Look Ahead at Pest Management

- Manage Nitrogen More Effectively
- Double Crop Soybeans, Wheat to Boost Profits
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Cover Story
Are You Prepared for 2014 Pests?
Maximizing soybean yield potential requires farmers to prepare for potential pests and then control them through timely, hands-on management. The 2014 season will be no different than any other. What can be different is how you prepare. Soybean specialists share some tips.

Animal Agriculture
Farmer Sees Advantages, Challenges with Livestock Expansion
One farm family decided a couple of years ago to expand their farrow-to-finish hog operation as a way to remain viable in agriculture and support their young family. Illinois Field & Bean checks in with them again to find out how they are doing raising both crops and hogs.

Transportation
Bond Financing May Help Fund Infrastructure Repairs
Bond financing allows government bodies to borrow money to pay for public infrastructure and other development projects they otherwise couldn’t afford. ISA is working with local government in one county to identify specific bridges that could be repaired with funds from municipal bonds. Learn how the process works and what it could mean for other projects.

Leadership
Covert Offers Leadership Insight
Sharon Covert from Tiskilwa, Ill., farms with her husband, Jim. She also has volunteered and been elected to several agricultural leadership positions over the years. Learn her tips for getting involved and her thoughts about what the future holds for Illinois soybean farmers.

Yield, Quality & Composition
Capture Profitability from Double-Crop Soybeans
Double-cropping may not be an option in every region of the state. But where it makes economic and agronomic sense to follow winter wheat with soybeans, university research finds that it may just put enough dollars in your pocket to be worth the extra effort.

Management Mythbuster
Rethink Nitrogen’s Role in Soybean Production
Farmers looking to boost soybean yields in 2014 may want to reconsider the role nitrogen (N) can play in their management system. One of the biggest soybean production myths is that soybeans add nitrogen to the soil. Get the truth about the soybean-nitrogen relationship.

ABOUT THE COVER
Rowen Ziegler says Illinois soybean farmers should prepare for yield-robbing pests all year long. The LaHarpe, Ill., farmer and past ISA Production Committee chairman says yield loss from weeds, insects and diseases has always been a focus of checkoff investments, and farmers should take advantage of the information available to help prevent loss. Photo by Joanie Stiers.

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Production Research an ISA Cornerstone

As ISA celebrates its 50th anniversary, one point that comes through many of our members’ memories is the long-term efforts to improve soybean production by investing in research. ISA has provided input and helped fund studies at Illinois universities for much of that time. In fact, part of the reason a group of farmers got together with University of Illinois staff to organize the association in 1964 was to conduct soybean variety testing. By the early 1970s, ISA was supporting a plant breeder position at the University of Illinois and a nematologist position to address soybean cyst nematode at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Sudden death syndrome followed as a major production concern we funded shortly thereafter.

During the last five decades, we have taken different strategic approaches to managing our investment in production research. Most recently, we have used a managed research area (MRA) approach, where we selected studies based on farmer priorities. Each MRA emphasized a specific challenge, and included soybean diseases and insect pests, soybean cyst nematode, weeds, soybean germplasm and breeding, and soy nutrition and food science.

Beginning with the fiscal year that began last September, we have shifted to a slightly different approach. While our objective remains increasing yield and return on investment and improving quality, we are adjusting our strategies to meet that objective and will invest in:

• carefully selected, multi-year basic research initiatives
• carefully selected, applied research initiatives, and
• a practical technology transfer program with local, regional and state focus.

Our funding allocations are 25 percent each invested in basic and applied research and 50 percent invested in technology transfer programs. All projects are targeted at helping ISA reach its goal to utilize 600 million bushels of Illinois soybeans by 2020.

This issue of Illinois Field & Bean will look at some of the work we are funding, as well as address some of the production challenges we may face in 2014.

We place tremendous value on communicating new and beneficial data to Illinois soybean farmers, both through this magazine and through numerous media outlets and educational opportunities we sponsor throughout the year. I encourage you to participate in one of the ISA Soybean Summits this month and next, the Farm Journal Soybean College held this summer, and the ISA Yield Challenge, which covers the entire growing season.

Bill Raben
ISA Chairman

Checkoff Fact: New Production Resource Tool Coming

ISA will introduce this year the ILSO Advisor, a website that will serve as a soybean production resource for Illinois farmers. The site will contain tools and articles and house a forum for discussing those issues affecting production statewide. Watch for more information this spring.
Our real goal should be to turn this data into decisions that make us money. Growers make more money in one of three ways: increasing yields, decreasing input costs or saving time. Shouldn’t all this data help us do that? We invested hard-earned money into hardware that collects the data, but then we just stored it on a shelf. Where can we analyze multiple layers of data and use it to create management zones and seeding/nitrogen prescriptions? Can we look at yield by soil type, yield by hybrid, and even yield by soil type by hybrid?

The next step is how and where to store this data and data ownership. Life is easier if you find a web application that allows multiple forms of data to be stored and allows you to own and control it. Maybe your combine is green, your planter is blue, and your sprayer is red. Can you store these different data files in one place and can they be analyzed together? You spent a lot of money collecting that data, but once that data leaves your farm, do you still own it?

As you consider what you will do with your data, the above questions need to be answered. Data is a valuable thing, but only if it reveals true knowledge. True knowledge is unbiased. True knowledge can reveal many things. Some that you might not want to hear. Ultimately it leads to better-made decisions that lead to increased profitability.

How will you turn your data into decisions in 2014?  

By Brent Minett  

Data is a valuable thing, but only if it reveals true knowledge. True knowledge is unbiased. True knowledge can reveal many things.
Are You Prepared for 2014 Pests?

Experts Urge Timely, Hands-on Management

By Barb Baylor Anderson

Maximizing soybean yield potential requires farmers to prepare for potential pests and control them through timely, hands-on management. The 2014 season will be no different. Soybean production specialists encourage farmers to be aware of weeds and diseases that may be issues in their fields, scout for pests and have a plan in mind for appropriate response.

“Illinois soybean checkoff dollars have generally been invested in research that helps identify weeds and diseases and how they can be controlled. Now, we also are investing in more technology transfer so we are sure Illinois farmers get the information they need in useful and usable formats,” says Rowen Ziegler, soybean farmer from LaHarpe, Ill., and immediate past chairman of the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) Production Committee.

Watch Weeds for Resistance

That research includes herbicide-resistant weed studies at Illinois universities. Aaron Hager, University of Illinois weed scientist, offers the following tips for Illinois soybean farmers:
• Understand the biology of weeds already present in the field.
• Use a diversified approach to weed management that focuses on preventing seed production and reducing the seed bank already in the soil.
• Use an effective burndown strategy.
• Plant weed-free crop seed.
• Scout fields regularly during the season to keep an eye out for weeds that might have survived early-season application work.
• Use multiple modes-of-action herbicides effective against the most troublesome weeds.

USB Introduces Take Action Campaign

The United Soybean Board (USB) introduced its Take Action Herbicide Resistance Management campaign, which encourages farmers to manage resistance through these statements:
• I will know my weeds.
• I will take action before weeds go to seed.
• I will reduce the weed seeds in my soil.
• I will think beyond herbicides and diversify my approach to weed management.
• I will plant into fields free of weeds and do whatever I can to keep them that way.
• I will scout my fields regularly.
• I will use tillage to control troublesome weeds.
• I will do whatever it takes to give my crops a competitive advantage against weeds.
• I will rotate crops.
• I will plant cover crops to suppress weed growth.
• I will prevent weeds from spreading between fields.
• I will clean my equipment to prevent seeds from contaminating my fields.
• I will manage weeds in field borders and ditches.
• I will use multiple herbicides sites of action.
• I will apply herbicides at their full labeled rate.


Rowen Ziegler, soybean farmer from LaHarpe, Ill., prepares for 2014 production challenges.
11 Biggest Weed Resistance Threats
USB lists the following as the biggest resistance threats:

- Common waterhemp
- Palmer amaranth
- Horseweed (marestail)
- Giant ragweed
- Common ragweed
- Common lambsquarters
- Kochia
- Italian ryegrass
- Barnyardgrass
- Johnsongrass
- Giant foxtail

To learn more about these and other weeds, skip to page 23 of this issue.

Researchers are addressing production constraints by identifying the causes of seedling disease, developing new tools for diagnosis and developing management recommendations.

• Apply herbicides at the recommended label rates and for recommended weed sizes.
• Use mechanical weed control along with biological control when appropriate to do so.
• Prevent field-to-field movement of weed seed by cleaning equipment before it moves out.
• Manage weed seed spread at harvest time.
• Prevent an influx of weed seed by monitoring field borders (where potential resistant weeds might have been missed during any in-season application work).

New Approach to Weed Resistance
While new herbicide chemistry is slow to come to market, one company introducing a new approach to tackling weed resistance is MANA. Five soybean herbicides are designed to combat weed resistance with different modes of action and residual activity. The products also are formulated to help control glyphosate-, HPPD-, triazine- and ALS-resistant weeds.

“Older, gold standard chemistries are the new front-runners for superior weed control. They’ve come back into play with varying modes of action and residual performance, which are primary requirements when battling resistance,” says David Downing, MANA brand leader. “We are leveraging existing chemistries with more advanced formulations and mixture concepts.”

Downing believes glyphosate could be a viable weed control option for years to come if the soybean industry reinforces the importance to incorporate multiple modes of ac-
crop rotation with residual activity into weed control programs before resistance strikes.

**Spring Test for SCN Populations**

If you didn’t sample for soybean cyst nematode (SCN) last fall, you may want to put that on your spring to-do list. Nathan Schroeder, University of Illinois plant pathologist, says SCN remains a problem for most Illinois soybean farmers, whether they know it or not.

“SCN is definitely still out there in every county. You probably have it even if you think you do not,” he says. “SCN is the number one pathogen in soybeans but often results in no above-ground symptoms.”

In fact, Schroeder says farmers may experience 25-30 percent yield loss with no symptoms.

“Sample the low-yield areas of your fields. Ideally, farmers would sample in the fall, but it can be done in the spring so you can find out what SCN population levels you have,” he says.

Schroeder says farmers should plant an SCN-resistant variety and rotate with a non-host crop such as corn. Additional management options include switching up the resistance source by choosing other commercial resistant varieties. While seed treatment nematicides are available, like Clariva from Syngenta, Schroeder has not tested their efficacy.

**Manage for Seedling Diseases**

Seedling diseases annually reduce soybean yield by 30.5 million bushels across the country. Jason Bond, Southern Illinois University Carbondale plant pathologist, together with other soybean researchers in soybean-producing states, is looking for ways to cut those losses.

“We are addressing the production constraints by identifying the causes of seedling disease, developing new tools for diagnosis, developing new protocols for research and for germplasm screening assays, and developing management recommendations for farmers,” says Bond.

The long-term soybean checkoff-funded project, now completing its second year, includes collecting soilborne pathogens and other fungal organisms and then identifying those most associated with seedling diseases. Many species of *Fusarium*, *Phytophthora* and *Pythium* are being evaluated for the ability to cause disease. Researchers also are looking at environmental conditions and cropping practices responsible for reducing or increasing pathogens and disease.

“The diversity of organisms present has been very surprising,” says Bond. “Our ability to study at the molecular level now has revealed there are many differences in pathogens. As we are able to extract them from roots, we are finding some may even be beneficial.”

For 2014, Bond offers the following advice to Illinois soybean farmers:

- Spread out your planting window, and use seed treatments if you are planting early or it is cool and rainy. Planting date and soil temperatures affect seedling disease spectrums.
- If you use seed treatments, remember results in one field will not be indicative of every field. Even though seedling diseases may look the same to you, that doesn’t mean they are the same. Fields also may have the same pathogens but in different percentages.
- Seed treatments come already applied to the seed. It is hard to compare treatments among seed from the same company. If you want to evaluate different seed treatments, plant seed from two different companies to see how they compare.
- If you have problems with seedling disease, contact the University of Illinois Plant Clinic. Visit web.extension.illinois.edu/plantclinic/ to learn more.

Bond adds with the increase in the use of fungicide seed treatments, research is underway to determine how the most common fungicides impact various pathogens. Researchers already have found species of *Fusarium* and *Pythium* that are not sensitive to major fungicides.

**Stay Tuned to Future Disease Potential**

A relatively new and potentially destructive soybean disease has researchers on alert. Soybean vein necrosis virus (SVNV) has been detected in 16 states and Ontario, according to a recent report funded by the soybean checkoff, although it is not a big concern in the Midwest yet.
“Every field I walked into this year had it. Two years ago, it was in maybe one percent,” says Daren Mueller, assistant professor, Iowa State University Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology and co-principal investigator for the project. “Our message is soybean vein necrosis virus can potentially be a more destructive virus than any other we have studied.”

Little is known about the virus, but experts say it can reduce yields, especially when plants are stressed. The virus impairs photosynthesis of soybean plants and development.

SVNV is spread by thrips. According to the report, SVNV has likely been in soybeans for some time but is overlooked or misdiagnosed. SVNV symptoms resemble other foliar disease symptoms like brown spot, bacterial blight and early sudden death syndrome. Laboratory testing is required for proper identification.

The North Central Soybean Research Program (NCSRP) Board is studying SVNV. NCSRP is a collaboration of 12 state soybean associations, including Illinois.

“We don’t know if we sprayed an insecticide and killed thrips if that would help or if a seed treatment is needed,” says Mueller. “In general, we saw a yield loss as the disease increased in stressed fields. Fields doing well with a nice full canopy weren’t affected or affected very little.”

The report does not provide yield loss estimates, economic impact figures or management recommendations. Future findings will be posted on the website, www.planthealth.info.

Spread out your planting window, and use seed treatments if you are planting early or it is cool and rainy. Planting date and soil temperatures affect seedling disease spectrums.

““The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA), which administers the state soybean checkoff, funded research projects at Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois that proved that using residual herbicides can help farmers deal with herbicide resistance. Through the research and education efforts of the checkoff, I’m now using the recommendations from that research on my farm and have seen great results.”

ISA funds a variety of projects each year to increase the profitability of your soybean operation. Take a look below at some of the areas in which ISA funds research on behalf of soybean farmers in Illinois.

Areas of research:

- Quality
- Yield
- Sustainability
- Livestock Utilization

- Dean Campbell, soybean farmer from Coulterville, Ill. and ISA representative to the American Soybean Association
Two years ago, Utica, Ill., crop and hog farmers John and Kate Hagenbuch decided to expand their farrow-to-finish hog operation. They wanted to remain viable in agriculture and support their young family. And while the decision has its advantages, it also can be challenging.

“Adding more hogs in a contract finishing arrangement made sense. Bankers like to see contracts with guaranteed revenue,” says John, who also serves as an ISA director and animal agriculture first vice chair. He says the contract enabled them to build four 2,400-head feeder-to-finish buildings. “It would have been a lot harder, if not impossible, to expand the way we wanted to without it.”

John had 15 years of experience raising pigs before the expansion. While helpful, John has learned that contract finishing is a little different.

“You’re no longer your own boss. But it is a really good way for young soybean farmers with no livestock experience to expand,” he says. “If you build the barns, there are companies that will contract with you and train you how to raise pigs their way.”

In addition to the income stream from the pigs, extra manure generated by the expansion has opened up a new venture for the Hagenbuchs. They now contract haul and custom apply manure on crop farms in LaSalle, Bureau and Livingston counties.

“We went from 400,000 gallons of manure a year to four million, which takes a lot of equipment,” he says. “But the additional equipment also allowed us to start taking on custom jobs. Liquid hog manure is valued for its nutrients and widely used as fertilizer.”

The Hagenbuchs’ 10-year plan is to grow their custom manure application business, update their feed mill and eventually become independent hog farmers again.

Manage Challenges through Expansion

John calls the Illinois livestock permitting process straightforward, but with a lot of hoops to jump through along the way. He encourages soybean farmers to get advice to address challenges, including relying on the Illinois Pork Producers Association, the Illinois Livestock Development Group, ISA and the Illinois Corn Growers Association.

“They can help you with permits, manage through public hearings and build facilities in the appropriate ways,” he says, offering these tips as well:

- Look at all options. Find farmers doing the same thing you want to do, and listen to their opinions - not just the ones you agree with - before making decisions.
- Take advantage of resources available to help navigate the process.
- Be open and upfront with your neighbors.
- As soybean growers, pork producers are our top customers. I believe in the pork industry and I want to see livestock expand in Illinois,” says John. “Expansion is a good way to bring someone home to farm.”
Loans help buyers pay for a major asset such as a house, car or equipment over time. Similarly, bond financing allows governmental entities to borrow money for public infrastructure or other development projects they otherwise couldn’t afford.

Along that vein, ISA is working with local government to identify specific bridges that could be repaired with funds from municipal bonds, using Peoria County as the pilot project area.

Paul Rasmussen, soybean farmer from Genoa, Ill., and ISA director, says the association is searching for alternative methods for funding repairs to infrastructure.

“ISA wants to speed repairs to support the multiple ways soybeans get from farm gate to market. Every bridge that is posted for load and every lock that has to close for emergency repairs creates delays or detours which cut into the profitability of the soybean industry,” he says.

Checkoff-funded research uncovered bond financing as a viable option to help repair Illinois infrastructure. ISA is helping Peoria County prioritize which county and township bridges and road segments are the best candidates for bond financing, with recommendations to be completed in late spring. Next steps will include identifying potential revenue streams to pay back borrowed money to bondholders, such as federal monies, grants and taxes.

Once a bond amount is determined and proposed development projects are defined in draft documents, public hearings may be held before the appropriate legislative body, such as a county board, votes to issue the bond. The process may take as long as 18 months, according to ISA Transportation Infrastructure Lead Scott Sigman, before construction and repairs can begin.

“Bond financing is not a new concept, but it is definitely a creative approach for funding critical infrastructure updates,” says Tim Long, president of Long Economic Development Advisors, a contractor with the project. “It takes a little legwork to line up the right resources, but bonds can successfully fund repairs that may otherwise take years to move to the top of priority lists.”

Not only could bond financing speed fixes for rural infrastructure used by soybean farmers and agriculture, it would create jobs and pump money into local economies, Rasmussen adds.

For more information on ISA transportation initiatives, visit www.ilsoy.org/isa/transportation/.

### Municipal Bond Finance Basics

1. Municipal bonds must first be approved by their respective elected legislative body. Issuers pledge various revenue streams to pay principal and interest, including water and sewer fees, parking fees, levies, etc. If the issuer pledges their general obligation, they must raise taxes to pay the bonds if other monies are not available.

2. Bonds often receive a rating — the higher the rating the lower the interest rate. Bondholders purchase a bond, essentially a piece of paper, and are paid back by its maturity date.

3. Meanwhile, work begins on the development project — be it a bridge, road, lock, dam, school, airport, hospital, public parking garage or municipal buildings — that could not be funded otherwise.

*Source: Long Economic Development Advisors*
How to Become an Advocate in 3 Easy Steps

Actively participating in the policymaking process has never been faster or easier, thanks to the FREE Voice for Soy online action network funded by ISG membership dues. For example, say you want to contact your Illinois state legislators about the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS).

1. Start at VoiceforSoy.org. You’ll find information on the RFS, along with all the other major state and federal legislative issues facing Illinois soybean growers.

2. Set the facts. The site offers key messages about each state and federal issue to help you communicate with your legislators.

3. Send a letter. You can quickly send a letter via email from Voice for Soy. Or use the key messages provided on each issue to write your own.

Register and you’ll receive an Action Alert via email whenever there’s a legislative issue that could affect your future.

When you register, Voice for Soy automatically identifies your state and federal legislators, and provides a customizable email letter for each Action Alert.

Voice for Soy is an easy, one-stop shop to track key issues, share information with fellow producers and mobilize quickly when necessary.

Effective Letter Tips

- Clearly state what action you want your legislator to take.
- Explain why your position is important to your legislator’s constituents.
- Use facts or examples to show how the proposed bill will impact you personally.
- Keep it brief. Discuss only one bill or issue.
- Personalize the letter by introducing yourself and sharing a bit about your farm.

Re: Support a Biodiesel RVO of at Least 1.7 Billion Gallons

Dear Representative Shock:

My name is Joe Beans and I am a fifth-generation Illinois farmer. My family grows 1,500 acres of soybeans and corn in McLean County, which is the No. 1 soybean-producing county in Illinois.

I am writing to ask you to support biodiesel fuels and our state’s biodiesel industry, which creates jobs and stimulates rural and urban Illinois economies. (See facts here: http://www.soybeansforillinois.org/Fueling_Illinois_Industry.html.)

Illinois produces the most soybeans, and the most biodiesel in the U.S. Unfortunately, a U.S. EPA proposal threatens the progress of our biodiesel industry and the success of Illinois soybean growers like me. The EPA has released a proposal that would set the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) Required Volume Obligation (RVO) for Biomass-based diesel at 1.28 billion gallons for 2014 and 1.7 billion gallons for 2015. This would set back the U.S. biodiesel industry, as production this year is expected to reach 1.7 billion gallons.

Setting the 2014 and 2015 RVO at a level lower than 2013 production would:

- Be detrimental to the Illinois biodiesel industry and our 45,000 soybean farmers.
- Result in reduced demand for soybean oil, which accounts for about half of all U.S. biodiesel production. (The 1.7 billion gallons of biodiesel that is expected to be produced in 2013 will use more than 6 billion pounds of soybean oil.)
- Drive down the price of soybeans and soy oil, which will negatively impact my income and economic activity in my community – and in turn, reduce the tax base at the state and local levels.

Rep. Tom Latham (R-IA) and Rep. Mike McIntyre (D-NC) are circulating a letter in the House to be sent to the Administration in support of a biomass-based diesel volume of at least 1.7 billion gallons for the EPA’s 2014 RFS proposal. Please join Reps. Tammy Duckworth, Cheryl Bushos, Rodney Davis and Adam Kinzinger in signing on to support Illinois soybean farmers and the benefits biodiesel creates for the Illinois economy. To sign on, your office can contact Ian Manzano in Rep. Latham’s office ian.manzano@mail.house.gov or Katlin Wolf in Rep. McIntyre’s office katlin.wolf@mail.house.gov. Thank you for supporting Illinois soybean farmers.

Sincerely,

Joe S. Beans
Cool Beans Family Farm
1 Dee Lane
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-555-1212

Include your full name and complete home address.
Industry Seeks Better Market Access for Biotech in China

United Soybean Board (USB) Past Chairman Jim Stillman and Secretary Lewis Bainbridge recently joined members of the American Soybean Association and other U.S. officials on a biotechnology acceptance mission to China. China, which is the U.S. soy industry’s largest international customer, is hesitant to approve new traits. Several biotech events continue to be held up in the Chinese approval process, so the soy organization leaders held discussions with Chinese officials about the merits of biotechnology and need for a streamlined approval process.

This is the second mission checkoff farmer-leaders have made to China in recent months, and Chinese officials visited the United States earlier in the summer. Bainbridge says that the frequent visits have increased trust between the groups and have led to fruitful discussions.

WISHH Invites Central American Food Processors to Soy in Cooking Course

The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health Program (WISHH) recently invited three representatives from a commercial food processing company in Guatemala and one representative from a government feeding program in El Salvador to a soy in cooking course held at the University of Illinois and hosted by NSRL. Participants reported the course to be a great success. One company has already reached out to a U.S. supplier looking for new soy products to include in their product lines, and the other organization is committed to using soy in their programming next year. NSRL and WISHH are partners in the region.

Conservation Survey Shows Benefits of Cover Crops

Along with the benefits of reduced soil compaction, less soil erosion and improved weed control, Illinois soybean farmers may have another reason to plant cover crops. A survey published by the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) finds Illinois soybean farmers who planted cover crops in 2012 boosted yields by 27 percent, despite harsh drought conditions. The survey was carried out in partnership between the CTIC and the USDA North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. The survey also found that farmers are rapidly increasing acreage of cover crops. They planted an average of 303 acres per farm in 2012 and intend to farm 421 acres of cover crops in 2013. Total acreage of cover crops among farmers surveyed increased 35 percent from 2008 to 2012.
Beef & Beyond Offers Understanding of Links Between Pasture and Plate

Academic and industry professionals will put cattle producers through their paces at the Beef & Beyond workshop, March 21-22. Sponsored by the Illinois Beef Association (IBA) and the University of Illinois, the interactive educational program offers insight into all aspects of the cattle industry and management tips that can help producers stay profitable.

Hands-on activities will offer participants a chance to learn new skills and sharpen existing ones related to genetic selection, feed efficiency, carcass quality and general cattle management. Speakers will focus on creating value through improved management techniques.

“Rare is the opportunity for cattlemen to see beyond the farm gate and experience how beef is handled and evaluated at each step in the production chain. Beef & Beyond will afford producers that opportunity to witness our industry from multiple perspectives,” says Reid Blossom, IBA executive vice president.

The program will take place at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and is funded in part by the Illinois soybean checkoff. Producers should register by March 7. A $75 fee covers the cost of meals and educational materials. Download the registration form at www.illinoisbeef.com.

Soy Transportation Coalition
Re-elects Officers for 2014

The Soy Transportation Coalition (STC) re-elected its officers at the organization’s annual meeting in New York City. Patrick Knouff of Minster, Ohio, was once again elected chairman. He currently serves as chairman of the Ohio Soybean Council and is a member of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. Scott Gauslow of Colfax, N.D., was re-elected vice chairman of the STC. Gauslow currently serves as chairman of the North Dakota Soybean Council. Gerry Hayden of Calhoun, Ky., was re-elected secretary-treasurer. He is a previous chairman of the Kentucky Soybean Board. To learn more, visit the website www.soytransportation.org.

A Market View
At this time of year, most farmers are anxiously looking forward to the preparations required for putting the 2014 crop in the ground. While those efforts are necessary, now isn’t the time for farmers to neglect marketing the crop that may still be in the bin.

Soybean production in 2013 totaled 3.29 million bushels, up eight percent from 2012. Dow AgroSciences grain leader Larry Stenberg says soybean carryover as of Aug. 31, 2014 is forecast to be at 150 million bushels, which is tight and why the market is inverted. However, only about two-thirds of the 2013 soybean crop has been sold. With large soybean crops expected in both Argentina and Brazil and anticipated soybean acreage increases in the United States, the stage is set for prices to continue a downward trend.

Stenberg says a strong crop in Argentina and an anticipated record crop in Brazil could encourage buyers like China to cancel U.S. soybean orders and buy elsewhere to get lower cost beans. Cancelling orders would surely drive prices down.

“Now isn’t the time for farmers to neglect marketing the crop that may still be in the bin.”

Long term, Stenberg is bearish on beans. He says many farmers are in denial about the trend in crop prices.

“My biggest fear is that we plant 91 million acres of corn and 81 million acres of soybeans and by July, American farmers will still have large volumes of the 2013 crop unsold and very little of the 2014 crop,” Stenberg says. "If we get a normal crop year, then farmers will have to sell what they produced last year and many will have done nothing about this year’s crop. It’s a giant vacuum that pulls prices down.”

Many trend lines point to soybean prices heading down, with November 2014 beans right around $11 per bushel. If U.S. carryover stocks double to 300 million bushels as some anticipate, beans could drop as low as $9 by next November.

Stenberg points to wildcards such as South American weather and yields, domestic demand and exports, China’s demand for soybeans, EPA’s impact on the Renewable Fuels Standards (RFS) as factors that could dramatically impact the price of corn and soybeans in the coming year.

He advises that farmers should be ready to sell when markets dictate. “Farmers need to be selling old crop rallies, and new crop, sell on the bounces. Don't be the last one to the party, go out and market your crop.”

Soybean Summit
March 7
Civic Center, Peoria

For more information, visit www.ilsoy.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Sharon Covert from Tiskilwa, Ill., farms with her husband, Jim. She is a district director for the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) and recently retired from the United Soybean Board (USB). Covert has served in various leadership roles for the U.S. Soybean Export Council, USB, ISA and various county and state agricultural and community organizations. Covert attended Bradley University and is a registered nurse. She and Jim have three children and 10 grandchildren.

What are your early memories of soybean farming?
My earliest memories bring back childhood memories of “walking the beans.” Like most children who grew up in the Midwest before genetically enhanced soybeans, I remember June or July, hot summer days, getting up early in the morning, taking a thermos, getting into the pickup, heading to the field with a hoe or some other cutting device, and trying to remove weeds between the plants row after row. If you were lucky, you had a friend working in the same field.

How did you get started serving on soybean boards?
I got started serving on soybean boards because I have a real passion for Illinois agriculture and someone asked me to represent my district.

What opportunities have serving in leadership positions provided you?
The opportunities of serving on soybean boards have been amazing. One of the best opportunities is to really listen to our customers, exploring their needs and concerns about U.S. soybeans. I have had the opportunity to sit down with those customers and to build relationships of trust and respect. As most soybean growers know, 60 percent or more of our soybeans are used by customers around the world. We need to listen and learn from them.

What industry challenges have you helped address?
I have helped explain U.S. soybean farming sustainability practices in Europe and Asia. One concern of all buyers is the protein and oil content of U.S. soy. I have tried to help U.S. farmers understand that even though they are paid on yield, customers only are interested in the oil and protein content. The important thing for U.S. farmers to remember is that they can have both, if they ask their seed dealers. I also am working with the Smithsonian's American History Museum to establish a new exhibit that will feature agriculture along with other industries. The goal is to help the more than four million yearly visitors at the museum understand agriculture’s contribution to life here and abroad. There also are opportunities to explain U.S. agriculture to the more than 14 million visitors to the Smithsonian website.

What advice do you have for farmers considering serving in leadership positions?
Make sure you have support at home and from others in your farming operation who feel the work of the checkoff is important and who understand its value to help farmers be profitable.

How has serving in leadership positions helped your soybean operation?
It has given me a deeper understanding of the industry and how different segments are inter-related. I have learned about all aspects of soybean farming including planting, weed management and marketing, and opportunities and challenges involved with each. I also realize farmers need to engage with consumers to help them better understand how food is produced.

ISA will have five director positions open when the current fiscal year ends Aug. 31, 2014; three for district directors and two for at-large directors. While the process for district director elections begins in April, interested farmers are encouraged to consider the application process now. The three districts with openings are District 5 representing Fulton, Knox, Marshall, Peoria, Putnam and Tazewell counties; District 9, including Cass, Logan, Mason, Menard, Morgan and Sangamon counties; and District 12, representing Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Pike and Scott counties. Farmers from across the state of Illinois are urged to apply for the at-large openings this month. Interested farmers also are invited to attend the March ISA board meeting. For more information, contact the ISA office at 309-663-7692.
100 Bushels. Your New Goal.

Soybeans have a remarkable yield potential, and if managed for high yield, 100 bushels per acre is possible and within reach in Illinois.

The ISA Yield Challenge puts innovative techniques and approaches to the test, pushing soybeans to unleash their full yield potential. Be the grower with the highest percentage yield increase in your district and you’ll take home $500. Come in second and you’ll take home $250. The grower who reaches the highest number of bushels above the 100 bushel per acre mark takes home $5,000!

So set a new goal for your yields and make this YOUR year! Take the 2014 Yield Challenge today.

For more details and to register, please visit www.soyyieldchallenge.com or email yieldchallenge@ilsoy.org.

Registration Fee: Only $25 per participant! We encourage companies to sponsor and work with growers to test new technologies and farming practices!

Get Ready to Unleash the Potential of Your Soybeans.
Double-crop soybeans are generally managed like full-season soybeans, even though the growing season often starts about six weeks later than full-season beans.

Based on $3.80 per bushel for wheat and $11 for soybeans, the 2014 Illinois Crop Budgets for wheat and double-crop soybeans in southern Illinois forecast a $165 per acre return, reflecting current expectations for prices and yields.

While double-cropping soybeans after wheat offers additional economic benefits, Tim Scates, soybean farmer from Carmi, Ill., and ISA director, says weather can be a limiting factor in success. His family uses center pivot irrigation to help take the guesswork out of the weather.

“Our irrigation systems help us get a strong soybean stand established, and then we keep enough water on the crop through the growing season to help maximize yields,” he says.

According to Nafziger, an ongoing study of common cropping systems in southern and central Illinois shows an average wheat yield of 62 bushels per acre, while double-crop soybeans (without irrigation) have a 28 bushel-per-acre average. The same trial showed full-season soybeans with about 40 bushels per acre.

Based on his experience, Scates estimates that double-crop soybeans under irrigation typically produce yields comparable to full-season soybeans. Dryland double-crop soybeans typically produce yields about 70 percent of the full-season soybeans.

Most farmers can expect double-cropped soybeans to yield on average about 60 to 70 percent of the average yields for full-season beans, says Nafziger. He adds that double-crop soybeans that yield at least 50 percent of the full-season yield average for the area should be profitable.
The best premiums are right in front of you.

You could be getting even more out of your soybean crop. A quick visit to SoybeanPremiums.org reveals a jackpot of buyers, locations and details for programs such as non-GMO contracts and food-grade soybeans. Programs are available throughout the U.S. Click on “Find a Premium Program” to see the latest opportunities in your area.

Funded by the Illinois soybean checkoff.
ISG Offers Membership Discount with Anniversary Celebration

Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) is reaching out to potential new farmer members this year with a three-year membership special for only $145. That is a $50 savings that corresponds with ISA’s 50th anniversary. The discounted rate will be available until Aug. 1, 2014, and can be obtained online or at various farm shows and other events.

Local soybean clubs also will take part in promoting the membership discount by inviting potential new members to attend annual meetings. These events give growers a chance to see how things get done at the local level, as well as provide an opportunity to offer input. ISG works with national and state legislators to help establish favorable soybean industry legislation, including important issues such as transportation and the farm bill. Learn more at www.ilsoygrowers.org, and share the opportunity to get involved with other growers.

Farmers Featured in Moll Documentary

Award-winning Director James Moll has produced a feature-length documentary which follows the next generation of American farmers and ranchers, all in their 20s, from various regions across the country. “Farmland” will be released in March 2014. The film was made possible with financial support from the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA).

Moll spent five months meeting farmers and ranchers before he settled on six who are featured. Moll extensively researched the subject and looked for individuals to profile, specifically choosing from different farming and ranching production methods, various types of crops and livestock and geographic diversity. The farmers and ranchers featured include:

- Brad Bellah, sixth-generation rancher with beef cattle operations in Texas and Colorado.
- Leighton Cooley, fourth-generation poultry farmer, who operates four farms in Georgia with his father.
- David Loberg, fifth-generation corn and soybean farmer in Nebraska, who runs the farm with his mother, custom feeds cows for a local dairy and runs an irrigation business.
- Sutton Morgan, fourth-generation farmer from California, who grows, packs and sells onions, potatoes, melons, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuces, chard, kale and alfalfa.
- Margaret Schlass, CSA (community supported agriculture) vegetable farmer based in Pennsylvania, who farms on 18 acres.
- Ryan Veldhuizen, fourth-generation farmer, who is taking over the operation of his family’s hog farm in Minnesota with his brother and sister.

The advance trailer and more information are available at www.farmlandfilm.com, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/farmlandfilm and on Twitter @FarmlandFilm.

Visit the ISA Booth at Commodity Classic

Farmers and families attending Commodity Classic, Feb. 26-March 1, in San Antonio, Texas, are invited to stop by the ISA booth, #2017, in the trade show and receive a free flashlight. Commodity Classic is the annual convention organized for the nation’s corn, soybean, wheat and sorghum farmers. Visit the website, www.commodityclassic.com, for registration and housing details.

Become a Member. Let Your Voice Be Heard. www.ilsoygrowers.org
What does it take to make the world — or even a governing body — stop and listen? One voice may earn you a glance. A handful of voices may cause someone to pause for a moment. But the collective voice of many... that is what brings about change.

Join today and save $50!

Gain representation on key legislative issues.

Illinois Soybean Growers is continually raising its voice to be heard in Washington, D.C., and Springfield.

- We advocate for fair public policies and the freedom to farm.
- We lobby to improve our state’s infrastructure.
- We build awareness on the many uses of soybeans.
- We help protect the soybean industry as a whole.

To learn more, visit voiceforsoy.org.

Make a small investment, get a big return.

Now, for a limited time, you can get a 3-year membership for only $145 (a $195 value).

ISG also offers many valuable member benefits, including:

- $100 in biodiesel coupons to all 1-year and 3-year new and renewal members.
- Novozymes BioAg, Inc. will provide one voucher good for the treatment of 100 units of soybean seed ($300 approx.value) with Optimize® or Tag Team® LCO.
- Huge discounts on new Ford, Chrysler and General Motors vehicles.
- Reward points at more than 1,000 of your favorite stores.
- 10% off all Cabela’s gift card purchases and more.

To learn about many more membership benefits, visit ilsoygrowers.org.

Questions? Call (309) 663-7692 or e-mail smithj@ilsoy.org.
True: Farmers Should Rethink Nitrogen’s Role in Soybean Production.

Farmers looking to boost soybean yields in 2014 may want to reconsider the role nitrogen (N) can play in their management system. “Most growers focus on fertility for their corn crop, assuming soil nutrients will be adequate for soybeans the following year. However, researchers find that high-yield soybeans demand a different management approach, which includes a closer look at the role nitrogen plays,” says Don Guinnip, soybean farmer from Marshall, Ill., and ISA Production Committee chairman.

■ Soybeans add nitrogen to the soil.

FALSE: According to Fred Below, University of Illinois plant physiologist, one of the biggest soybean production myths is that soybeans add nitrogen to the soil. He says the misconception is based on the old soybean nitrogen credit from corn fertility worksheets. While the average amount of nitrogen fixed by soybeans increases as yields increase, only a portion of the total nitrogen required is met through nitrogen fixation. For example, at 60 bushels per acre, fixed nitrogen provides about 160 pounds of the total 275-pound nitrogen uptake by soybeans. The difference is provided by soil sources, finds a recent report published by John Schmidt, DuPont Pioneer research scientist. Below says the gap between what a plant can fix and what the plant actually needs is even greater at higher yield levels.

■ A soybean plant can fix all of the N it needs.

FALSE: While soybeans fix nitrogen from the atmosphere with help from rhizobia, a soil bacterium, Below cautions it may not be enough. Soybeans have a large requirement for nitrogen, he says. Soybean seed has a high concentration of protein, and nitrogen is a building block of protein. Nitrogen-fixing nodules typically peak at the R5 growth stage, but the developing soybean seed still needs nitrogen after that. To meet late-season nitrogen demand, the plant “self-destructs” its leaves, further reducing yields. Below says yield and quality suffer when a soybean plant is deficient in nitrogen.

■ It is difficult to predict how soybeans will respond to N.

TRUE: While removal rates might suggest a response to extra nitrogen, research results can be highly variable. Below explains that nitrogen is part of a complex system and must be optimized with all other management inputs. He adds that drought stress, high levels of insect or disease pressure, or deficiency of another mineral nutrient can all reduce yield response. DuPont Pioneer’s Schmidt acknowledges no clear-cut formula to understanding how soybeans will respond to additional nitrogen. But he says some fields may respond better than others. Lighter textured soils with lower levels of organic matter might be most likely to respond to added nitrogen.

■ There is no good way to determine if extra nitrogen will make a difference.

FALSE: Although nitrogen yield response can be difficult to predict, Schmidt recommends farmers interested in adding nitrogen use precision agriculture tools, such as yield monitors, to evaluate results. “For growers with high-yielding soybeans, I recommend they start by adding 20-30 pounds of nitrogen and see what happens,” he says. “If nitrogen is a limiting factor, the difference will be obvious in the yield monitor.”

While the average amount of nitrogen fixed by the soybean increases as yields increase, only a portion of the total nitrogen required is met through nitrogen fixation.

Checkoff Fact: ISA Investigates Nitrogen’s Role

ISA is funding additional research in this area as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting research to increase soybean yields and profits. For more information on John Schmidt’s article on using nitrogen to boost yields, visit http://bit.ly/1IlaGUG.
Weed Out Herbicide Resistance in 2014

Weed resistance is a bigger issue every season. ISA checkoff funds help farmers better manage problem weeds.

“As more Illinois farms experience resistant weeds, farmers will need to take new approaches to weed management,” says Daryl Cates, soybean farmer from Columbia, Ill., and ISA director. “Checkoff funds continue to provide new recommendations for a more integrated weed management plan, which includes knowing your farm’s history, using multiple modes of action, regular scouting and preventing weed seed spread.”

Here are the most prevalent herbicide-resistant weeds in Illinois soybean fields. Can you identify them? Find the answers on page 3.

Choices: Common ragweed, Marestail/horseweed, Palmer amaranth, Common lambsquarters, Giant ragweed, Common waterhemp

- Has shown resistance to five sites of action, including ALS inhibitors, T1R1 Auxin Receptors and PPO Inhibitors.
- Height can range from four inches to 12 feet, but generally grows to four or five feet.
- Seedlings are hairless with leaves that look waxy or glossy.

- Highly aggressive and increasingly prevalent in Illinois.
- Can grow two to three inches per day.
- Leaves are alternate on the stem and generally lance-shaped or egg-shaped with prominent white veins on the underside.

- Has shown resistance to both ALS Inhibitors and EPSP Synthase Inhibitors.
- Pollen-producing.
- Large, three-lobed (occasionally five-lobed) leaves that are opposite each other on the stem.
- Often one to five feet taller than the crop.

- Fern-like leaves grow up to six inches long and four inches wide, with an opposite or alternate arrangement along the stem.
- Stem color can range from green to light pink or red.
- Pollen-producing.
- Reaches an average height of two to four feet.

- Emerges as a winter or summer annual.
- Mature plants can reach six feet tall, but a height of three to five feet is most common.
- Characterized by alternate, linear leaves with entirely or slightly toothed margins. Leaves get progressively smaller in size towards the top of the plant.
- Often confused with whitlow grass, mouseear chickweed, annual fleabane or shepherd’s purse.

ISA’s WeedMap Tool Kit shows which weeds are resistant and what materials, listed by chemical class and sites of action, may not provide effective control. Select an Illinois county to view herbicide-resistant weeds in an area, and visually compare growth stages for different weeds using the photo gallery.

Photos courtesy of United Soybean Board
Not only do Beck’s LibertyLink® soybeans win the fight against weed resistance, but they win the yield battle too! In 1,977 head to head comparisons of Beck’s L4 class of LibertyLink soybeans vs. Genuity® Roundup Ready 2 Yield® (RR2Y) soybeans, Beck’s LibertyLink soybeans win with a 1.2 Bu/A. advantage. Experience the Difference. Plant Beck’s.

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