

June 2021

# *Illinois* **Field & Bean**

A PUBLICATION OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION



**Pioneering  
the Pyramids**

# EGYPT?

**We've  
bean  
there!**

In this issue: Pioneering the Pyramids. With one of the fastest growing food industries in the world, Egypt is taking the lead as the next soybean frontier. Learn how ISA supports this emerging market to help bring profit potential back to our farmers.





# IT'S TIME TO TAKE A STAND

## TOGETHER, WE HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT

As the number one soybean producing state in the U.S., Illinois soybean farmers have a responsibility to protect what they've worked so hard to create. There's no better spokesperson for your farm than you, and that's why we encourage you to make your voice heard through Voice for Soy today.

In just a few clicks and less time than it takes to scroll your social feeds, you can make a difference in important legislative issues such as biodiesel, trade, infrastructure and more. Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) does the work of monitoring these issues impacting Illinois farmers at the state and national levels, engaging you through the Voice for Soy platform when it's time to act. We've laid the groundwork, but you must be the one to fight for the future you want. Your farm's viability, profitability and accessibility are all up to you.

Text "SOY" to 52886 to sign up to  
be a Voice for Soy Advocate today.



ILLINOIS SOYBEAN GROWERS





# CONTENTS

June 2021 Volume 1 Issue 6

## 6 **Pioneering the Pyramids**

Egypt is taking lead as the next great soybean frontier.

## 10 **Cluck Like an Egyptian**

Egyptian poultry investments valued to the tune of around \$5.7 billion USD.

## 12 **Ethnic Fare for Illinois Farmers**

ISA highlights top export markets with special field lunches for farmers.

## 16 **Alex Seeds**

Get to know this mega soy production facility located in the heart of Egypt's industrial zone with an Illinois connection.

## 18 **Working for Soy Excellence**

USSEC is making investments to meet Egypt's growing protein demands.

## 21 **SoyVen**

This joint venture aims to provide soybean meal and oil for customers across Egypt.

## 22 **Partner Perspective**

USSEC's 35 years of partnership lead to progress in Egypt.

## DEPARTMENTS

### 4 **FROM THE BOARDROOM WITH MARK READ**

### 5 **CEO'S MESSAGE**

### 9 **EDITOR'S MESSAGE**



Visit us online at [www.ilsoy.org/magazine/illinois-field-bean](http://www.ilsoy.org/magazine/illinois-field-bean).



**COVER:** The pages of this issue provide a new spin on an ancient story. Egypt is a civilization known for rich storytelling. Today, that story includes soybeans, and their emergence as a major importer for one Illinois' favorite crops.

**CHAIRMAN**  
Doug Schroeder, Mahomet  
District 11

**VICE CHAIRMAN**  
Steve Pitstick, Maple Park  
District 2

**SECRETARY**  
Elliott Uphoff, Shelbyville  
District 10

**TREASURER**  
Dwayne Anderson, Lynn Center  
District 3

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER**  
Scott Gaffner, Greenville  
At-Large Director

**GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**CHAIR**  
Ron Kindred, Atlanta  
District 9

**MARKET DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**CHAIR**  
Rick Rubenacker, McLeansboro  
District 18

**UTILIZATION COMMITTEE CHAIR**  
David Wessel, Chandlerville  
At-Large Director

**DIRECTORS**  
Ryan Frieders, Waterman | District 1  
Buck Hill, Grand Ridge | District 4

Mark Read, Putnam | District 5  
James Martin, Pontiac | District 6  
Bryan Severs, Potomac | District 7  
David Niekamp, Coatsburg |  
District 8  
Brock Willard, Pittsfield | District 12  
Ed Murphy, Farmersville |  
District 13  
Brad Daugherty, West Union |  
District 14  
Jeff Parker, Belleville | District 15  
Brian Atteberry, Carmi | District 16  
Nick Harre, Nashville | District 17

**AT-LARGE DIRECTORS**  
Betsey Emerick, Vandalia  
Brady Holst, Plymouth  
Jeff O'Connor, Kankakee  
Tim Scates, Carmi

**UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD (USB)**  
Doug Winter  
Dan Farney, USB Chairman  
Gary Berg  
Lynn Rohrscheib

**AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION (ASA)**  
Stan Born, ASA Treasurer  
Daryl Cates, ASA Secretary  
David Droste  
Jered Hooker  
Ron Moore  
Bill Raben  
Rob Shaffer  
Bill Wykes

#### STAFF CREDITS

Editor | Rachel Peabody, Illinois Soybean Association  
Assistant Editor | Betsy Osman, Illinois Soybean Association  
Staff Writer | Claire Weinzierl, Illinois Soybean Association  
Staff Writer & Advertising Coordinator | Jill Parrent, Illinois Soybean Association  
Digital Edition & Circulation Manager | Heather Atkinson, Illinois Soybean Association  
Staff Photographer | Stephen Sostaric, Illinois Soybean Association

#### OTHER ISA STAFF

Chief Executive Officer | John Lumpe  
Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer | Brian Hansen  
Senior Director of Government Affairs | Mike Levin  
Director of Ag Innovation | Linda Kull  
Director of Conservation Agriculture | Michael Gill  
Director of Operations | Dustin Scott  
Director of Outreach | Amy Roady  
Director of Public Policy & Market Development | Andrew Larson

The Illinois Soybean Growers is owner of Illinois Field & Bean, a publication for Illinois soybean farmers, designed and written to provide timely and useful industry information. Illinois Field & Bean is published by the Illinois Soybean Association, 1605 Commerce Parkway, Bloomington, IL 61704. For address corrections, contact Illinois Field & Bean at 1605 Commerce Parkway, Bloomington, IL 61704. Phone 309-663-7692. Web address: [www.ilsoy.org](http://www.ilsoy.org). Email: [atkinsonh@ilsoy.org](mailto:atkinsonh@ilsoy.org).

Comments and statewide news articles should be sent to the above address. Advertising space reservations must be made by the first of the month preceding publication. In consideration of the acceptance of advertisement, the agency and the advertiser must, in respect of the contents of the advertisement, indemnify and save the publisher harmless against any expense arising from claims or actions against the publisher because of the publication of the content of the advertisement.

#### FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Rachel Peabody  
Director of Communications  
Phone: (217) 825-7654  
Email: [peabodyr@ilsoy.org](mailto:peabodyr@ilsoy.org)



## FROM THE BOARDROOM

# Eyes on Egypt



MARK READ | ISA District 5 Director

I'm new to the ISA boardroom, but what I've learned during my early days is that opportunity makes this organization snap to attention.

It's been fascinating to watch Egypt reveal itself as one of the most significant markets for U.S. soybeans. An unlikely front-runner, Egypt's interest in our product has to do with our ability to be nimble, respond quickly to their fast-growing needs, and the branded high-quality behind U.S. soy.

The United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) has made great strides in helping develop this market, hungry for both meal and oil. Their poultry and aquaculture industries require considerable soy-based products, and both industries are growing at incredibly fast speeds. It's interesting to note that Egypt has a preference for using soy oil for cooking – even more so than we do here in America.

So what makes this market unique? Here are some fast points of reference:

- Egypt is the third largest importer of U.S. soy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, importing more than 3.7 million tons (135 million bushels) in the most recent marketing year.
- Egypt continues to increase imports of U.S. soybeans with approximately 80 percent market share this marketing year-to-date.
- Egypt imported 2.56 million metric tons of U.S. soybeans through April 2021 – an increase of 9 percent.
- Poultry and aquaculture industry experienced COVID-19 related slowdowns in the last year that impacted demand and profitability but had limited effect on soymeal consumption.
- Egypt's U.S. soy imports continue to increase year-over-year.

As a new board member, I can't think of a better investment of my checkoff dollars than to introduce our exports to growing markets, to explore new regions and potential markets, and to cultivate relationships with industry partners who share our goal for providing farmers substantial returns. Diversifying our export markets is not only a smart use of resources, it's an investment in our long-play and the key to soy farmer sustainability.

There's a reason car windshields are so much bigger than rear-view mirrors. Sure it's important to know what's behind you and where you've been. But keeping your eyes on the road ahead is the only way to get where you need to go.



# Good Opportunities

It's not in my nature to sit on the sidelines of a good opportunity. And when a global market like Egypt increased their soybean imports by twofold in just five years' time, to me, that's the very definition of "good opportunity."

As part of ISA's commitment to Illinois farmers, we keep a close eye on trade. For the past 12 months as the Egypt market has continued to heat up and develop a preference for U.S. soybeans, it became clear to me that we needed to partner with the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) on continuing to nurture that market. Today, Egypt is the third largest soybean market for U.S. soybeans and only projected to grow. You'll read about the industries fueling that growth such as aquaculture and poultry in the pages of this issue.

As far as your soybean checkoff, Egypt is on our map, so to speak. And, we felt that it needed to be on the Illinois farmers' map, too. The entirety of this issue is devoted to keeping you in-the-know about one of the hottest markets to hit the soybean industry in years.

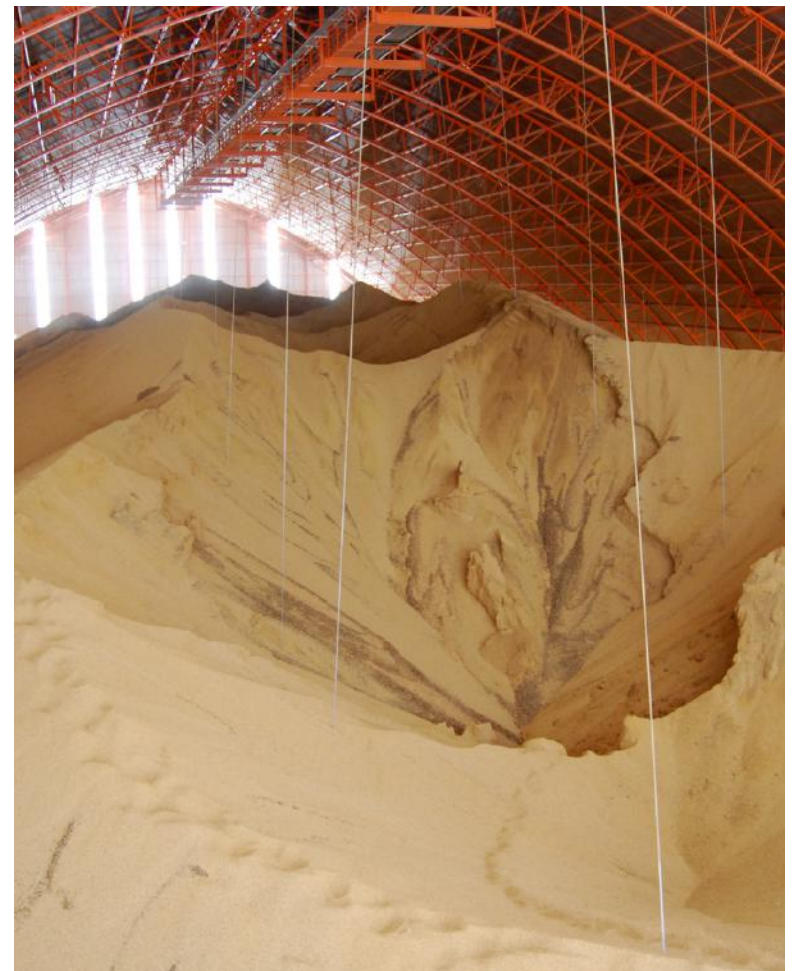
What's next for the soybean checkoff and Egypt? Only time will tell, but our work there is just getting started. We are working alongside USSEC to advance programs that target the whole soybean value chain in Egypt, including supporting traders, crushers, oil refiners, feed millers, poultry producers, and more. The success of the Egyptian industry means only good news for U.S. soybean farmers, and in particular, Illinois soybean farmers who send approximately two out of every three soybean rows to overseas markets.

On behalf of our entire ISA team, it's a pleasure working for the Illinois soybean farmer. You can know that we always have one eye on tomorrow, and we'll always be watching out for what's next, like Egypt for example. Part of recognizing a good opportunity is preparing to be at the front end of those industry revolutions, instead of two-steps behind the history makers. For the top soybean state in the country – only history-making will do.

Let's jump in on this good opportunity together and get to know more about Egypt, a diverse and growing market for your soybeans.



JOHN LUMPE | CEO | Illinois Soybean Association









# Pioneering the Pyramids

Egypt is taking lead as the next great soybean frontier.

By Betsy Osman

**E**gypt is made up of crisscrossing layers that range from the ancient to the modern. “The Land of the Pharaohs” claims the oldest civilization on earth, but today most of Egypt’s major cities fuse together futuristic skyscrapers, highways, international hotels, restaurants, contemporary art museums, local designer clothing shops, ancient monuments, historical mosques, Coptic churches, and traditional souks; all intersecting to create the gripping scene that is modern day Egypt.

Over the past decade, Egypt has grown to become the hub of Africa, home to numerous airports, shipping ports, modern marinas, and interconnected cities enabled by a network of newly developed highway systems. Telecommunications and internet services in Egypt are supported by leading-edge technologies, providing the needed infrastructure for the country’s constant up-reach.

This culture has become a global influencer, sweeping through art, fashion, gastronomy, and culture; a place where ancient thinkers, philosophers, and storytellers have prepared the way for new era efficiencies and contemporary connectivity.

The adage, “less is more” does not apply to this fast-paced frontier. In Egypt, more is more.

And while it may be a surprise to learn that Egypt has stepped forward as a country ripe for growth, as a foreign market for U.S. soybeans. Our go-to market strategy suggests all the ingredients are there for this to be our next hot trade space, including strong economic activity, a growing population, and an almost unsatisfiable demand for protein.

“It’s true, Egypt has emerged as one of the strongest markets for U.S. soybeans,” says Eric Woodie, for the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA). “This growth can be attributed to increased crush capacity in Egypt, which has been driven by the growth of protein demand in the diets of consumers. The U.S. has been at the forefront of this rise in demand and has met their increased needs over the past five years.”

As the most populous country in the Middle East, Egypt has a young, expanding population and an increasing diet of meat, milk, and eggs. This climbing demand for protein can be attributed to households joining the Egyptian middle-class. “We know Egyptian crush capacity continues



Egypt has emerged as one of the strongest markets for U.S. soybeans. — Photo by United Soybean Board

(See Pioneering the Pyramids, page 8 )



# Pioneering the Pyramids

(continued from page 7)

to expand," says Woodie. "The USDA is estimating it will reach 8.4 million metric tons daily in 2021-2022, which is the result of new facilities coming on-line," says Woodie. "In order to meet this demand, Egypt needs to import the soybeans."

In 2019, U.S. exports of food and agricultural products to Egypt reached \$1.59 billion, up 100 percent compared to a low of \$795 million in 2017. U.S. soybeans led export growth in value in 2019, reaching \$995 million. Through July 2020, U.S. soybean exports to Egypt were up 65 percent at \$834 million and are contributing positively to \$1.2 billion in food and agricultural product exports, which are now up 22 percent. With expanded crush capacity, Egypt is shifting to greater imports of soybeans for local

processing into value-added products such as soybean meal and oil.

Illinois soybeans typically arrive in Egypt by way of the U.S. Gulf Coast, moving through barges from the heart of Illinois to the Gulf via the Illinois Waterway, then through the Atlantic to the Mediterranean to Alexandria Port of Egypt or Damietta Port of Egypt.

But why the interest in U.S. specific soybeans? According to Woodie, it comes down to our agility, speed, and quality.

"The U.S. has demonstrated our ability to react to a market hungry for more soybeans," says Woodie. "Egypt has seen how efficient and productive it can be to utilize U.S. soy and has ultimately been won over by our ability to provide quality product and exceptional logistics, year-in and year-out."

Mousa Wakileh is a Regional Consultant for the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) and has spent many years aligning foreign needs with U.S. solutions.

"The U.S. soy industry and USSEC have been working in Egypt and the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region for many more than years," says Wakileh. "In that time, we've witnessed immense change and growth in the poultry, dairy, and aquaculture industries. The MENA region soy crushing industry started increasing capacity 15 years ago and has expanded aggressively over the past five years. This helped MENA become one of fastest growing soy markets in the world."

USSEC is also working to increase soy oil consumption by providing technical assistance to soy oil refiners, which paves the path to continued production of high-quality soybean oil. Providing technical assistance to feed millers also helps increase soy oil inclusion rates in locally produced feed.

So how does Illinois stay at the front of this new market opportunity? According to Wakileh, it comes down to communication.

"I believe continued cooperation between USSEC and local industries to provide more support to the aquaculture and poultry industries in Egypt will help to improve performance, decrease the costs of production, and encourage producers to expand their productions so as to increase consumption per capita," says Wakileh.

Woodie adds that Illinois growers are well-positioned to take advantage of this burgeoning market.

Adds Woodie, "Illinois growers are well-positioned to take advantage of this burgeoning market. The work we are doing now in developing relationships, expanding our educational efforts to farmers and those involved in the supply chain to ensure that we continue to provide the Egyptian market with exactly what they need is the best way forward. It is vital that we continue to support this marketplace by hosting buying teams, providing technical assistance, and connecting buyers and sellers."

## The DeLong Co., Inc.

**Originating from farmer producers and elevators in the heartland of American agriculture, our grains and feedstuffs are trans-loaded into containers for shipments around the world.**

**Products we are interested in purchasing: Soybeans (GMO and non-GMO), Soybean Meal, Corn, Wheat, Organics (Corn, Soybeans, Wheat), Sorghum/Milo, Specialty Corns (Non-GMO Yellow, White, Blue, Waxy, Hard Endo)**



16 locations in Illinois  
39 locations around the U.S.



**delongcompany.com - Let's Talk! - 608.676.3021**  
**Download The DeLong Co., Inc. App at:**







RACHEL PEABODY | Editor | Illinois Soybean Association

# New Chapters

The pages of Illinois Field & Bean are where we get to tell farmers good news, and it's always exciting when we get to write a new chapter in the Illinois soybean story. This month, we are excited to bring you this special edition dedicated entirely to Egypt, a thriving market with an increasing demand for your soybeans. The pages of this issue are chock full of good news for soybean farmers as we explore the myriad of ways Egypt has established an appetite for soy.

Read this month's feature *Pioneering the Pyramids* on page 7, and you'll learn about Egypt's quick climb to being the third highest soybean importer in the world. You'll read about how Illinois in particular is well-positioned to be a significant supplier of their protein needs.

Take a look at page 10, and read about Egypt's robust poultry market. They have come to rely on the known quality of U.S. soybeans and contribute it to higher performance in their nearly 55,000 poultry establishments country-wide.

The good news continues on page 12 where we showcase a spring planting tactic – trade and export themed lunch deliveries to the field. While farmers were busy planting the 2021 soybean crop, we were able to show our appreciation for their hard work by delivering lunch right to the tractor. Dennis Wentworth, at his farm near LeRoy, got some Egyptian-infused cuisine delivered directly to the field this year, along with the message that ISA's trade and export programs are nurturing this important new market for his crop.

When thinking about checkoff investments and the nuts and bolts of "what's really in it for farmers," there's a lot to get excited about when it comes to promoting robust trade and export programs. It all comes down to return on investment, and for a farmer, there's no better return on their investment than increased demand from new markets all over the globe.

You keep growing great soybeans, and ISA will keep growing great markets. In the pages of this issue of Illinois Field & Bean, we will keep telling great stories to keep you informed about your checkoff's ongoing work.

New chapters are fun, and Illinois soy and our growing relationship with a dynamic Egyptian market makes for exciting times. We thank you for the opportunity to work around the world on your behalf, and for the opportunity to write another page in the Illinois soy story.

Your soybean stories are important to us, too. Drop us a line today at [ilsoy@ilsoy.org](mailto:ilsoy@ilsoy.org).







The World Organisation for Animal Health officially listed Egypt among countries with "avian influenza free establishments" and granted approval for the continuation of exports last year.

# Cluck Like an Egyptian

Egyptian poultry investments valued to the tune of around \$5.7 billion USD.

*By Claire Weinzierl*

**B**ack in 2006, poultry exports out of Egypt were suspended by the National Veterinary Authority following an outbreak of bird flu.

Avian influenza, also known as fowl plague or bird flu, affects species of all kinds and ages, worldwide. Effects of the virus include respiratory

distress, coughing, sneezing, rales, depression, sinusitis, emaciation, feed refusal, and more. In poultry specifically, there is a decrease in egg production and shell quality in layers. In order to prevent the spread of the virus, control of live bird markets is important.

In 2020, the World Organisation for Animal Health officially listed Egypt among countries with "avian influenza free

establishments" and granted the long-awaited approval for the continuation of exports. Now, there are about 14 poultry companies in Egypt that are authorized to export.

Following the approval, Egyptian companies that showed no evidence of infection with avian influenza viruses were able to resume exporting their products for the first time in over a decade,

starting in the last quarter of 2020. Eligible products for export include day-old chicks, table eggs, hatching eggs, and broiler chickens. Resuming exports is expected to help boost poultry production, support the economy, and increase Egypt's foreign reserves.

Having to cease exports back in 2006 took a toll on Egypt's economy, and particularly impacted the protein



sector itself. Poultry investments in the Egyptian market are currently around 90 billion Egyptian pounds (\$5.7 billion USD) while there are more than 55,000 poultry establishments in the country, employing around 2.5 million workers. Egypt handles around four million chickens a day, with an average annual production of 1.4 billion chickens and 13 billion eggs.

Egypt's export destinations for poultry products include gulf countries Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), both of which were the first markets to open for Egyptian poultry products and live birds late last year.

However, impacts of the bird flu were also the driving force behind the improvement of Egypt's poultry production systems.

"The production system itself became more integrated, and more up-to-date because once exports ceased, producers were forced to improve farms and the overall system," says Mousa Wakileh, Regional Consultant for the Middle East and North Africa, U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC).

"Farms had to improve not only in their performance, but in their hygiene," says Wakileh. "The export suspension made the system become more controlled and eggs become cleaner."

With Egypt as one of the fastest growing export markets for U.S. soy, USSEC met with the Egyptian Poultry Association to discuss opportunities for training and education around U.S. soy in animal agriculture. The organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding, committing to the establishment of online and in-person cooperative agricultural training services in Egypt. Representing the Egyptian Poultry Association was its President Mahmoud Al Anani.

Wakileh remarks that Anani is an asset to the organization,

as he is the largest producer of poultry and feed in Egypt. Anani owns and serves as chairman of the Dakahlia Poultry Co., which owns a state-of-the-art poultry feed factory, producing 3,000 metric tons (MT) per day and a fish feed factory producing 400 mt per day.

"Anani wants to encourage the domestic production of poultry, and since his election, he has met with the Ministry of Agriculture and managed to ban imports of frozen chicken," says Wakileh. "He believes small- and medium-sized producers can be convinced to increase their production, and Egypt will not need any more imports of frozen chicken from the outside."

The Egyptian government has made efforts to build new poultry houses in order to increase production, thus eliminating the need to import frozen chicken, and also helping producers with financing through a low interest, government program.

Egypt utilizes the soybean meal as a high-protein feed ingredient for its poultry, aquaculture, and dairy diets. The U.S. is Egypt's largest supplier of soybean imports, and 2019-

2020 was a record year for U.S. soybean exports to Egypt at 3.83 million metric tons (MMT). According to the USDA Foreign Ag Service (FAS), Egypt's soybean imports in marketing year 2021-2022 are forecast at 4.6 MMT, with soybean meal specifically forecast at 3.9 MMT.

Now that poultry exports may resume, USDA FAS expects Egypt's imports of U.S. soy to increase approximately

200,000 MMT more U.S. soybeans from last year.

There are approximately 110 million people in Egypt, and Wakileh says Egypt has a year-round preference for U.S. soybeans with an annual growth of U.S. soy imports year-over-year. Wakileh adds U.S. soybeans have a higher amino acid profile compared to soybeans from other origins that help livestock producers achieve better performance.

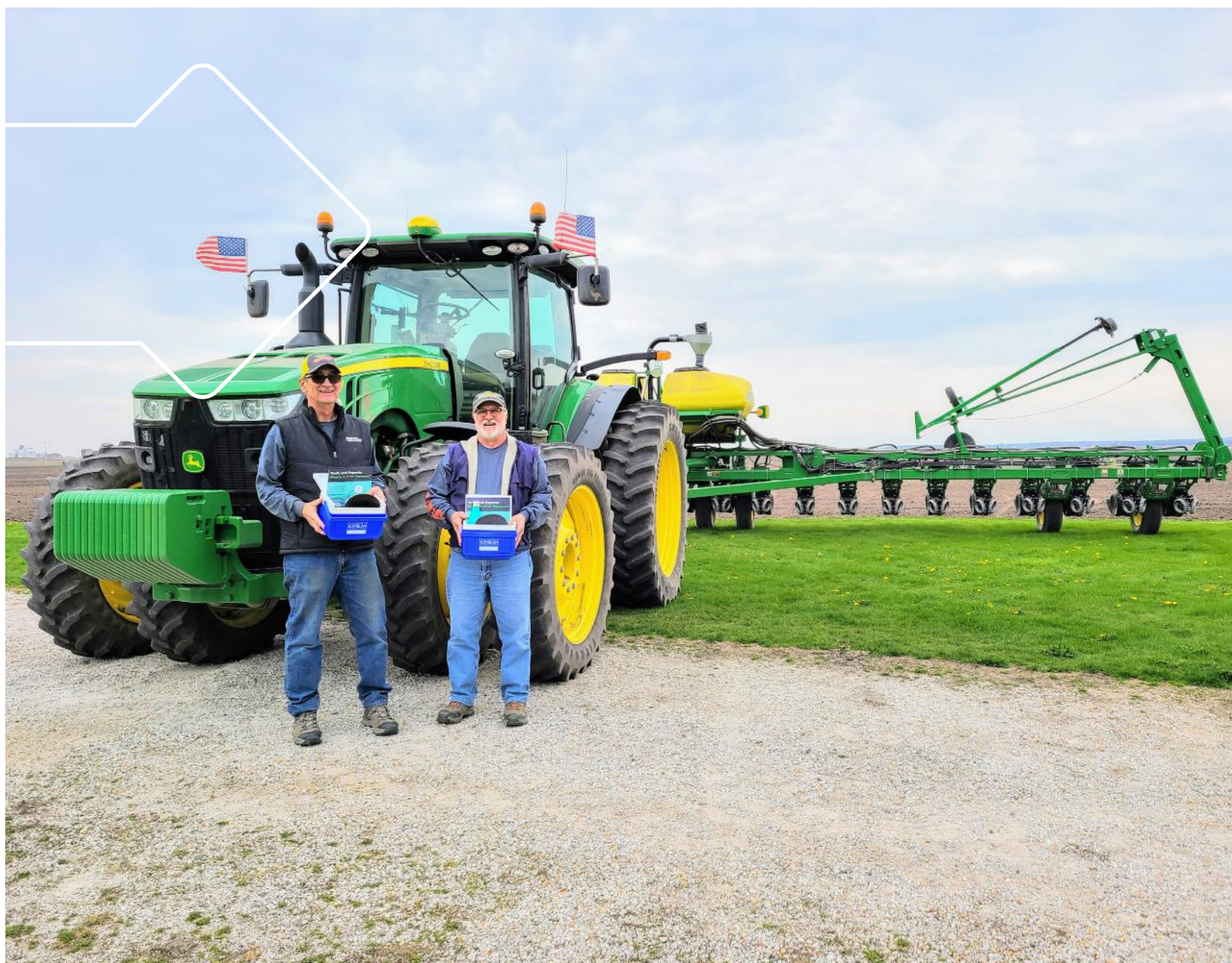


Eligible products for export from Egypt include day-old chicks, table eggs, hatching eggs, and broiler chickens.



Egypt utilizes U.S. soybean meal as a high-protein feed ingredient for its poultry, aquaculture and dairy diets.





Dennis Wentworth and Bill McHie of Wentworth Family Farms in Downs, Illinois, received an Egyptian-inspired lunch delivered to the field during planting.

# Ethnic Fare for Illinois Farmers

ISA highlights top export markets with special field lunches for farmers.

By Jill Parrent

**T**his spring, planters were in the field full force with lots of cab time to ensure seeds were accurately put in the ground. With busy spring schedules, there is little time for anything else for the farmer. This spring, the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) wanted to help celebrate our farmers

who are growing quality crops by delivering a meal to them in the field.

Illinois soybean farmers are industrious, not-stopping-till-the-light-is-gone individuals, and ISA wanted to do something unexpected and a little different to show our appreciation for all they do. During the busyness of planting, ISA staff

celebrated our farmers by delivering meals. These meals were just a little different than the traditional sandwich, chips, and cookie often eaten on-the-go in the tractor. Each meal focused on one of the top countries for U.S. soybean exports, and the meals were enjoyed over conversations during a short break from the planting.

The menu was from one of the six key trade markets of Illinois soybeans. These countries include Egypt, Mexico, Indonesia, Pakistan, Taiwan, and Bangladesh and are top exporting markets for Illinois soybeans. The meals included chilaquiles from Mexico, shawarmas from Egypt, and gua bao from Taiwan. Although



different, an unexpected change of pace to the planting season hustle and bustle was welcomed with open arms.

In addition to the meals, relationships were built and market knowledge was gained by both Illinois farmers and ISA staff. After soybeans leave the field, sometimes we don't know their destination. But with this opportunity to bring a meal to the field, we were able to educate and inform about the exciting trip the soybeans take.

One of the farms we were able to visit was the Wentworth Farm near Leroy, Ill., where the planters were able to enjoy beef

and chicken shawarmas, an Egyptian cuisine.

Dennis Wentworth has had the opportunity to visit Egypt previously, where he was able to experience the location his soybeans may travel after leaving his farm.

"This short break to visit with ISA during the busyness of planting allowed me and my family to be able to take a break and learn about where the seed we are putting in the ground may end up. Egypt is an important market, and although it may be a little different than countries we may usually think of, it's important to know about and

grow soybeans for countries like them."

Each farmer visited by ISA staff was provided information regarding foreign markets' effects on them directly. From charting routes for a greater return on investment (ROI), to direct returns for healthy trade markets, there is an increased demand for Illinois soybean products.

This fun and out-of-the-ordinary tactic allowed ISA to let farmers know they see them and appreciate them. After a year of not being able to be face to face with our farmers, this opportunity enabled ISA to show farmers how much they are valued.

These farmers are the backbone of the ISA, and we wanted to be able to celebrate and let them know how thankful we are for their dedication to agriculture in a small way during this 2021 planting season. Delivering foods was just a small token of appreciation for everything farmers do to help Illinois be the largest soybean producer in the nation with some of the highest quality soybean. We hope for a safe and healthy planting season for every farmer.

To learn more about ISA's ongoing work to support U.S. trade and exports visit, [\*\*ILSoy.org/tradeandexports\*\*](https://ILSoy.org/tradeandexports).

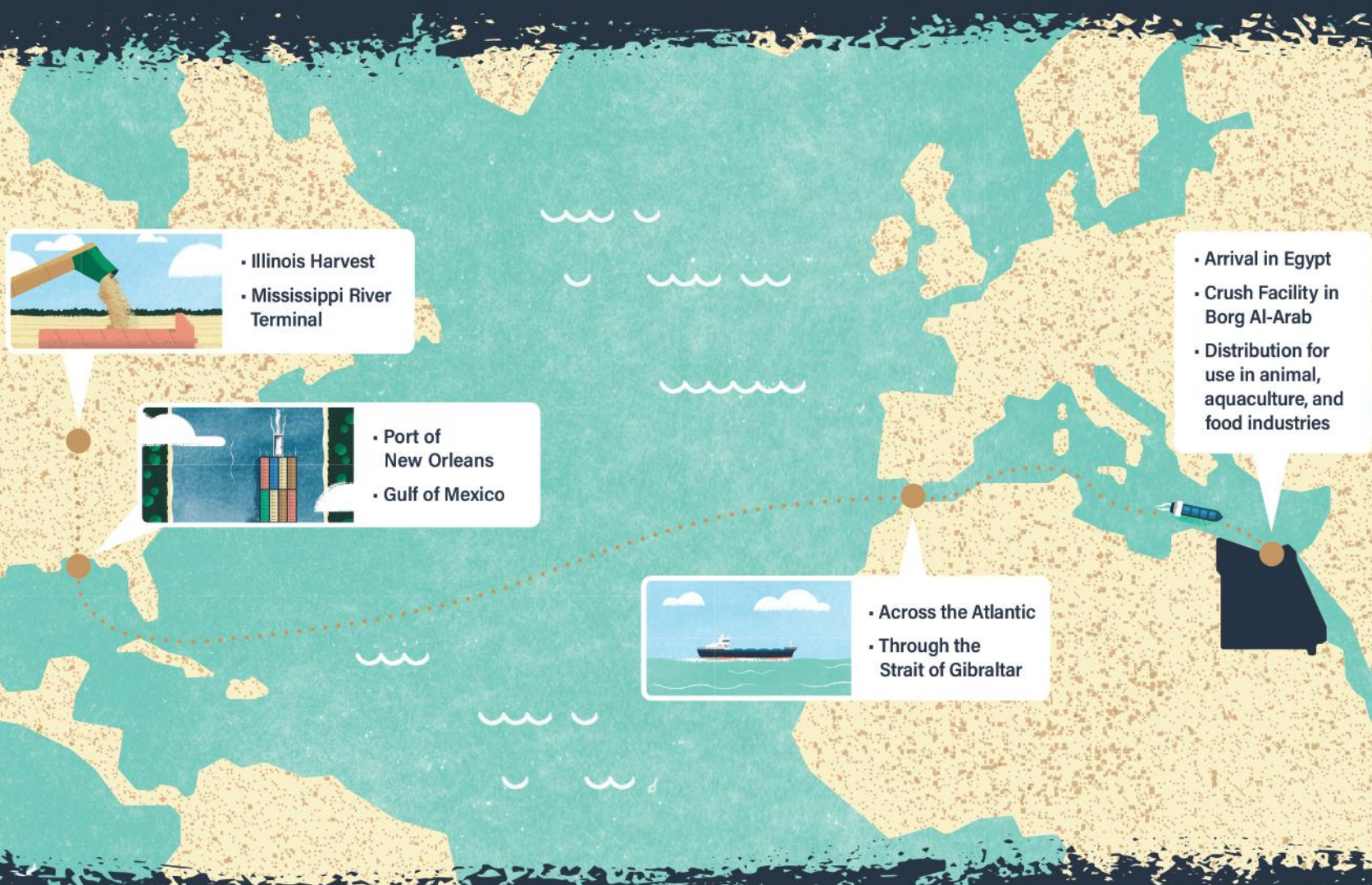


**LEFT:** Andrew Bowman and Matt Hulsizer of Oneida, Illinois, received a meal in the field representing Mexico. **RIGHT:** Roy Wendte and Wendte Farms Ltd. in Altamont, Illinois, were busy planting but stopped for a short break for a to the field delivery.



# Illinois Soy: From the Midwest to the Middle East

Egypt is opening significant trade and export opportunities for Illinois Soy due to growing demand from the country's animal, aquaculture, and food processing industries. These industries imported 3.7 million tons of U.S. soybeans in the marketing year 2019-2020 alone.<sup>1</sup> That's the "why" behind this exciting new market. But how do Illinois soybeans make their way from farmers' fields to end users halfway around the world? Let's take a look.



Visit [ILSoy.org/TradeandExports](https://ilssoy.org/TradeandExports)

To learn more about our ongoing work  
to support U.S. trade and exports.

**We've bean there?**







## **FUEL YOUR BOTTOM LINE WITH BIODIESEL.**

Illinois-grown soybeans are the key to increased grower profit potential and a source of high-quality, sustainable fuel. That's because they are used to make B20, a blend of 80-percent petroleum diesel and 20-percent biodiesel. Fueling your farm equipment with B20 is like putting money back in your own pocket because it adds more than 10% to the price of soybeans. To learn more about the benefits of biodiesel, visit [ilsoy.org/about-biodiesel](http://ilsoy.org/about-biodiesel).







Alex Seeds is the only fully integrated soy production facility in all of the Middle East and North Africa region.

# Alex Seeds

**Get to know this mega soy production facility located in the heart of Egypt's industrial zone with an Illinois connection.**

By Betsy Osman

**A**lexandria Company for Seed Processing & Derivatives (S.A.E), or "Alex Seeds" as it's more commonly known, has become one of the major oil seeds processors in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region with a

mega production plant located in the heart of the Borg El-Arab industrial zone.

"Alex Seeds is the only fully integrated facility in all of the Middle East and North Africa region," reports David Headley, Trade Team Coordinator for the Illinois Soybean Association

(ISA). "The company has several certifications both Halal, Egyptian Quality Mark, and SGS to process products."

This rapidly-growing company is being recognized globally as a quality manufacturer and a trusted supplier of oil seed products such as soya meal,

soybean oil, and soy lecithin. It has a strong presence in the fast-moving consumer goods market with three soybean oil brands: Solo, Shatara, and Karamesh, each targeting different customer segments.

In 2017, Alexandria Co. adopted its first initiative to grow sun-



flower seeds in Egyptian fields and extract oil in their factories, creating a fully-integrated process and thus, positioning the company's product as key brands in the market. With over 260 valuable, highly-qualified employees, Alex Seeds has established two sister companies, Solo Food Industries and Egus, LLC, to best serve its mission and loyal customer base.

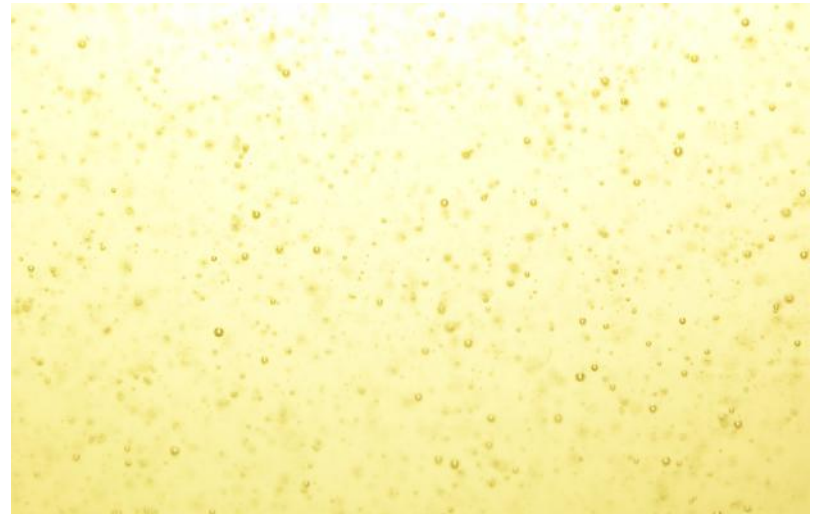
According to Headley, the company's decision to maintain a Chicago office has been a strategic one.

"Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we would meet with the Alex Seeds Office at least once a year to foster relationships," says Headley. "Chicago is the only U.S. office for the company, which is critical as the company executes trades and futures on the Chicago Board of Trade."

Eric Woodie, Trade Analyst for ISA, agrees that a home-court advantage has been a value add for the company.

"For large, vertically integrated companies like Alex, proximity to origination points is vantageous," says Woodie. "They can closely monitor their supply chain movements and crop conditions in real time. What better place to be than Illinois to keep a close eye on the world's most reliable supplier of quality soybeans."

Alex Seeds stands for high-quality products and providing leadership in the vegetable oil production and animal feed industries, with a strong distribution system in local and foreign markets. The company works to continually adopt the latest technology, promote excellence in processing, and work



**Alex Seeds for Seed Processing & Derivatives (S.A.E) is a major oilseed processor in the MENA region.**

with professional ethics to fulfill their commitment to customer needs. Their core values include quality, safety, integration, human resources, and technology.

The company attributes its success to the trust and confi-

dence they've carefully cultivated in customers by delivering consistently high-quality products, meeting international standards, and providing end consumers with reliability.



**An up close look at soybean meal, Illinois farmers produce a pivotal component of livestock rations around the world.**





From left to right: Ahmed Wally, Agricultural Specialist, FAS Cairo; Mousa Wakileh, Regional Consultant, USSEC; Mariano J. Beillard, Senior Agricultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy / FAS Cairo, Egypt; Jim Sutter, Chief Executive Officer, U. S. Soybean Export Council; Thomas Goldberger, Chargé D'Affaires, Embassy of the USA; Keith Tapp, Chairman, United Soybean Board (USB); Lewis Bainbridge, Past Chairman, South Dakota, United Soybean Board (USB); Stan Born, National Director, American Soybean Association (ASA); and Brent Babb, Regional Director, EU & MENA, U. S. Soybean Export Council.

# Working for Soy Excellence

**USSEC is making investments to meet Egypt's growing protein demands.**

By Jill Parrent

**A**s Egypt continues up the charts of becoming a large importer of U.S. soy, the need for advanced knowledge and a centralized location for meetings and activities has become vital to the success of the Egypt soy market. Currently the third highest importer of U.S. soybean, Egypt continues to grow its way to distinction while housing the Soy Excellence Center (SEC).

In the fall of 2019, the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) opened the SEC in Cairo, Egypt to assist in the growing market's

protein challenges. It also works to enhance connections that can drive the market opportunities in Egypt.

## Soy Excellence Center

Before opening the SEC in Egypt, USSEC had to be decisive and intentional in where to lay down their potential roots internationally. After research and deep conversation, they found the needs were in Egypt, which has strong economic activity, a growing population, and a rising demand for protein. The desire for protein has continued to grow with aquaculture and poultry as some of

the main consumers for soy.

Mousa Wakileh, USSEC Regional Representative - Middle East/North Africa, emphasized the need for the SEC due to the market share's growth in the past few years.

"There is a strong preference for U.S. soy in Egypt," says Wakileh. "This center allows us to improve feed and feed conversion ratio while allowing business to be more profitable and grow consumption."

## Goals of the SEC

1. Support development of the soy-relevant agriculture and food sectors.

2. Provide sustainable and renewable education and learning model for relevant best local practices.

3. Develop strong relationships with key stakeholders for anticipated soy import demand.

These objectives work towards the ability of the SEC to educate visitors, to be a central location for connecting and growing, and to enhance soy market opportunities in Egypt. Since 2019, there have been over 43 events conducted with 4,750 participants that have been held at the SEC with more anticipated.



## The Growth

The Soy Excellence Center integrates education and relationship building with animal agriculture. The center assists in growing and concentrating soy efforts in Egypt.

To demonstrate the desire for U.S. soybeans, an April report distributed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) shows that between October 2020 through February 2021, Egypt had already imported some 1.89 million metric tons (MMT) of soybeans with 92.2 percent of the volume coming from the U.S. This large number and desire for soy was another reason the SEC was developed.

During the past five years, Egyptian imports of U.S. soy have continuously increased, according to USSEC. In 2017, Egypt imported 807,000 metric tons of U.S. soy, according to the USDA. Last year, exports landed at a booming 3.7 MMT. These outstanding numbers alone prove the importance of utilizing Egypt as one of the faster growing soy markets in the world. This brought around the importance of having a place where learning can occur and cooperation can continue.

## Aquaculture

Egyptian aquaculture feed industry currently includes 73 privately-owned feed mills, providing 90 percent of aquaculture feed. This industry is increasing Egypt's soybean imports thanks to expanded local crush capacity. Aquaculture is an important aspect of soy in Egypt. Egypt is first in Africa and sixth internationally of the world's largest fish farming countries. Fish grown include mainly tilapia, but also carp, catfish, sea bream, sea bass, and shrimp.

Soybean meal is important as common fish feed formulas contain 35 to 40 percent soybean meal, according to the USDA. With over 100 fish associations, 10,000 ponds for fish, and 5,000 family fish farms, aquaculture



Opening of the Soy Excellence Center in Cairo, Egypt in 2019.



Stan Born, Illinois soybean farmer speaking at the launch of the Egypt Soy Excellence Center.

is a large industry nationwide, according to Wakileh.

"The Nile River is such an important aspect of our aquaculture," says Wakileh. "In the past few years, we have been able to double or triple fish production using the same amount of water by utilizing soy."

Because of soy imports, a once seasonal fish crop is now year-round. This change has helped an industry flourish, enhancing the need for soybeans in Egypt.

## Poultry

The SEC also assists in sharing poultry knowledge with Egyptian growers who utilize soy production. According to a 2017 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization report, poultry production is forecasted to increase by 14 percent over the next six years. Because of this growth, the SEC is in the prime location to assist in growing this market, community, and increase of soy use.

The SEC is in a prime location for a growing soy industry. The use and need of soybeans continue to grow at a rapid rate, allowing U.S. soybeans to be the preferred import. This is only the beginning of USSEC events and activities with an ability for greater growth and involvement. Since the center's inception two years ago, it continues to provide updated soy education, advocating for the preference, and use of U.S. soy in Egypt and beyond.





# Egypt Wants Illinois Soy

When you consider the characteristics buyers in this growing market value most, Illinois soybeans fit the bill perfectly.



**Quality:** Egyptian buyers seek out high-protein soybean meal from Illinois for use in pork and poultry production, aquaculture and other livestock feed rations.



**Consistent Supply & Competitive Pricing:** Egyptian buyers are price-driven, and Illinois soybean farmers have kept soybeans affordable by increasing yield and productivity while decreasing costs.



**Cost Effective, Reliable Transportation:** River transportation for bulk export shipments keeps shipping costs in line. With Illinois' proximity to inland waterways, Illinois soybeans have a distinct advantage for Egyptian buyers.

*"With the help of USSEC and the farmers, we hope to accelerate the technology, improve the processing techniques and increase the use of your soy in our country."*

Tony Freiji, Executive Chairman of Wadi Group and Egyptian buyer of U.S. soybeans

Visit [ILSoy.org/TradeandExports](https://ilssoy.org/TradeandExports)

To learn more about our ongoing work to support U.S. trade and exports.

We've bean there! 





# SOYVEN™

A CARGILL - ADM JOINT VENTURE



By bringing together the strengths and capabilities of both Cargill and ADM in Egypt, this joint venture is uniquely positioned to meet specific customer needs in the growing Egyptian market.

## SoyVen

**This joint venture aims to provide soybean meal and oil for customers across Egypt.**

By Betsy Osman

**A**rcher Daniels Midland Company (ADM) and Cargill have successfully launched SoyVen, their new joint venture to provide soybean meal and oil for customers in Egypt.

SoyVen owns and operates the National Vegetable Oil Company soy crush facility in Borg Al-Arab, along with related commercial and functional activities, including a separate Switzerland-based entity supplying soybeans to the Egypt crush plant. The plant's daily crush capacity has been doubled to 6,000 metric tons in order to meet increasing Egyptian demand for higher-protein soybean meal and for oil, reducing the need for imports.

The new company, which will function as an independent entity, is headed by Chief Executive Officer, Ahmet Ertürk, who previously held global management positions in Cargill's malt, grains, and oilseeds businesses.

"By bringing together the strengths and capabilities of both Cargill and ADM in Egypt, this joint venture is uniquely positioned to meet specific customer needs in the growing Egyptian market," said Ertürk. "The demand for high-quality soybean meal and for oil from both the food manufacturing and animal feed sectors continues to rise, and I'm confident customers will turn to SoyVen as the premier provider in Egypt."

The joint venture consists of ADM and Cargill each holding

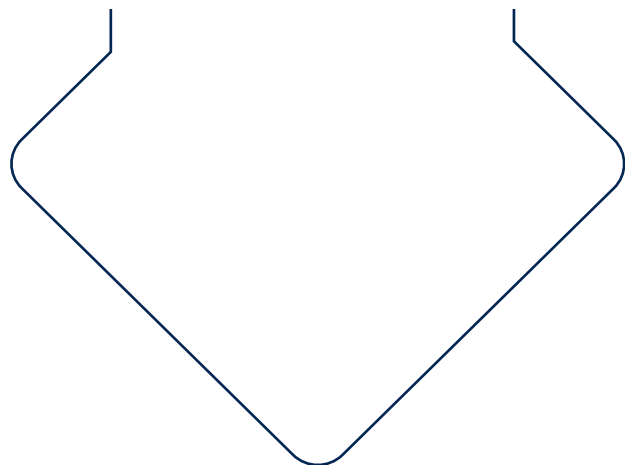
a 50 percent interest, with the management team reporting to a board of directors appointed by the two parent companies. The joint venture's assets do not include Cargill's grain business and

port terminal in Dekheila, or the ADM-Medsofts joint venture at the Port of Alexandria. Each company will continue its separate business activities in the country and region.



The joint venture was announced in 2020 and is key to increasing ADM and Cargill's presence in the region.





# 35 years of partnership lead to progress in Egypt



JIM SUTTER | CEO | USSEC

Recently, I had the pleasure of discussing the evolving soy market with leaders at the Egyptian Poultry Association. A key point that stuck with me was the association's focus on education and support for smallholder farmers, who are responsible for about 65 percent of Egypt's poultry production today.

The association is taking a broad view with its support programs, with the understanding that when farmers of all sizes succeed and prosper, it benefits everyone.

That's exactly the same approach that has fueled the success story of U.S. Soy's 35-year partnership with leaders in feed, food, and agriculture in Egypt. It's a classic example of a simple truth: when we do the right things to help our customers grow and prosper, we open opportunities to grow and prosper along with them. With our Soy Excellence Center in Egypt and wide-ranging education and technical support programs across the country, we have helped customers build the market and boost efficiency in key areas such as aquaculture and poultry production. These programs, along with the consistent high quality, reliability, and sustainability of U.S. Soy, have in turn resulted in significant growth and continued opportunity for us in the market.

When the U.S. Soy Excellence center (USSEC) first started working in Egypt, the country imported the vast majority of its soy meal, but today, about 95 percent of meal is supplied by local crushers. Utilization of existing crushing facilities is about 80 percent today – up from around 50 percent just a few years ago – and operators are focused on building additional capacity to meet growing demand for animal protein. USSEC's ongoing support throughout the value chain has helped to facilitate this expansion, making the Middle East and North Africa region one of the fastest-growing markets for U.S. soy worldwide.

Today, one area that USSEC focuses on is supporting the increased use of soy oil by providing technical assistance to soy refiners and feed millers. This kind of programming facilitates local feed production and that of value-added products for use in

Egypt and neighboring countries. We also help producers adopt a more efficient means of production, providing technical support for development of highly efficient In-Pond Raceway Systems and supporting a shift from conventional pellet feeds to extruded feeds. This work helps ensure year-round availability of tilapia and other products in Egypt, as well as growing export opportunities for aquaculture producers.

Egypt and many other countries in the MENA region still maintain lower-than-average per-capita consumption of protein, with the strongest demand seen in poultry, dairy, and aquaculture. With expanding modern infrastructure and increasingly more efficient operations throughout the value chain, our customers in Egypt are well-positioned to meet growing demands throughout the region. And, of course, increased consumption and export opportunities for our customers translates to additional opportunity to U.S. Soy.

Our teams on the ground in Egypt and those who support them have done tremendous work to support the market, and that has helped us build strong customer preference for U.S. Soy. We're making important contributions every day. Even as I write this, I learned of a USSEC team in Egypt that visited a local poultry producer who was struggling with a poultry disease issue. Our team took the initiative to reach out to a U.S.-based university partner, and we were able to facilitate a seminar with a poultry veterinary expert to help them resolve the issue. It's one simple-yet-powerful example of our successful approach: do the right things to help our partners succeed and grow, enabling U.S. soy to grow along with them.

In the special Illinois Field & Bean issue, you have read more about the scope and breadth of USSEC's activities in Egypt, and the opportunities ahead for both our customers and the U.S. Soy ecosystem. I hope this information leaves you sharing my excitement for the accomplishments achieved by this highly successful partnership and looking forward to our next mutual steps forward.



# JOIN THE PREMIUM CLUB

You put in work year-round to produce a crop that has high yield and impact on a personal, local, and global level, and we think you deserve a greater return. SoybeanPremiums.org exists to simplify soybean premium programs and elevate your business, and we invite you to be a part of our Premium Club. Consider [soybeanpremiums.org](http://soybeanpremiums.org) your go-to resource for insights and opportunities you can't access anywhere else.

*Unlock greater potential in your soybeans*

Visit [SoybeanPremiums.org](http://SoybeanPremiums.org) to see premiums available in your area and more.





Sent to you compliments of:

Illinois Soybean Association  
1605 Commerce Pkwy  
Bloomington, IL 61704

NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN  
GROWERS



## MEET YOUR NEW GO-TO MULTI-TOOL.

Every farmer has that pocket tool that never leaves their side. That tool that can do a little bit of everything. With actionable tips from soybean experts, industry news and insights, connections to other Illinois farmers, events, webinars and more, ILSoyAdvisor is the latest multi-tool you shouldn't farm without.



[ILSOYADVISOR.COM](http://ILSOYADVISOR.COM)

