanto Research Center.

### Human Safety of GMO Seeds and Crops

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### Farmers’ use of GMO Seeds

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Moms’ knowledge about

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Moms still have questions about:

- European Standards
- Safety
- Herbicides
- Pesticides
- Labeling
- Environment
- What’s Next?

Knowledge and concern calculated using “somewhat” and “very” scale options in surveys. Data based on number of moms taking pre- and post-event surveys. Participation numbers may vary.

IFF coalition members include:

TRUE or FALSE?

Does Conservation Affect Farmland Rent Negotiations?

It is never too early to consider new or updated on-farm management practices for the next season. But how do those decisions, especially conservation decisions, affect farmland rent negotiations? Here are some busted myths to address both landowner’s and tenant’s questions.

**THE TENANT MUST ASSUME THE COST OF CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS TO FARMLAND.**

*FALSE:* Conservation improvements, such as installing tile and building waterways, typically are the responsibility of the landowner, according to Gary Schnitkey, PhD., University of Illinois professor and farm management specialist. The tenant can help by securing government cost-shares and providing labor when improvements are made, followed by ongoing maintenance.

*A alternative approach has worked for Ross Pauli, who farms about 700 acres in north-central Illinois owned by 15 landowners. Over time, Pauli has introduced a number of sustainable production practices, including cover crop use. He believes helping landowners manage the perceived risk of new practices is critical. “For the first year, I cover all the expenses, taking the risk off landowners,” he says. “I tell them, ‘You don’t need to worry about the risk, you can just reap the benefits of improved soil health.’”*

**CASH RENTS FOR ILLINOIS FARMLAND HAVE BEEN COMING DOWN.**

*FALSE:* While some analysts expect a correlation between lower commodity prices and Illinois farmland prices and cash rents, that is not yet evident. Cash rents increased dramatically from $132 in 2006 to $234 per acre in 2014, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Rental values remain relatively steady today, even though prices for corn, soybeans and wheat declined in 2013 before taking a hard fall last year, Schnitkey says. “We haven’t seen cash rents come down. How much lower they’ll be, we don’t know,” he says. He expects them to level off and decline the next two years, but the extent is hard to predict. He forecasts land values will be stable to down two or three percent. USDA’s National Agriculture Statistics Service valued Illinois farmland at $7,520 per acre in 2014, up 5.9 percent from 2013. Average land values ranged from as low as $5,300 per acre in the state’s southern tip to as high as $9,300 per acre in the adjacent region to the west along the Mississippi River, according to the Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

**TENANTS CAN ACCESS SOLID DATA TO SUPPORT 2016 RENT NEGOTIATIONS.**

*TRUE:* These questions and tips to help tenants and landlords determine farmland rents were published this spring by Michigan State University Extension educators:

1. **Nutrient content of soil** – do you have a recent soil test?
2. **Crop productive index** – USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey tells how productive the soil is compared to other soil types.
3. **Cropping history** – what has been planted on the field during the last 10 years? What are the base acres and yields as reported to USDA’s Farm Service Agency?
4. **Herbicide application history** – this can affect future crop rotation.
5. **Drainage tile** – is it in good working condition? What spacing? What type? When was it installed? Do you have a map of the lines and outlets?
6. **Access/obstructions** – are there telephone poles, stone piles, narrow drives, buildings, or is it near school, fences, on busy roads or rural areas?
7. **Proximity to wildlife cover** – do you have potential deer or other wildlife damage?

For more information, visit www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c2-20.html and msue.anr.msu.edu/news/tips_for_negotiating_farmland_rent.
SOMETIMES OPPORTUNITY LOOKS YOU RIGHT IN THE FACE.

LIVESTOCK CAN PROVIDE ILLINOIS GRAIN FARMERS WITH SEVERAL DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- Bring family members back to the farm.
- Spread your risk.
- Reduce fertilizer costs as much as $135-$180* per acre.
- Build organic matter and soil health.
- Add value to your farm and your community.

*Fall 2014 comparative nitrogen costs; Laura Pepple, University of Illinois Extension, estimating cash value of applying 3,500-4,500 gal/acre of finishing hog manure, minus application costs.

Learn how you can capitalize on the benefits of livestock production at ILSOY.ORG/ANIMALAG.
IDOA Offers Free Recycling Program for Agrichemical Containers

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) will begin collecting agrichemical containers at the end of July and into August at sites throughout the state. The program was created through IDOA, Agriculture Containers Recycling Council, GROWMARK, Inc., Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association, Container Services Network, Illinois Farm Bureau and University of Illinois Extension. The collection sites are as follows:

- Carrolton, Ill. — Greene County — Illinois Valley Supply
- Lawrenceville, Ill. — Lawrence County — Klein Flying Service
- Heyworth, Ill. — McLean County — Randolph Ag Service

Collection sites will accept only clean, dry, high-density polyethylene, #2 plastic agrichemical containers. Rinse and remove caps, labels, booklets and foil seals.

The containers will be recycled to make shipping pallets, fence posts, drainage tubing, plastic lumber and more. To learn more about the program, including single day collection sites and to obtain a free brochure, call IDOA at 800-641-3934.

FieldRise Network Documents Sustainability

Several farm groups, including ISA, have teamed up to create the FieldRise Network, a system to document sustainability and to empower improvement through sharing data confidentially. The network was created from the National Sustainable Soybean Initiative. ISA, the American Soybean Association, Wisconsin Soybean Association and others will put existing assessment data to work with farmers and farm customers.

“We’re seeing increasing need for farmers to know where they stand and to get new ideas to continue improvements. We offered the program to Illinois soybean producers and about 300 questionnaires were completed. That proves farmers are open to the FieldRise approach and supports our association’s freedom to operate goals,” says Ron Moore, soybean farmer from Roseville, Ill. Visit www.fieldrise.com for more details.

IPPA Names New Executive Director

Jennifer Tirey has been named executive director of the Illinois Pork Producers Association (IPPA), replacing Jim Kaitschuk. Tirey graduated from Eastern Illinois University, and has since worked for Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, Central Management Services, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Tirey most recently was executive director for the Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (C-BMP).

Calendar of Events

ISA Board Meetings
> July 29-31 · Champaign, IL

ILSoyAdvisor.com Field Days
> Aug. 4-6 · Benton, Villa Grove and Hinckley, IL

Ag Day at Illinois State Fair
> Aug. 18 · Springfield, IL

University of Illinois Agronomy Day
> Aug. 20 · Champaign, IL

ISA International Biotech Symposium
> Aug. 31 · Bloomington, IL

Farm Progress Show
> Sept. 1-3 · Decatur, IL

For more information, visit www.ilsoy.org.
ISG Marks Success Milestones in Cuba

Illinois Soybean Growers has been actively pursuing market options in Cuba for more than three years. Here are some of the key milestones and success stories to date:

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<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<td><strong>MARCH &gt;</strong></td>
<td>ISG travels to Cuba for the first time on a fact-finding mission, just before Pope visit.</td>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY &gt;</strong></td>
<td>After nearly a year of unsuccessfully trying to host Cuban leaders in Illinois, ISG travels to Cuba for key meetings.</td>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY &gt;</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MAY &gt;</strong></td>
<td>Cuba resolution passes unanimously in the Illinois General Assembly.</td>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY &gt;</strong></td>
<td>ISG and Cargill host first conference call with national ag organizations to kick off the U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba (USACC).</td>
<td><strong>JANUARY &gt;</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NOVEMBER &gt;</strong></td>
<td>ISG travels to Cuba to host first Illinois Cuba Working Group (ICWG) booth at the Havana International Trade Fair (FIHAV).</td>
<td><strong>NOVEMBER &gt;</strong></td>
<td>ISG/ICWG attends FHAV to promote Illinois products and soybeans.</td>
<td><strong>MARCH &gt;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOVEMBER &gt;</strong></td>
<td>ISG/ICWG attends FHAV to promote Illinois products and soybeans.</td>
<td><strong>DECEMBER &gt;</strong></td>
<td>President Obama announces normalization of trade relations.</td>
<td><strong>FEBRUARY &gt;</strong></td>
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Attend this important event and learn how you can make a difference. Visit the website for more details, including the agenda and registration, biotechnologysymposium.com.

Funded by the ILLINOIS SOYBEAN CHECKOFF

Attend the August 31 International Biotechnology Symposium

International exports are critical to farmer profitability, but regulatory roadblocks to biotechnology approvals cause trade delays, loss of access to new and scientifically proven safe technology, and decreased global food security. The Illinois Soybean Association, along with industry partners, will once again host the International Biotechnology Symposium to continue to build awareness around the need for a global, synchronous, science-based approval process.

Stakeholders from across the agriculture industry will come together from 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m., at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bloomington, Ill., Aug. 31, the day before the Farm Progress Show begins. Discussions will focus on new biotechnology trait approvals and trade with China and Europe. The program will consist of keynote speakers and four panels that will cover the following topics:

- Constraints to biotechnology trait approvals in China and Europe
- Economic costs of delayed regulatory trait approvals
- Importance of biotechnology for end users in the value chain
- The role of biotechnology in improving global food security

Attend this important event and learn how you can make a difference. Visit the website for more details, including the agenda and registration, biotechnologysymposium.com.
Jennifer Smith started teaching agriculture in 2004 at Winchester High School. She then decided to accept a position at her student teaching site at Astoria High School where she taught junior high students and first began using the soybean checkoff-funded Pod to Plate ag literacy materials. She taught seventh through 12th grade agriculture in 2012 and 2013 at A-C Central in Ashland, Ill., before moving to Williamsville High School in 2014.

WHAT IS THE VALUE IN TEACHING AG LITERACY TO STUDENTS?
I believe the value in teaching ag literacy to students is simply educating young members of our society about how their food and fiber is produced. So many children grow up without knowing the truth in what we do in the agriculture industry, and I truly believe that educating them will help them understand what we do and why it is important.

HOW DO YOU USE THE POD TO PLATE MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM PODTOPLATE.ORG?
I have used Pod to Plate materials in several ways. I have used the videos showing exactly how soybeans are planted, cared for and then harvested. I have had my high school students use the materials when we do ag literacy activities for FFA Week at the junior high school. I have the students use their worksheets and other materials to help support what I teach in my classes. Pod to Plate is a great resource to help students break down agriculture information and understand that real life not just going to the grocery store and buying food.

WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESS IN USING POD TO PLATE MATERIALS WITH STUDENTS?
I have had several students get so motivated from the information they have learned in the classroom from Pod to Plate that they wanted to do their SAE (Supervised Ag Experiences) projects for FFA in a sector of the soybean industry.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO OTHER EDUCATORS TO MOTIVATE THEM TO USE THESE MATERIALS?
I would encourage teachers to consider the materials because they are user friendly, well written and give a strong foundation of information to talk with students in third through ninth grade.

ARE THERE OTHER MATERIALS THAT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO HAVE?
I would like to have materials that continue on from Pod to Plate that are geared toward high school students. I have used the Pod to Plate series in my introduction to ag class with high school students because it really shows the ins and outs of farming. I still have some students on a very basic level of understanding about farming that have no clue until we watch the series.

“So many children grow up without knowing the truth about what we do in the agriculture industry. I truly believe that educating them will help them understand what we do and why it is important.”

Jennifer Smith
Williamsville High School Agriculture Teacher
Starting with this issue, *Illinois Field & Bean* is now published by DTN/The Progressive Farmer.

We take great pride in our partnership with the Illinois Soybean Association, and will continue to deliver a high-quality magazine to Illinois’ key soybean producers and industry leaders.

Advertisers can reach this valuable audience – 45,000 of the nation’s largest soybean producers – within a fresh and inviting editorial environment.

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