

OCTOBER 2025

Illinois Field & Bean

A PUBLICATION OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

SOY AROUND THE WORLD

*Opening Foreign
Markets*





G5 or G5^{Plus} Display

Analyze field data with a multilayer view display



StarFire™ 7500 Receiver

Get precise seed placement with SF-RTK accuracy within 2.5 cm



JDLink™ M or R Modem

Stay connected to monitor your operation in real time



John Deere Operations Center™

Seamlessly connect all your in-field data



JOHN DEERE

Precision Essentials Kit

TURN CURRENT MACHINES INTO PRECISION WORKHORSES

Want to pull more value out of your older machines – even non-Deere ones?

Precision Essentials bundles everything you need to connect machines, stream field data, and open doors to more guidance and automation. All for one low, upfront cost. Technology that's More Affordable. More Accessible. More Adaptable.



Get precise at [JohnDeere.com/Essentials](https://www.johndeere.com/Essentials)



CONTENTS

October 2025

Volume 5 Issue 12

6 On the Ground in Indonesia

ISA recently traveled to Indonesia to explore growth potential for U.S. soy's No. 4 trade partner.

10 Meet the Illinois Soybean Board's New District Directors

Three new Illinois soybean farmers were recently elected to the Illinois Soybean Board of Directors, each bringing unique experiences and perspectives to help shape the future of our industry.

14 Connecting Farmers to International Markets

The annual Soy Connex event gathers soy buyers, sellers, farmers and other supply chain members from around the world to share and gain insights into U.S. soybean production.

18 Farmers Drive Checkoff-Funded Research for 2025-2026

Every year, ISA's farmer-led Board takes a careful, science-based approach to investing checkoff dollars where they matter: back into your fields.

20 Uniting for Global Impact

The International Commercialization Initiative (ICI) of ISA's Soy Innovation Center unites soybean organizations to advance market development efforts.

22 Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance Strengthens Ties with Illinois Soybean

Since the Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance's inception in 2019, ISA has been one of its biggest supporters, providing vital funding for key initiatives through its checkoff program.

24 Global Markets to Watch

Explore the emerging markets ISA is targeting to ensure Illinois soybean farmers are well-positioned to seize new opportunities.

DEPARTMENTS

4 FROM THE BOARDROOM

5 CEO'S MESSAGE

24 PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

26 VOICE FOR SOY



COVER: Join the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) on a journey to expand global opportunities for Illinois soybean farmers. Discover why Illinois is better positioned than most states to meet rising demand, explore the international markets ISA is targeting and learn how U.S. soybean organizations are working together to increase the use of soy-based industrial products worldwide. Plus, get an inside look at ISA's recent trade mission to Indonesia.



CHAIRMAN

Bryan Severs, Potomac
District 7

VICE CHAIRMAN

Brady Holst, Plymouth
At-Large

SECRETARY

Scott Gaffner, Greenville
At-Large

TREASURER

Tim Scates, Carmi
At-Large

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER

Jeff O'Connor, Kankakee
At-Large

**GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

Rob Shaffer, El Paso
District 6

**MARKET DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

Brock Willard, Pittsfield
District 12

**SOYBEAN PRODUCTION COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

Heath Houck, Nokomis
District 13

DIRECTORS

Ryan Frieders, Waterman | District 1
Steve Pitstick, Maple Park | District 2
Dwayne Anderson, Lynn Center |
District 3
Weston Olson, Peru | District 4
Mark Read, Putnam | District 5
Tim Clark, Macomb | District 8
Ron Kindred, Atlanta | District 9
Elliott Uphoff, Shelbyville | District 10
Matt Murray, Paxton | District 11
Brad Daugherty, West Union |
District 14
Jeff Parker, Belleville | District 15
Brian Atteberry, Carmi | District 16
Emily Lovelady, Tamaroa | District 17

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Betsy Emerick, Vandalia
David Wessel, Chandlerlerville

UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD (USB)

Dwayne Anderson, Lynn Center
Gary Berg, St. Elmo
Steve Pitstick, Maple Park
David Wessel, Chandlerlerville

**AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION
(ASA)**

Stan Born, Mahomet
Daryl Cates, Columbia
Ryan Frieders, Waterman
Jim Martin, Pontiac
Ron Kindred, Atlanta
Rob Shaffer, El Paso
Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare, Nebo
Bryan Severs, Potomac

STAFF CREDITS

Editor in Chief | Betsy Osman
Assistant Editor | Olivia Shafer
Lead Writer | Ashley Haddon
Staff Contributor | Brynna Sentel
Staff Contributor | Peyton Rinkenberger, Communications Intern
Staff Contributor | Kyle Wolf

OTHER ISA STAFF

Chief Executive Officer | John Lumpe
Director of Illinois Soybean Foundation | Suellen Burns
Executive Employee Relations | Nicole Butler
Director of Government Relations & Strategy | Andrew Larson
Director of Market Development | Todd Main
Director of Marketing Communications | Betsy Osman
Director of Finance | Kati Owen
Director of Agronomy | Abigail Peterson
Director of Operations | Dustin Scott

Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) 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, 1108 Trinity Lane, Bloomington, IL, 61704.

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.

Illinois Field & Bean Magazine may contain information or advertisements for third-party products, services, or companies. Any reference to a specific commercial product, process, service, or manufacturer does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Illinois Soybean Association.

**FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION OR
ADDRESS CORRECTIONS, CONTACT:**

Betsy Osman
Editor in Chief
Email: betsy.osman@ilsoy.org

Hi, I'm Bryan Severs



**BRYAN SEVERS | CHAIRMAN |
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION**

Hi, I'm Bryan Severs. I raise corn, soybeans and cattle with my family in Vermilion County, and I'm honored to introduce myself as your Chairman of the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA).

Since July 2020, I've had the privilege of serving on the Illinois Soybean Board of Directors. Over those five years, ISA has made incredible advancements on behalf of Illinois soybean farmers. Although there are far too many accomplishments to list in one column, I want to share a few of my favorite initiatives that I find especially impactful.

After launching in March 2024, ISA's Soy Innovation Center (SIC) team has been working around the clock to accelerate the commercialization of soy-based products. As farmers produce more and more soybeans each year, and consumer demand for sustainable products continues to grow, the SIC is bridging the gap by streamlining the development of innovative, renewable products made from soybeans.

In this issue of *Illinois Field & Bean*, we highlight a new initiative of the SIC, the International Commercialization Initiative (ICI). The ICI unites the efforts of U.S. soybean organizations involved in researching and commercializing soy-based products to develop a single international market development strategy for industrial-use, soy-based products.

Of course, driving innovation starts with strong production. Through checkoff-funded agronomic research, ISA is helping farmers maximize yield potential, improve profitability and enhance sustainability. A key part of this work is the recently established ISA Agronomy Farm. A farmer-led research and demonstration site, ISA's Agronomy Farm produces actionable data, informs public policy and showcases the innovation within Illinois agriculture.

Located just south of Heyworth, Ill., the Agronomy Farm showcases practices such as double cropping, cover crops, pollinator habitats and more. By partnering with researchers and testing new ideas in real-world conditions, ISA is helping farmers make informed decisions that keep Illinois soybean production competitive and resilient.

As we continue to strengthen our markets and improve production, it's equally important that we make sure sound legislation is in place to protect our freedom to farm. Through the Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG), we're bringing your voices and concerns directly to lawmakers in Springfield and Washington to ensure they understand and support the needs of Illinois agriculture.

One recent example of this impact are the efforts ISG staff members took to successfully implement a bipartisan B20 law, which encourages the use of higher blends of biodiesel through a sales tax exemption. This law was a major win for Illinois farmers and our environment, driving demand for biodiesel while advancing the use of renewable fuels.

In this issue of *Field & Bean*, you'll also hear more about ISA's international market development efforts, including a recap of a recent trade mission to Indonesia. There, our Market Development team worked to deepen trade relations and explore the country's growing agricultural sector. Over the years, ISA has met countless soybean buyers where they are, strengthening lasting partnerships and fueling demand for Illinois soybeans.

Together, these efforts, from innovation and research to farmer advocacy and market development, ensure that Illinois farmers remain competitive in an ever-changing industry. It is a privilege to serve you and I look forward to working alongside you to build an even stronger future for Illinois soybean farmers.



Illinois Soy: Opening Markets Around the World

Illinois farmers grow some of the best soybeans in the world. Our land, our work ethic, our innovative mindset and our transportation system give us an edge. Right now, those competitive advantages matter more than ever.

This summer, a delegation of Illinois soybean farmer leaders visited Indonesia, meeting with buyers on their own turf. Farmers toured their facilities and got a close look at what our hosts need most from Illinois soy. Strong face-to-face relationships were established, and our team came home with one clear message: Global buyers want more soy, and they want it from farms like yours.

Why It Matters

Indonesia is ramping up poultry and fish production fast. That means they need more high-protein soy meal. They're looking for dependable partners who can deliver quality consistently and reliably. As you will see in this issue of *Illinois Field & Bean*, that's where Illinois soy comes in.

We've got the logistics—rail, barge, containers—that make it easier to move grain efficiently. We've earned a positive reputation among our global customers, and we go where our buyers are to introduce the farmers behind the farms.

In any language, a handshake translates to respect, understanding and connection.

Indonesia's just one example. Other markets—such as Vietnam, Nigeria and parts of Latin America—are growing, too. Some need soy for livestock feed, others for industrial uses such as soy-based plastics or fuels. Those markets are growing, and getting in early matters. We're not waiting for the phone to ring; we're going to them first. We're listening and learning what global communities need, and we are showing them how Illinois farmers can deliver.

Events such as SoyConnex — hosted by USSEC — help a lot, too. We just wrapped up that annual meeting in D.C., where farmers, global buyers, and industry professionals came together in one room, giving soybean customers the opportunity to meet real producers. This meeting is a top initiative for us, and Illinois looks forward to hosting the group in Chicago next year. We know that hearing from you directly about how seriously you prioritize quality and consistency can be a gamechanger. Our buyers depend on you and have confidence in how you grow and ship their soybeans.

Thinking Long-Term

As you will read in this issue, we're also pushing new opportunities on the innovation side. Through our new International Commercialization Initiative at ISA's Soy Innovation Center, we're working with national partners to promote soy-based industrial products



JOHN LUMPE | CEO |
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

around the world. That includes everything from biodegradable plastics to alternative fuels. The goal is more demand, more uses and more markets, all pointing back to Illinois soy.

We have the infrastructure, the quality and the supply. But we can't assume the world already knows that. So we're pushing ahead, pioneering new opportunities and looking for new solutions — face to face, mile by mile — opening doors and keeping Illinois soy front and center. At the end of the day, ISA's work is about keeping your soybeans moving and your markets growing.

You grow it; we sell it. That's the deal.

Thank you for your important work and for the excellence you bring to our industry. We'll keep doing our part to make sure the rest of the world knows the full list of competitive advantages of Illinois soy — and of the Illinois farmers who make it all happen.



Funded by the Illinois Soybean Checkoff



On the Ground in Indonesia



Indonesia trade mission illustrates growth potential for No. 4 U.S. soy trade partner

Indonesia rarely makes headlines in Illinois. The nation purchased a staggering \$1.24 billion of U.S. soy in 2024 and is poised to grow enormously as a strategic trading partner. Now, ongoing dialogue between the countries aims to remove barriers, build trust and understanding, and supply accelerating demand for tempeh, tofu and animal feed, according to Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) representatives who participated in a July 2025 trade mission to the country.

"What stood out most to me during the Indonesia trip was the opportunity to engage directly with leaders from the country's halal advisory board," says Scott Gaffner, a Greenville soybean farmer and ISA Secretary and At-Large Director. "Indonesia places great importance on religious standards and ensuring that imported products meet halal requirements is critical. The board had questions about U.S. soybeans—particularly those that are genetically modified or gene-edited—and there were some misconceptions that could have jeopardized certification. By meeting face-to-face, we were able to provide clear information,

address concerns, and reinforce confidence in the quality and integrity of Illinois and U.S. soy."

A Market Poised to Mirror China

Indonesia has a population of 282 million people and is experiencing rapid economic growth of over 5% annually. It's now the largest economy in Southeast Asia. More than half the population is under 35, and 86% are Muslim, which makes food security, protein access and halal certification essential, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

ISA leaders see striking parallels with the early stage growth of China as a soy market.

"Indonesia is going to be the fourth or fifth most populous country in the world and has a stable government and a preference for U.S. soy," explains Todd Main, ISA Director of Market Development. "It will be a good partner for U.S. soybean farmers."

Main says the contrast between the country's rural villages and new high-speed rail system—"better than anything in the U.S."—illustrates how modernization is happening fast, creating

new logistical challenges and huge trade potential. "Food security is going to be central to that modernization," he adds.

The timing of the trade mission proved critical. Just days before the delegation's arrival, the U.S. and Indonesian governments signed a historic trade deal that promises to ease barriers and open additional opportunities for U.S. agricultural exports, including soybeans. As Indonesia expands its global role in food processing, retail and exports, ISA representatives say the nation's appetite for high-quality soy will only grow.

Tempeh, Culture and Soybean Color

To the Indonesian people, soybeans are not only a commodity but also a cultural staple. Tempeh, a fermented whole soybean food, is consumed by millions daily and serves as a primary protein source. ISA representatives visited both small producers and major players such as Azaki Food International, which has 83 plants in 11 countries and is expanding to the U.S. market.

"People who eat tempeh look for a specific color of the product when determining what to

buy, and they like the color of the bean that is produced in the U.S.," says Caitlyn Abbey, ISA International Markets Specialist. "The consistency and reliability of U.S. soybeans was important for them, especially the large producers who make products for export."

Gaffner agrees.

"Producers told me directly that U.S. soy delivers the best results in processing—whether it's making tofu, tempeh or feed—and that translates into better taste and quality for the consumer."

Soy consumption in Indonesia differs from the U.S. in other ways, too, notes Brady Holst, an Augusta soybean farmer and ISA's Vice Chairman and At-Large Director.

"Tempeh is a staple food, so the people see soybeans used much more often than people in other places in the world," he says. "That familiarity creates a very stable base of demand."

Future Demand to Span Meal, Feed and Biofuels

As its middle class grows, Indonesia's demand for poultry, aquaculture and processed food

(See On the Ground in Indonesia, page 8)



To better understand Indonesia's agricultural landscape, the group visited a tea research farm and coffee dry mill.

On the Ground in Indonesia

(continued from page 7)

is increasing rapidly.

"One of the biggest growth opportunities for U.S. soy in Indonesia is from the growing population and increasing GDP," Abbey says.

Although soy for human consumption is vital, soybean meal also holds major promise.

"Indonesia has significant potential to utilize this meal for poultry and aquaculture, creating a strong additional outlet for Illinois soybeans," Gaffner says. "With domestic U.S. crush increasing due to renewable fuels

demand, we'll have more meal to export. Countries like Indonesia that are just ramping up feed production are ideal markets for that surplus."

Biodiesel markets also are opening up in Indonesia, expanding use cases even further, Main adds.

Such growing demand on multiple fronts could be transformative for the nation and for the Illinois farmers supplying them.

An Inside Look At Soy Logistics and Processing

The delegation learned that Indonesia's unique geography as a country made up of hundreds of islands adds complexity to

soy logistics, transportation and processing.

"They have modern port facilities, but the challenges are due to being a nation of islands," Main says.

Soybeans for tempeh are typically cleaned and bagged before being sent to small-scale processors throughout the country.

"Their soy processing is much more unique than other places in the world because most tempeh production is at smaller scale," Holst explains.

Illinois farmers' production efficiency and sustainability practices can add value to the end product.

"Because the Indonesian climate and geography is much different than the U.S., they benefit from our advancements in agriculture and gain access to an efficiently produced soybean they wouldn't be able to compete with from their own production," he says.

Processing infrastructure is evolving rapidly. Holst noted that despite the country's logistical challenges, expanding retail footprints and modern grocery chains in rural areas are beginning to open up new distribution pathways for value-added soy products.

"As demand grows, I think we'll see increased interest in scaling up processing and feed production. That's where our soy fits in."

Trade Barriers and Breakthroughs

Just days before the ISA team arrived in Jakarta, the U.S. and Indonesia announced a breakthrough tariff agreement. It marked a pivotal move in a country where non-tariff barriers have historically included import licensing delays, halal certification requirements and technical inspection issues, according to USDA data.

"The timing of the trip was ideal," Abbey says. "We were able to meet with government agencies and talk more about how this trade deal will impact imports of U.S. soybeans into the Indonesian market."

Main said he saw immense value in those discussions.

"We had very positive meetings with two government agencies. It was evident from the seriousness that our Indonesian counterparts approached the meeting that they wanted to nurture the relationship with the U.S."

Personal connections also play a role in navigating regulatory challenges.

"By being on the ground and providing context about how our soy is grown, processed and shipped, we help dispel misunderstandings and build confidence," Gaffner says. "It's not something you can do effectively over email."

Human Connections and Local Visits

The ISA team met with major buyers, government officials and religious leaders, even visiting a coffee plantation to explore Indonesia's broader export culture. These face-to-face moments made a lasting impression.

"This trade mission really pulled all of my roles together in a meaningful way," says Gaffner, who is also involved with U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) and USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC). "Tempeh and tofu aren't occasional foods, they're staples for millions of



families. Add to that the fast growth in poultry and aquaculture, and it's clear that U.S. soy isn't just a commodity in Indonesia, it's a solution to food security and protein demand."

The delegation's conversations with tempeh producers and retail food distributors offered valuable insight into how Illinois farmers can align their production to meet international consumer expectations.

"It comes down to quality, traceability and consistency," Holst says. "That's what they trust us to deliver."

Farmer Engagement and Trade Advocacy Opportunities

ISA plans to build on this momentum by strengthening ties with the Indonesian consulate in Chicago and hosting visiting delegations. Illinois soybean farmers can continue to get involved in these activities.

"We encourage Illinois farmers to reach out to the ISA Market Development team if they are

interested in interacting with international buyers or have questions about markets and trends," Abbey says. "We are a great resource to make connections with buyers around the world."

She also recommends subscribing to ISA's monthly emails, which include updates and guest experts providing insights on market trends. Contact olivia.key@ilsoy.org to sign up today.

For Gaffner, this work is essential. "This is the same kind of work that helped open China years ago, and now we're laying that foundation in places like Indonesia," Gaffner says. "It's not just travel, it's an investment, one that pays back directly on the farm."

Holst agrees: "Being aware of international trade dynamics, especially as a younger generation of farmers, is key to keeping Illinois agriculture competitive. These types of missions give us the knowledge and connections to influence future demand."



Fast Facts About Indonesia and Soy Demand

Population: 282 million (2024); 70% between ages 15–64

Religion: 86% Muslim


2024 U.S. Soy Exports to Indonesia: \$1.24 billion


Top Soy Uses: Tempeh, tofu, poultry, aquaculture, biodiesel

Growth Drivers: 5.03% economic growth (2024), rising middle class, modernizing infrastructure

Trade Breakthrough: July 2025 tariff agreement with U.S. expands market access

Source: USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Illinois Soybean Association



 **PIONEER**
HUNDRED YEARS

UNLEASH
PIONEER® BRAND

Z

SERIES
SOYBEANS

IT'S TIME TO RIDE THE Z-SERIES WAVE

When you plant Pioneer® brand Z-Series soybeans, you unleash the power of yield potential beyond anything you've ever seen. With next-level genetics and protection traits, Z-Series soybeans dominated yield expectations and delivered maximum ROI last season. **Start the next hundred years with your best harvest yet.**

Enter the next era of performance at Pioneer.com/UnleashGreatness.

Pioneer® brand products are provided subject to the terms and conditions of purchase which are part of the labeling and purchase documents.
™ & © Trademarks of Corteva Agriscience and its affiliated companies. © 2025 Corteva. 032187 P10 (08/25)


CORTEVA
agriscience

Meet the Illinois Soybean Board's New District Directors



By Olivia Shafer, Assistant Editor,
Illinois Field & Bean Magazine

At the 2025 Illinois Soybean Board (ISB) public meeting in Champaign, Ill., three new Illinois soybean farmers were elected to the Illinois Soybean Board of Directors. Each brings a unique perspective to our industry, and we're excited to introduce them to our *Illinois Field & Bean* readers.

District 4 – Weston Olson

Weston Olson is the District 4 Director for the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) and serves on the Soybean Production Committee.

A fifth-generation corn and soybean farmer and former Illinois Soy Envoy, Olson farms near Wyanet, Ill., with his father on their family's centennial operation. He works full-time as a Field Agronomist for Biolumic and spends his evenings and weekends either on the farm or with his wife, Jesamieh, and their daughter, Megan.

Olson looks forward to both supporting and learning from ISA's agronomic research. "Farmers like stuff that's unbiased. So it's best that research comes from organizations like the Illinois Soybean Association - they're just trying products out and different practices to see what actually works best. And I salute that, because I can try it on my own farm, but we can only do so much," he says.

For Olson, this kind of research is especially important for his smaller-scale farm, where limited acreage and tighter margins can make it harder to take risks on new practices.

"We're not a typical farm," Olson says. "There are all kinds of farmers around Illinois. There are absolutely giant farmers with tons of acres, and others, like us, operate on the smaller side, maybe farming somewhere between 100 to 400 acres. Advocacy in the farming community is often focused on volume, and it's easier for large-scale farms

to implement new practices or technology. And that's fine, it's just that a smaller farmer has a harder time. We must be mindful of our finances."

During his term, Olson hopes to be a voice for the small-scale farmers of Illinois, ensuring their needs are considered as impactful decisions are made.

District 6 – Rob Shaffer

Rob Shaffer is ISA's District 6 Director and serves as Chairman of the Government Relations Committee.

A familiar face in the U.S. soybean industry, Rob Shaffer has been involved with ISA since 2010 and has been an American Soybean Association (ASA) Board Director since 2016. Passionate about farmer-focused legislation, Shaffer is looking forward to leading the Government Relations Committee. "These days, there's a lot of uncertainty within our industry, and it's important that Illinois farmers have a presence in Springfield and Washington so we

can educate policymakers about the issues Illinois and U.S. farmers face," he says.

Shaffer farms in El Paso, Ill., alongside his brother, Emory, his wife, Jennifer, and their two sons, Bobby and Jacob, raising corn, soybeans and cattle. A lifelong ag professional, he studied ag business and animal science in college and began his career in ag sales before returning to the farm full-time.

Since then, Shaffer has been a dedicated leader in the U.S. soy industry. "I like to stay busy," he says. "At ISA, I've served as Treasurer, Secretary and Bylaws Committee Chairman and was a member of the National Biodiesel Board. Right now, as an ASA Director, I'm the Commodity Classic co-chair, 1st Vice Chairman of Clean Fuels Alliance America and I serve as the Chairman of ASA's PAC." He's also active within local organizations, such as the Grain-

(See Meet the Illinois Soybean Board's
New District Directors, page 12)



District 4 – Weston Olson



District 6 – Rob Shaffer

Meet the Illinois Soybean Board's New District Directors

(continued from page 11)

land Farmers Elevator Board and the alumni board of the agriculture-focused Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.

District 8 – Tim Clark

Tim Clark is the District 8 Director for ISA and sits on the Soybean Production Committee.

Located near the small community of Colmar, Ill., Clark's farm has been in his family since the 1970s, and this is his first year farming the land himself. However, Clark isn't a stranger to Illinois agriculture. "I've been involved in the farming industry for most of

my life," says Clark. "My dad and I used to farm about 1,000 acres. Then the '80s came along. So I got out got out of farming until I started at the local elevator."

Today, Clark is a seed manager at Augusta Farmers Co-Op and was previously the owner of a Macomb-based construction company.

As a new farmer and first-time Board Director, Clark is eager to make the most of his first year. "One of my main goals is to absorb as much knowledge as I can and share it with my customers," Clark says. "I think it'll be highly beneficial to take what I learn from others and bring that back to the people I work with every day."

In his free time, Clark enjoys collecting and restoring antique vehicles, as well as drag racing. He also values time spent with his wife, Stacy, along with their children and grandchildren.

For more information about the Illinois Soybean Board of Directors, visit www.ilsoy.org/board-of-directors/.



District 8 – Tim Clark

Have an idea for a soy-based product?

Airable provides early-stage research at no cost, reducing the upfront investment risk for companies.



Turn "what if" into "what's next" with Airable.



THE POWER OF YOUR SOY INVESTMENT



Global demand. Local return. The value of your state and national soy checkoff is stronger than ever. In the last 5 years, your investments have...


CREATED JOBS AND
GROWN THE ECONOMY

\$9.8B

added to the U.S. GDP

~\$1B

generated in tax revenue
in 2023 alone

\$36M county | \$244M state | \$655M federal

30,932

U.S. jobs created

***\$2.6B**

in U.S.
employment
income

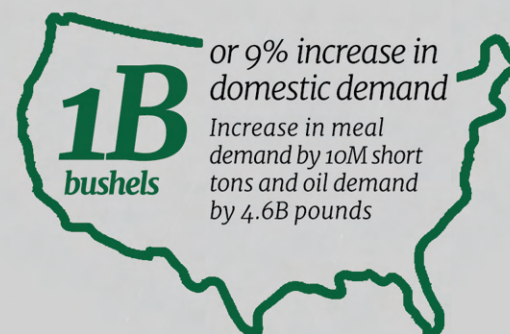


DRIVEN DEMAND FOR U.S. SOY

***1.8B**
bushels



or 18% increase in U.S. soybean exports
Increase in meal exports by 5.2M short tons and oil
exports by 3.4B pounds



or 9% increase in
domestic demand

Increase in meal
demand by 10M short
tons and oil demand
by 4.6B pounds

DELIVERED VALUE TO YOUR FARM

\$12.30

return for every \$1 invested

AT LEAST 4.5-TO-1 RETURN ACROSS FOUR CATEGORIES:

- 1 Export market development
- 2 Domestic demand-enhancing research
- 3 On-farm production research
- 4 Soybean promotion

Learn more at unitedsoybean.org

*Export initiatives supported by United Soybean Board, Qualified State Soybean Boards, the U.S. Soybean Export Council and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service. Source: Kaiser, H.M. 2024. An Economic Analysis of the United Soybean Board and Qualified State Soybean Boards' Demand- and Supply-Enhancing Programs. Cornell University.



Connecting Farmers to International Markets

By Eileen Pabst, *International Markets Manager, Illinois Soybean Association*

Conversations in Washington about policies and issues play a crucial and complex role in shaping market outcomes. As the hub of U.S. policymaking, the city facilitates high-stakes dialogue and strategic alliances that influence both domestic and global markets.

It's no coincidence, then, that Washington serves as the venue for one of the agricultural sector's most impactful international gatherings, one where regulatory shifts, economic priorities and trade strategies converge.

Hosted by the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Soy Connex is a premier event where buyers, sellers, traders, producers and other key industry members from across the world gather to build partnerships, explore market opportunities, share research and work toward sustainable supply chain solutions.

The 2025 Soy Connex event took place in Washington

from Aug. 20-22, with more than 730 participants from 59 countries. The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) was proud to sponsor the event alongside 32 other supporting organizations.

This conference allows ISA to accomplish many crucial meetings efficiently and effectively in one centralized location rather than spending time and resources traveling

to multiple countries. At ISA's sponsored booth, we held private meetings with customers from countries such as Indonesia and Taiwan and met with members of the Soy Excellence Center.

Reflecting on this year's event, I'm proud of the meaningful relationships ISA built and strengthened with our global partners and their trust

in our high-quality products. At its core, Soy Connex is about bringing together the brightest minds in the soybean industry. Through collaboration and trusted relationships, conflicts are more easily resolved and new opportunities arise. As a result, there's a big payoff for American farmers and international trade partners alike.



Consumer Trends and Market Opportunities

Soybeans play a vital role across a range of industries including food, livestock feed, biofuels and oil production. The sheer number of markets and products in which soybeans are used can be overwhelming.

One session focused on current trends in the soy-based food space. The panelists dove into the science behind soy and human health, focusing on the areas that drive consumer demand.

Higher protein intake remains widely popular in health, fitness and functional sport communities. Soybeans, as a complete protein, are among the best plant-based sources of protein. Insights such as these help us identify those opportunities that our customers

are interested in and develop strategies to increase our market share in the food sector.

The session also addressed the role of soy in healthy aging. A 7-Eleven merchandiser shared that Japan attributes the longevity of its population, in part, to a soy-rich diet. It is those global perspectives that open doors for U.S. producers and associations to introduce soybean products into untapped markets.

We often view soy differently than our customers do. I'm grateful for the opportunity to hear different viewpoints and better understand what our customers need. Although events such as Soy Connex educate our customers about the U.S. soybean product, we also get to learn what they expect from our products and the

challenges they face. It's a two-way exchange when it comes to these kinds of meetings.

A High-Quality Product

Although expanding markets and developing innovative solutions remained at the forefront of the event, it's also important to mention the strength of our current product. Soy Connex hosted many discussions on the state of soybean production, including valuable data and economic insights.

Total U.S. soybean acreage has declined slightly in 2025, yet the crop is performing well and is projected to achieve record yields, making this year another opportunity to deliver abundant, high-quality products to our global customers.

There has also been growing attention on soy's amino acid

profile and its positive impact on livestock energy efficiency and digestibility. Soybeans provide a high-quality, balanced amino acid composition that aids the growth and development of livestock.

Research on this topic continues to expand, and ISA is closely monitoring how it could positively impact production and market opportunity going forward. We predict that as more research is conducted, it will continue to show a positive correlation between soy-based feed and improved animal product quality.

Going Back to Our Roots

In addition to participating in the Soy Connex event, ISA recently hosted several international trade teams on local Illinois farms. These visits gave



customers a front-row seat to the soybean production process and created space for productive dialogue between farmers and global buyers.

This year, ISA welcomed trade teams from South America, Europe and China. These farm visits allowed our customers to see soybeans in the field and ask producers key questions. Additionally, the trade teams visited industry partners such as ADM, which provided a unique opportunity to see the soybean production cycle in its entirety.

Throughout both the conference and farm visits, one theme stayed at the forefront: producing high quality, reliable products. Although international customers already recognize and respect the great product Illinois puts forth, we took the conversation deeper by sharing these local practices and clearing up confusion regarding the food supply chain.



Looking Toward the Future

Cultivating global relationships doesn't end here. Every day, ISA remains committed to promoting the U.S. soybean industry both domestically and abroad. We believe in the power of face-to-face connection, and we hope our

visitors will share the information they learned with their colleagues.

You can stay up to date with our domestic and global initiatives by visiting our website and trade map at ilsoy.org. There, you can track where your soybeans are going and

learn how ISA works to expand your market opportunities.

We'll keep driving demand and opening new doors in the market. You keep doing what you do best: growing the highest-quality soybeans in the country.

We put soybeans first because you put performance first.

At Asgrow® brand, not only are we all about the beans, we're all about your success as well. That's why we offer localized products with leading genetics, weed management systems and maximum profit potential – all developed by soybean experts who put soybeans first.

DISCOVER HOW IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BEANS.

Asgrow.com



ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW PESTICIDE LABEL DIRECTIONS. Asgrow and the A Design, Asgrow, Bayer and Bayer Cross are registered trademarks of Bayer Group. ©2025 Bayer Group. All Rights Reserved.

Farmers Drive Checkoff-Funded Research for 2025-2026

Deciding which soybean production projects to fund through the Illinois Soybean Checkoff is never taken lightly. Every year, your farmer-led Board takes a careful, science-based approach to investing checkoff dollars where they matter most: back into your fields.

The process begins with listening. Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) Staff survey farmers across the state, gather input from agronomists and consult with research partners to identify the most pressing production challenges. This year, the

Soybean Production Committee reviewed more than 45 research proposals—digging into the details of each one to evaluate how it could deliver real results for Illinois soybean farmers. From there, 20 projects earned funding for Fiscal Year 2026 (Sept. 1, 2025 – Aug. 31, 2026).

These investments span weed management, soil health, disease pressures such as soybean cyst nematode (SCN) and red crown rot (RCR), cover crop systems and collaborations that expand Illinois research through regional and national partnerships.

At the end of the day, your checkoff dollars fuel the research needed to answer questions, refine recommendations and create new opportunities for your farm's profitability and stewardship. Here's a closer look at where your dollars are going this year: FY26 Funded Research Highlights:

- **Measuring Soil Health, Water Quality and Climate Impact on Illinois Soybeans** – Assessing soil health, nutrient loss, carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions across cropping systems.

- **Residue Management and Nutrient Value for Soybean Production** – Tracking nitrogen and sulfur release from residue and evaluating tillage and biological effects.

- **Evaluation of a Targeted Conservation Plan in the Lake Bloomington Watershed** – Identifying nutrient loss hot spots and supporting adoption of cover crops.

- **Integrated Management Strategies for Maximizing Soybean Production in Conservation Tillage Systems** – Studying soil type, tillage, row spacing and fertilizer impacts on yield.



- **Refining Cover Crop Recommendations for Corn-Soybean Rotations Based on Species and Timing** – Comparing species mixtures and termination timing for regional guidance.

- **Evaluating the Impact of Cover Crops on Lesion Nematodes in Soybeans** – Studying how cover crops influence nematode populations and soybean yield.

- **Bioherbicides to Control Palmer Amaranth and Waterhemp in Soybeans** – Developing targeted, sustainable weed control options.

- **Using Integrated Weed Management to Control Waterhemp in Soybeans** – Combining cover crops, herbicides and tillage to control herbicide-resistant waterhemp.

- **Managing Weeds in Early Planted No-Till Soybeans**

- Evaluate PRE and POST herbicide programs with and without cereal rye for weed control in early planted no-till soybeans.

- **Using Genetic Engineering to Help Control Soybean Cyst Nematode** – Exploring CRISPR and other tools to reduce SCN reproduction and survival.

- **Diversifying Genetic Resistance to Soybean Cyst Nematode** – Developing new soybean varieties with stacked SCN resistance genes.

- **Using Electrically Polarized Nanomaterials to Help Control SCN and SDS in Soybeans** – Testing a novel tool against two key soybean diseases.

- **Free Soybean Cyst Nematode Testing for Illinois Farmers** – Providing no-cost soil sampling to detect SCN and resistance responses.

- **Red Crown Rot Management in Soybeans** – Detecting hot spots with satellite imagery, evaluating commercial products and studying the interaction between RCR and SCN.

- **Measuring How Insect Pests Impact Yields and the Value of Pest Control Products** – Identifying which pests affect yield and which treatments pay off.

- **Enhancing the Profitability of Wheat-Soybean Double Cropping** – Developing high yielding, earlier-maturing wheat to support earlier planting of double-crop soybeans.

- **Improving Soybean Protein Quality Through Genetic and Environmental Characterization** – Identifying stable, high-protein genotypes for feed and food markets.

- **Evaluating Leaf Nutrient Tissue Testing and Relation to Soybean Grain Yield** – Determining how nutrients move within plants to fine-tune in-season recommendations.

- **North Central Soybean Research Program** – Supporting multistate research and outreach across the Midwest.

- **U.S. Soybean Genetics Collaborative** – Building alignment and advancing public soybean breeding and genetics programs.

We encourage you to stay connected: Read project updates in *Illinois Field & Bean*, subscribe to [*FieldAdvisor.org*](https://www.fieldadvisor.org) for in-season updates and attend the Field Advisor Forum this winter to hear directly from researchers. Most importantly—keep asking questions. Your voice shapes the direction of soybean research in Illinois.



Uniting for Global Impact

ICI aims to build soybean demand through innovation and collaboration

By Todd Main, Director of Market Development, Illinois Soybean Association

Moving the soybean pile. That's the ultimate goal of all soybean checkoff-funded initiatives we have administered at the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA). And that pile keeps getting bigger because Illinois soybean farmers keep getting better at what they do. It's our job at ISA to make sure we're not just

maintaining existing supply chains but creating new ones — and new uses for the crop — in markets at home and around the world.

That's exactly what we're doing with the new International Commercialization Initiative (ICI). It's part of the ISA Soy Innovation Center that was itself launched in 2024 with a goal of taking soybean innovations from the laboratory, scaling them up and making them commercially viable. It's a some-

times time- and labor-intensive effort that's laser-focused on building soybean demand and, ultimately, stronger prices for Illinois soybean farmers.

Collaborating to Solve a Problem

The ICI solves a previous problem: Though there's been a lot of research and commercialization activity over the years, those efforts have been disconnected, with little collaboration between the great organiza-

tions leading the work. The new initiative aims to gather stakeholders such as ISA and other state soybean associations as well as the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) and United Soybean Board (USB) to work together and elevate efforts to expand existing uses and develop new food and industrial uses for soybeans. ICI's goal is to connect those uses with markets around the world where they'll be most effective in driving new demand for Illi-

nois soybeans.

In other words, the ICI — with leadership from Paul Burke, Commodity & Cooperator Services, Inc. Senior Partner and the former Executive Director of USSEC's Soy Excellence Centers — will advance those efforts. The initiative started earlier this fall is a year-round effort, and we'll bring everyone together six times per year to connect all the stars in this increasingly complex constellation.

"A lot of great work has been done, and we've seen a number of soybean industry players investing in this area," Burke says. "But we've noticed over time that there hasn't really been a coordinated effort to share information and organize how we go about doing this in a more unified fashion. That's what the ICI is all about. Its primary objective is collaboration and leaning into the resources that many different international trade organizations offer to bring more attention and resources to promoting the soybean technology and products available."

Applying New Thinking to Unite Individual Efforts

With ICI, we're creating new, meaningful industry synergy. We'll continue meeting with partners around the world to connect the innovators who deliver those products with our network of trading partners around the world. It's a new way we are applying collaborative and new thinking that, when put into action, will stimulate new demand for Illinois soybeans around the world to the farmer's benefit.

High on the ICI wishlist as our work begins is quality time and capacity to connect with trading partners at the highest levels. We're working with companies — startups all the way to the largest corporations — to research and develop new, in-demand uses for soybeans, then get those products in front

of high-level decision-makers so we're effectively solving problems for everyone in the supply chain from the field to the consumer rather than creating solutions looking for problems.

"Collaboration plays a role in success, and it can be difficult when individual players have different interests. It requires a lot of communication and can be a slow process, but it's critical if we want to tap into all of the global resources we can access but are not currently using," Burke says. "It takes key relationships around the world with the right decision-makers, technology and companies who are commercializing new products with soybeans. We are doing a lot of work to determine the technology and products that are most shelf-ready and commercially viable for priority markets that will add soybean demand in the long run."

The ICI's Next Steps

Over the next year or so, we are going to be getting our ducks in a row and creating a strategy by which we can approach this new collaborative effort at a very high level of seriousness. It won't be another highly structured, regulated entity as much as it will be an ongoing "meeting of the minds" of some of the best in the business at creating new market opportunities for the soybeans you grow. Like Burke says, we won't be launching a ton of new products in ICI's first year, but we'll lay the groundwork for that effort — supercharged by collaboration — down the road.

Developing and implementing the ICI is much like planting a soybean crop in the spring: We know what we want to happen, what we'll do to make it happen and when we will ultimately reap the rewards of a successful growing season. We just know it won't happen tomorrow. But in the end, Illinois soybean farmers will be the ultimate benefactors of the ICI and



GRAIN BIN MONITORING

AGI BINMANAGER®

KNOW WHAT'S INSIDE YOUR BIN WITHOUT EVER ENTERING IT

No more manual probing or climbing the bins — use AGI BinManager® to check your grain anywhere at any time with any connected device.



aggrowth.com



AGI IS A PROUD PARTNER OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION.





Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance Strengthens Ties with ISA

The Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance (SSGA) is a leading voice of identity-preserved (IP) agriculture in the U.S. IP soybeans are often food-grade, non-GMO soybeans that exceed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) No. 1 grade quality standards. They feature either specific varieties or have special traits – such as a higher protein or sugar content, or a certain color or size – and a specific end use, such as natto

(a Japanese dish made from fermented soybeans), tofu, miso and soymilk, to name a few.

Processors pay farmers a premium to grow IP soybeans. In exchange, farmers commit to keeping them segregated from other crops to avoid comingling and cross-contamination.

Since SSGA's inception in 2019, Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) has been one of its biggest supporters, providing vital funding for key initiatives through its checkoff program.

This past March, at SSGA's annual meeting, Illinois farmer and ISA Chairman Bryan Severs was elected as SSGA's new chairman, further strengthening the ties between the two organizations.

"As a grower of food-grade non-GMO soybeans, I bring a firsthand perspective to end users about what we do in the U.S. to maintain the quality of the crop they're purchasing," Severs said.

Severs first joined the SSGA board in 2024 after hosting a

group of foreign buyers at his farm during SSGA's Fork to Farm Day in Illinois.

"During that event, I saw the passion of SSGA staff and board members, and it made me want to be part of their group," he said.

The High Quality Specialty Grains Program

Over the course of its short but impactful history, SSGA has established a number of initiatives to help the U.S. IP and specialty soy industry build,

expand and sustain a reliable supply chain that ensures the integrity of the end product. One of its biggest success stories is the High Quality Specialty Grains (HQSG) inspection program.

"This program streamlines the process for obtaining phytosanitary certificates, making it easier for specialty soy exporters to get containers turned around more quickly," Severs said. "It reduces costs for our exporting members and, in turn, helps maintain a strong market for specialty soy growers to earn a premium."

The HQSG program was created to address phytosanitary requirements on soybeans and soybean meal imports issued by Japan in 2020. Because Japan is by far the biggest market for specialty soybeans, accounting for more than 50% of U.S. sales, these requirements threatened to saddle the industry with burdensome costs and a time-consuming process. SSGA took swift action. It first negotiated a three-year moratorium with authorities in Japan and then partnered with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to develop a business-friendly solution.

"After running through a number of options with SSGA, we came up with the HQSG program, a completely unique approach that borrowed some of the principles applied to other commodities," said George Galasso, National Trade Manager for Grains at APHIS.

To participate in the program, companies first undergo an audit and special training through SSGA. Once certified, these companies are able to use the streamlined process to obtain APHIS phytosanitary certificates more quickly.

"Enrolling in the HQSG program has made us more efficient in almost every aspect of our business," said Cameron Hilgenberg, Food Grade Soy Export Manager for The DeLong

Company. "There's less of a paperwork bottleneck to get timely phytosanitary certificates, and we can turn containers around much faster. Our numbers have improved substantially. The increased flexibility this program offers may have doubled or tripled our capacity."

SSGA reports that, under the program, there have been more than 5,000 applications for phytosanitary certificates thus far, and APHIS indicates not a single complaint has been received from a foreign buyer.

"SSGA has done an excellent job ensuring that this program is running smoothly without any unforeseen complications," Galasso said.

Growing Specialty Soybeans

The benefits of the program extend up and down the value chain. It enables exporters to position themselves as reliable suppliers in markets with many just-in-time buyers and also bestows a reputation for quality for U.S. grain in general. For growers, it strengthens the specialty soybean market, providing them with a good option to earn a premium and diversify their crop rotations.

"Conservation also plays a big role in how we sell to our buyers," Severs said. "They like to know that we're doing our best to reduce our carbon footprint, to use less fuel and that our farming practices are sustainable."

Farmers interested in growing specialty soybeans can start by visiting the SSGA website's members page (soyagrainsalliance.org/ssga-members) and finding a processor-exporter in their region. More than 90% of food-grade soybeans are pre-contracted, with companies typically signing up farmers between September and December.

Opportunities for Expansion

Based on the HQSG program's impeccable track record, SSGA and APHIS are looking to expand the program to other specialty



grains. Meanwhile, SSGA continues to seek opportunities to grow overseas markets for U.S.-origin food-grade soybeans. SSGA Executive Director Randy Duckworth has his eye on the Philippines and Taiwan and points to growing markets for tofu in Indonesia and Vietnam, and to the increased use of U.S. soybeans in Indonesia's soymilk market and Vietnam's tofu market. Additionally, negotiations are presently underway to secure an import quota from India.

"These are complicated markets, and anything we can do to make it easier to meet their phytosanitary requirements helps us expand opportunities for food-grade soybean farmers," Duckworth said.

Checkoff Partnerships

SSGA is supported through the checkoff program of the

Illinois Soybean Association and other qualified state soybean boards (QSSBs). In addition to the HQSG program, SSGA benefits its members through several other initiatives. Its U.S. Identity Preserved program, for instance, provides members with a quality assurance plan that qualifies them to use the Identity Preserved United States label, indicating a high-quality product of U.S. origin. SSGA also helps members navigate the complexities of intermodal transportation and shipping and offers farmers resources to learn about the IP process and growing IP crops.

For more information on these and other programs, visit the SSGA website (soyagrainsalliance.org) and the U.S. Identity Preserved website (usidentitypreserved.org).



Global Markets to Watch

*By Ashley Rice-Haddon, Lead Writer,
Illinois Field & Bean Magazine*

The story of Illinois soybean farmers can't be shared often enough.

That's the approach Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) takes to developing and growing international markets. The importance of identifying and growing emerging soybean markets also can't be overstated because 60% of U.S. soy is exported. In total, more than 82 countries rely on U.S. soy for human consumption, livestock feed and aquaculture feed in the form of whole beans, meal or oil.

Emerging markets for U.S. and Illinois soybeans are not just decided on a whim. Regular research and analysis are done by the ISA Market Development team to identify key potential emerging markets and countries.

By contrast, mature soybean markets generally operate in countries with advanced economies. Those locations tend to have well-defined strategies for buying and selling of commodities.

"The mature markets make decisions for purchasing based on their own criteria," said Todd Main, ISA's Director of Market Development. "Through our checkoff investments, our ability to influence mature economies is pretty thin."

Emerging economies, on the other hand, often are navigating factors such as food security issues or meeting the needs of developing urban populations that have increased protein demand for swine, poultry or fish.

Or in the case of Indonesia, the number one buyer of Illinois soybeans, they may want whole soybeans for traditional dishes like tempeh, which is made from fermented soybeans.

"Our ability to influence and help these emerging economies is much greater," explained Main. "If they want a low-cost source of protein, we can provide that. If they want to do oil or meal, we get a soybean crush facility going. Most importantly, we can develop a two-way relationship to help

these economies."

To do this, ISA and partner organizations must determine how to grow these markets and increase the use of soybeans.

ISA's partners include the World Initiative for Soy and Human Health (WISHH) and the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC). Coupled with projects supported fully by ISA, the track record is strong for developing relationships with new markets.

"Mexico is one of the top five consumers in the world of U.S. soybeans, and that's because of the work and partnerships we have been a part of," said Main. "In Egypt, we have supported their growing aquaculture industry, in addition to in Southeast Asia."

The ISA team takes a rational approach to research and analysis when determining potential emerging markets, looking at population age, income level, where people live, whether it's a growing economy, trade barriers, free trade agreements and governmental

barriers.

"We do a detailed analysis of all the markets we have. What can we do, and what's the probability of success?" explained Main. "Do they have the port infrastructure to handle boatloads of soybeans?"

The detailed analysis has shown some key markets and indicators as to why they might be of interest to U.S. soybean growers.

Emerging Markets

Historically, China has been the largest buyer of U.S. soybeans. But over the past several years, farmers have faced challenges because of slowing exports to China.

"Over the last decade, U.S. exports to China fell 15%, largely due to tariffs, African Swine Fever and trade disruptions," said Eric Woodie, ISA Trade Analyst. "While China remains critical, its demand has softened, underscoring the need to continue diversifying markets."

Emerging markets are filling this gap. In the current mar-

keting year (MY), 2024/25, soybean exports to multiple countries are ahead of last year, and several new and growing destinations posted sharp increases.

In Indonesia, imports of U.S. soybeans have surged over 20 years, reaching a record 2.4 million metric tons (MMT) in MY 2023/24. U.S. soy enjoys an 88% market share, fueled by strong demand for tofu, tempeh and feed.

In Bangladesh, imports have soared in recent years, signaling major new demand.

Vietnam, Egypt and other Southeast Asian/North African markets also posted growth across soybeans and meal.

Soybean meal exports tell a similar story, with critical export markets seeing sharp increases including in the Philippines and Mexico.

Egypt: A Strong & Growing Market

Egypt is a powerhouse and expanding Illinois soybean buyer with a dominant market share, growing consumption and a strong preference for U.S. quality. It's a resilient anchor market offering long-term demand stability.

Between MY 2019/20 and MY 2023/24, Egypt imported 18.5 MMT of soybeans. Of this, the U.S. accounted for 13 MMT, almost 70%, making the U.S. a leading provider of its imports.

Egypt's demand for soybean imports is steadily increasing. In MY 2024/25, imports are expected to rise by 14.8%, and another 5% growth is projected for MY 2025/26.

The growth in Egypt's soybean consumption is fueled by rapid expansion in their poultry and aquaculture sectors, which rely heavily on soybean meal in feed formulations. Structured efforts, including training programs and the Soy Excellence Center, have helped solidify U.S. credibility and relationship-building in the market.



Vietnam: A Rising Opportunity

Vietnam is emerging as a dynamic growth market, especially for soybean meal. Although it's not yet as dominant as Egypt as measured by volume of imports, Vietnam's double-digit growth streak suggests strong momentum and opportunity.

Vietnam's imports of U.S. soybean meal have soared by 110%, reaching approximately 744,000 MT in MY 2023/24. This surge outpaced other fast-growing markets during the same time period, including Venezuela, Indonesia and the European Union.

In the 2023/24 MY, U.S. soy exports to Vietnam, including whole beans and meal, totaled about \$365 million, putting Vietnam among the top emerging buyers.

Vietnam's livestock and aquafeed industries continue to drive increasing demand for protein-rich feed ingredients, creating opportunities for U.S. soy.

Key Value for Farmers

Emerging markets such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Egypt are becoming critical growth drivers. These markets are not only increasing demand for whole beans but also for soybean meal. By strengthening

trade ties and capturing these expanding markets, Illinois soybean farmers can diversify markets, stabilize demand and secure long-term growth opportunities.

That's why farmers are at the forefront of ISA trade missions. They share stories of how they

grow and produce sustainable food, feed and fuel.

"At the end of the day, when meeting with potential global partners, it's one human talking to another," said Main. "In the case of ISA, having one farmer talk to another farmer or buyer is really powerful."

NOT YOUR GRANDDAD'S BIOSTIMULANTS

At Valent BioSciences, these aren't your granddad's biostimulants. They're built on good, solid science and designed to keep your fields thriving for years to come. Whether you're a seasoned hand at biostimulants or just dabbling for the first time, Valent BioSciences' biostimulant experts are here to help you find what'll work best on your farm.



valentbiosciences.com/biostimulants

ISG Hosts Members at Farm Progress Show with Congressional Guests



ANDREW LARSON | DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & STRATEGY | ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) hosted a member reception during the Farm Progress Show in our partner AGI's tent, welcoming congressional guests and industry partners for an evening of conversation.

The reception brought together Illinois-serving U.S. Representatives Robin Kelly, Nikki Budzinski, Mary Miller, Mike Bost and Eric Sorensen—offering ISG members a unique opportunity to engage directly with policymakers on the issues that matter most to Illinois farmers.

"It's not every day you get to share your story with members of Congress," said ISG Chairman Bryan Severs. "Getting this many legislators in a room at the same time isn't easy. Their presence here shows that they're listening and care about what's happening on our farms. It was great opportunity for ISG members."

"The event served as more than a meet-and-greet; it was an opportunity for our members to talk face-to-face with several elected officials who are making life-changing decisions on Illinois farms," said Andrew Larson, ISG Director of Government Relations. "We set the stage for farmers to be heard, and at the end of the day, that is who Congress will listen to."

Representatives shared remarks and visited with growers individually, underscoring their commitment to better understand issues Illinois farmers are facing in times of economic challenges.

"I'm proud to join the Illinois Soybean Growers for the annual Farm Progress Show. Central and Southern Illinois is at the forefront of cutting-edge ag innovation – innovation that makes crops more resilient, creates new markets for farmers, shores up the supply chain and so much more," said Congresswoman Budzinski. "As a legislator, I'm focused on bringing home federal resources to support this important work and look forward to continuing to be a partner to our farmers and a champion for the groundbreaking research on display at this year's Farm Progress Show."

"I want to thank Illinois Soybean Growers for having me at the Farm Progress Show. This event is one of the best opportunities we have to hear directly from Illinois farmers about the challenges and opportunities they see in agriculture," said Congressman Bost. "Listening to their experiences helps me be a stronger voice for them in Congress, and I'm grateful for the chance to engage with the farm families who are the backbone of our state."

"My district spans from Chicago to the south suburbs to over 4,500 farms in rural communities. A vast majority of them are owned by families who are proud to build their farms from the ground up," said Congresswoman Kelly. "I'm grateful to Illinois Soybean Growers for providing the opportunity to hear about their issues and concerns that I'll take back with me to D.C. Illinois soybean farmers are critical to our

country's food supply, and they deserve the best resources to stay at the cutting edge of agriculture technology and innovation."

"Illinois soybean growers are among the most resilient and hard-working farmers in America. Their dedication, innovation and tireless work ethic not only feeds our communities but also strengthens our state and our nation," said Congresswoman Miller. "I am deeply grateful for their contributions to our economy, our food supply and our future."

"The Farm Progress Show is an incredible opportunity to connect directly with Illinois farmers and hear firsthand about both the challenges and the innovations shaping agriculture today. Listening to our producers helps guide my work in Washington and on the House Agriculture Committee," said Congressman Sorensen. "This chance to come together reminds us that the future of American agriculture begins right here in Illinois. I'm grateful to stand alongside the hardworking farming community that keeps our families strong and fed."

Although the spotlight was on members of Congress, it's incredibly important to also highlight our appreciation for our dedicated sponsors. AGI opened its venue to host over 150 ISG members onsite at Farm Progress Show in addition to major support from ADM, Farm Credit Illinois and Nutrien Ag Solutions. Their continued support plays a critical role in helping ISG effectively advocate for soybean farmers across the state.

"These partnerships don't just make these events possible, they make advocacy possible," said ISG CEO John Lumpe. "We're incredibly grateful to work with organizations that share our passion for agriculture and our vision for the future of soybean farming in Illinois. Without our partners, we would have a difficult time accomplishing the mountainous task of protecting Illinois soybean farmers. Thank you for your support and dedication!"





GROWING POPULATIONS DRIVE DEMAND FOR PROTEIN

U.S. Soy Protein Goes Global with WISHH



wishh.org

Sent to you compliments of:

Illinois Soybean Association
1108 Trinity Lane
Bloomington, IL. 61704

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN
GROWERS

Free soybean cyst nematode testing for Illinois farmers

Sept. 1, 2025 - Aug. 30, 2026

Soybean cyst nematode (SCN) is considered the most damaging pest of soybean in the U.S. and is found throughout Illinois. Recent years have seen an increase in SCN populations able to overcome the most commonly used form of plant resistance. However, the only way to know if a field has an issue is by testing.

Learn more about this pest on [FieldAdvisor.org](https://www.fieldadvisor.org)

To participate, please contact:

freeSCNtesting@illinois.edu



This project is funded by the Illinois Soybean Checkoff Program.



ilsoy.org