

JANUARY 2026

Illinois Field & Bean

A PUBLICATION OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION



ILLINOIS
SOYBEAN
ASSOCIATION



INTRODUCING **JOHN DEERE OPERATIONS CENTER™ PRO SERVICE.**

Putting more control in your hands.

From running diagnostics to enabling reprogramming,*
Operations Center PRO Service delivers powerful
capabilities through John Deere Operations Center.
You have more control to manage your equipment
your way, when you want.

**Learn more at
JohnDeere.com/PROService**



JOHN DEERE

RUN IT YOUR WAY

*Certain engine related tests and calibrations are not currently available. Reprogramming functionality may not be available for non-John Deere controllers; see JohnDeere.com/PROService for further details.



CONTENTS

January 2026

Volume 6 Issue 3

6 2026 Soybean Summit

Take a look at this year's Soybean Summit agenda, which includes topics such as global trade impacts, the future of biodiesel, conservation strategies and what's next for farm policy.

10 Soybean Summit Trade Show

Along with a packed agenda of engaging presentations, the Soybean Summit also features a trade show with several of ISA's partners and Illinois ag organizations.

14 Soybean Management

IL Soy Envoy Dr. Matt Montgomery, CCA, provides insights into his Soybean Summit keynote presentation that looks at soybean management from an alternative, competitive perspective.

18 Year Two Under the Trump Administration

As the Trump administration enters its second year, Illinois soybean farmers face a policy environment full of both opportunity and uncertainty.

22 The State of Trade

USSEC CEO Jim Sutter explores the current state of global soy supply and demand, which he'll cover in depth at Soybean Summit.

24 Stem Watch

A multiyear Illinois Soybean Checkoff-funded effort is helping farmers understand where soybean stem pests stand today and what to watch for in 2026.

DEPARTMENTS

4 FROM THE BOARDROOM

5 CEO'S MESSAGE

26 VOICE FOR SOY



COVER: This forward-focused issue of *Illinois Field & Bean* explores what's ahead for soybean production through the lens of what's coming at the 2026 Soybean Summit. With insights tailored to help farmers stay ahead of emerging challenges and opportunities, this issue dives into evolving planting practices, pest and disease pressures, and cutting-edge strategies for sustainable growth. With insights on market trends and management innovations, it's a guide to thriving in the seasons to come.

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 Pittstick, 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
Emily Lovelady, Tamaroa | District 17
Martin Duffy, New Haven | District 18

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Betsey Emerick, Vandalia
David Wessel, Chandlerlerville

UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD (USB)

Dwayne Anderson, Lynn Center
Gary Berg, St. Elmo
Steve Pittstick, 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
Robert 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 | Kiley Wolf

OTHER ISA STAFF

Chief Executive Officer | John Lumpe
Executive Employee Relations | Nicole Butler
Director of Government Relations & Strategy | Kevin "KJ" Johnson
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: betsyosman@ilsoy.org



The Power of Your Presence



**ROB SHAFFER | GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN |
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION**

Across Illinois, there are over 71,000 farms that produce anything and everything from corn and soybeans, poultry and beef to pumpkins and horseradish. Each of our farms, based on location, management practices, weather patterns or what we produce, is unique in its own way. This diversity is one of our greatest strengths. It's the reason each of our voices and perspectives matter when decisions that impact our work are being made. No one farm looks the same, so no one voice can speak for all of us.

Whether you serve as a farmer representative at the county, state or national level, or take part in industry events, continuing to show up to voice our issues, needs and priorities is essential to the success and longevity of our operations.

Today, farmers have several opportunities online to learn or engage with decision makers. You can attend virtual webinars such as the ones hosted by Illinois Soybean Growers and Field Advisor. It's an easy way to engage with real-time policy updates and learn on the go. Providing feedback through surveys usually takes just a few minutes and ensures your opinion is accounted for. Keeping up with state and national ag organizations through email and social media allows for a consistent stream of information about our industry and provides insights about where your investments are going.

Digital tools make it incredibly easy to stay informed, but nothing truly replaces the impact of showing up in person. Real human connection – looking someone in the eye, shaking hands, asking questions and sharing your own story – cannot be replicated by a video call. As a longtime farmer representative, I've seen firsthand how relationships strengthen and understanding deepens when farmers and advocates choose to be physically present.

Opportunities to show up are all around us. Attending industry events such as the Illinois Soybean Association's annual Soybean Summit provides a chance to learn, network and contribute to conversations about the future and success of our industry. Joining advisory groups, farmer boards or committees can allow you to directly influence research, policy and strategic investments that impact your operation.

Beyond the practical benefits, your presence also helps share the story of Illinois agriculture. Every conversation with a legislator, industry partner, researcher or consumer is a valuable opportunity to showcase the innovation, responsibility and dedication behind your operation.

Your voice matters. Your perspective matters. And more than anything, your presence matters. Let's continue to show up, speak up and move our industry forward, together.



Summing Up Summit

As we kick off a new year, there's much reason to be optimistic in spite of some challenges lingering from 2025. Illinois soybean farmers continue to prove that with the right tools, solid information and a willingness to adapt, progress is always within reach. This issue of **Illinois Field & Bean** highlights those opportunities.

At the center of it all is the 2026 Soybean Summit, one of ISA's most valuable farmer-focused events. If you've been before, you know what to expect: sharp insights, practical tools and real conversations that leave you better prepared for the season ahead. This issue highlights the many ways you'll be better prepared for on-farm decisions when you attend the summit. That's true whether you're seeking insights on new planting approaches, managing pests, building markets or policy changes.

The speaker lineup features researchers, growers, economists and policy experts. They're offering tools to navigate what's next. This agenda was built with your farm in mind, whether you are dialing in nutrient management or getting ahead of regulatory shifts. This issue also highlights the Soybean Summit Trade Show, where ISA and our partners spotlight innovations and services you can put in motion on your acres. Making connections with these solution providers is a great way to jump into a new year.

From the local field to the global stage, the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), the international marketing arm of U.S. Soy, is constantly building market opportunities for Illinois soybeans. This work is more important than ever. In this issue, USSEC CEO Jim Sutter shares some of the insights he will present during the Soybean Summit about how Illinois soybeans are powering progress far beyond our borders in new ways and new places. His insights on international market development serve as a reminder that your high-quality soybeans not only feed the domestic market but also are the preferred choice of global customers.

We've also got a preview of the presentation ISA Soy Envoy Matt Montgomery, CCA, will share at Summit. Matt is the agronomy education lead for Beck's Hybrids, and his field-level strategies will help you transform tough seasonal decisions into a path toward success in 2026.

ISA Board Director and farmer Rob Shaffer reminds us of an important matter that is sometimes overlooked – the power of showing up. Whether it's the Soybean Summit or one of our many leadership programs, these opportunities for collaborative learning make a big difference. They're where farmers gain new information, build influence and take on new leadership roles within the industry.

Beyond the Soybean Summit, policy changes at the national level continue to ripple through our Illinois soybean fields. Our "Year in Review" story takes a clear-eyed look at how evolving federal poli-



JOHN LUMPE | CEO |
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

cies are impacting you and your farms. Our goal is to put a focus on the fine-print details that shape your daily work.

At ISA, everything we do – research investments, market development, policy education – is about helping you farm better and smarter. Our checkoff-backed research delivers ROI because it's rooted in your needs. We're here to make sure your investments resonate from Springfield to D.C. and to export markets around the world.

As you read through this issue, I'll leave you with this thought: Progress is a choice. In 2026, we're choosing to drive forward momentum, and Soybean Summit will be our ignition point. I look forward to seeing you there!

Visit www.ilsoy.org/events/soybean-summit-2026/ to register.



 Funded by the Illinois Soybean Checkoff

2026 Soybean Summit

Speaker Line-Up & Agenda





If you're looking to attend one event that can reshape how you think about your farm in 2026, make it the Illinois Soybean Association's (ISA's) Soybean Summit. This day-and-a-half event brings together the voices shaping modern agriculture: those of fellow farmers, leading agronomists, market experts and policymakers for the kind of real-world insights that can drive results on your farm.

"Attending the annual Soybean Summit provides our state's farmers with the tools and insights needed to have a successful growing season," says John Lumpe, CEO, ISA. "The event delivers three key takeaways: timely agronomic strategies farmers can put to work right away, valuable updates on market and policy trends shaping our industry, and opportunities to connect directly with experts and peers who share a commitment to continuous improvement."

What to Know About the Summit

This year's Summit takes place Jan. 27-28 in Champaign and will dive into critical topics including global trade impacts, the future of biodiesel, conservation strategies and what's next for farm policy. Whether you're dialing in plans for spring planting, adjusting to policy shifts or seeking data-backed strategies to improve ROI, you'll leave with actionable insights tailored to your operation.

"Soybean Summit keynote and breakout sessions are carefully selected each year to ensure the presentations remain relevant for Illinois soybean farmers," Lumpe explains. "As markets and policies continue to fluctuate, and input prices continue to climb, ISA remains committed to supporting the changing needs of our farmers and preparing them for what's ahead."

Choose Your Own Adventure

Customization is an important part of the conference experience. You get to pick which sessions

you attend based on where you're looking to grow and learn.

"Not all farms across Illinois are the same," Lumpe points out. "In fact, no two are identical. With that in mind, ISA designs the Soybean Summit agenda to include a diverse range of sessions and speakers from across the state and country, ensuring every attendee finds insights relevant to their own operation."

Here's a look at this year's agenda including session titles, descriptions and world-class speakers.

Tuesday, January 27 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

How the Illinois Soybean Association Will Work for You (Opening Keynote)

Learn how ISA is organizing its activities and programming around your needs to develop new markets, support production and influence ag policy in Springfield and Washington. You'll get

a clear view of the major issues facing Illinois agriculture as we open 2026.

Speakers: Kevin "KJ" Johnson, Director of Government Relations & Strategy, ISA; Todd Main, Director of Market Development, ISA; Abigail Peterson, Director of Agronomy, ISA

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

The State of Trade: The Global Impact of Illinois Soy (Keynote Session)

Sixty percent of Illinois soybeans are exported, which means your bottom line depends on global trade. This session explains how U.S. soy competes in a global market and what current trends mean for your profitability in 2026.

Speaker: Jim Sutter, CEO, U.S. Soybean Export Council

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Is the Farm Bill Dead? (Keynote Session)

With a Reconciliation Farm Bill signed in 2025, the rules of farm and food assistance are changing. Explore the political and economic fallout of the legislation and what it could mean for the future of farm programs and your risk-management strategy.

Speaker: Jonathan Coppess, Gardner Associate Professor of Agricultural Policy, University of Illinois

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Biodiesel Market and Policy Update (Keynote Session)

Get insights on 2025's biodiesel activity and learn where the market is headed next. Understand policy shifts, market drivers and ways biodiesel could play a role in your cropping strategy.

Speaker: Joe Jobe, CEO, Sustainable Advanced Biofuel Refiners

(See Soybean Summit 2026, page 8)



The Soybean Summit is designed to give Illinois farmers a clear starting point for the year ahead. Whether you are seeking guidance on agronomic planning or marketplace changes, you can use insights shared at the event to make the right business decisions for your farm operation.

Soybean Summit 2026

(continued from page 7)

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

New Technology to Make Phosphate Fertilizer More Efficient and Economical (Breakout Session)

Learn how RhizoSorb technology is helping farmers get more out of their phosphate fertilizer. You'll walk away with practical tips for improving phosphorus uptake and ROI while reducing environmental loss.

Speaker: Taylor Strehl, Technical Agronomist, Phospholutions Inc.

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Illinois Wetland Resources Overview (Breakout Session)

Find out how wetlands fit into modern ag operations. This session covers what wetlands are, why they matter and how farmers can incorporate conservation practices on their land. Includes panel discussion.

Speakers: Geoff Pociask, Principal Research Scientist, Illinois State Geological Survey; Paul Marcum, Associate Research Scientist, Illinois State Geological Survey

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Grains, Gains, and Global Change: The Story of Soy and Soybean Meal (Breakout Session)

Explore the shifting dynamics between exports and domestic soybean utilization, and discover how changes in global protein demand are redefining the economics of soy. This panel will unpack what these changes mean for price trends and profitability.

Speakers: Ryan Locke, Vice President of Engagement, National Oilseed Processors Association (NOPA); Todd Main, Director of Market Development, ISA; David Kubik, Biofuels and Trade Policy Manager,

ISA; Devin Mogler (tentative), President & CEO, NOPA

Wednesday, January 28

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Why Conservation Shouldn't Be a Trend (Breakout Session)

Conservation practices aren't one-size-fits-all. This session offers straight talk on how to navigate conservation programs and what it really takes to implement practices that stick.

Speaker: Darby Danzl, Regional Technical Agronomist, ISA

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Developing New Markets (Breakout Session)

ISA has a multipronged approach to developing new markets. This presentation will discuss how we manage the turbulence in international markets and continue to grow demand for Illinois soy.

Speaker: Todd Main, Director of Market Development, ISA

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Farm Inputs: A Focus on Fertilizers and Overall Farm Economy (Breakout Session)

This presentation focuses on the critical role of fertilizer in maintaining soil fertility and strong yields. It will also examine how rising prices for these essential inputs are reshaping farm budgets, tightening margins and influencing planting and management decisions.

Speaker: Samuel Taylor, Farm Inputs Analyst, Rabobank

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

The 5-Year Transition Program: Taking Time to Transition to Effective Soil Health Systems (Breakout Session)

Learn how a five-year support program is helping farmers transition to soil health systems. See real-world data from Illinois farmers using conservation practices that boost long-term performance.

Speaker: Jim Iserman, Independent Ag Consultant

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

From Harvest to Quality: How Bin Intelligence Protects Your Grain (Breakout Session)

Discover why "brains in bins" is more than a slogan; it's a game-changer for crop storage. This session combines technical expertise with real-world applications to help you make smarter storage decisions.

Speaker: John Lawrence, PhD, PE, Lead Grain Researcher, AGI; Ryan Thompson, Strategic Account Manager, AGI

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

How the MAHA Movement is Connecting Ingredients and Agriculture (Breakout Session)

Learn how the food and beverage industry is responding to the MAHA movement using themselves as a case study. PepsiCo highlights how they've made changes to meet consumer demand for more products and how they've partnered with farmers to meet these goals.



Illinois Soybean Association CEO John Lumpe, left, visits with an attendee during a past Soybean Summit. The event emphasizes direct conversation among farmers, ISA leadership and other leading industry experts on issues shaping soybean production, markets and policy.

Speaker: Jeremy Adamson, Director of Global Agriculture Policy, PepsiCo; Ryan Locke, Vice President of Engagement, National Oilseed Processors Association; Corey Lacey, PhD, Environmental Policy Manager, ISA

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Soybean Management: The Never-Ending Contest (Keynote Session)

Your success with soybeans is a year-round challenge. This session gives you a strategic framework to manage pre-plant, in-season and post-harvest decisions with long-term payoffs.

Speaker: Dr. Matt Montgomery, Agronomy Education Lead, Beck's Hybrids

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Prairie Fire & Ice (Closing Keynote)

What's in store for 2026? Learn how weather patterns, snow, drought and ocean temperatures could shape your next growing season.

Speaker: Matt Reardon, Senior Atmospheric Scientist, Nutrien Ag Solutions

Join Us to Jumpstart Your Year

By making the commitment to attend Soybean Summit 2026, you'll be investing in a day and a half of insights, connections and experiences that will drive success on your operation for years to come, says Lumpe, ISA's CEO.

"Each year, I learn something new, whether it be a fresh idea, a different perspective or a great story, and I can't wait to see what this year's conversations will bring," he says.

Mark your calendar for Jan. 27-28 and make plans to be in Champaign. Whether you're there to connect with fellow farmers, pressure-test ideas or gather tools to plan your next move, this is the place to do it.



Industry partners play a key role at Soybean Summit by bringing practical tools and research directly to farmers. During the trade show, you can visit with trusted ISA collaborators, learn about new solutions and get answers to your questions. Conversations held at the Summit often influence management choices long after the event ends.



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.




AGI IS A PROUD PARTNER OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION.



Educational sessions at Soybean Summit will provide you with timely insights on some of the biggest opportunities and challenges facing your farm operation.

Soybean Summit Trade Show

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

Along with a packed agenda of engaging presentations, Soybean Summit also features a trade show, with booths highlighting several of Illinois Soybean Association's partners and Illinois agriculture organizations. Participating partners include AGI, Agrauxine, BASF, Beck's, Brandt, Busey, Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI), Fendt, Phospholutions, Pinion, Rabobank, Valent BioSciences and others. These partners look forward to connecting with you one on one Jan. 27-28 at the I Hotel & Conference Center in Champaign!



AGI offers one of the most diverse catalogs of farm equipment and accessories for the storage, handling and conditioning of grain commodities. This includes AGI BinManager digital technology to safely monitor and automate in-bin grain quality by smart device. Stop by their booth at Soybean Summit to visit with AGI experts and learn more about their full product offering.



Agrauxine is the business unit of Lesaffre, a global player in fermentation in the areas of baking, food taste, health care and biotechnology. The business unit Agrauxine develops, manufactures and commercializes biosolutions for producers based on microorganisms and derivatives—yeast, bacteria and fungi. Stop by their booth to meet the Illinois Regional Sales team and learn more about what products they offer for soybean producers.



BASF Agricultural Solutions US LLC offers farmers crop protection, seed and seed treatment solutions. Products include revolutionary fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, seed treatments and seed. Representatives will be available at Soy Summit to hear from growers and share the latest about their crop protection and seed innovations.





Beck's, headquartered in Atlanta, Ind., is the largest family-owned retail seed company in the U.S. Stop by their booth to chat with their industry-leading agronomists to learn more about their high-yielding portfolio of varieties in all maturity ranges and the soybean success strategies that can help improve return on investment on your farm.



Brandt Industries is a short-line agricultural equipment manufacturer. They offer farmers a full lineup of grainhandling products: augers, belt conveyors, grain carts and also high-speed tillage equipment. Brandt manufactures grain carts at its factory in Hudson, Ill. and is now selling them directly to farmers in Illinois. Stop by their booth at Soy Summit to visit with Moe Winstead and learn more about how you can Lead the Field with Brandt Agricultural Products.



With agriculture being a cornerstone of our nation's economy, Busey Bank, member FDIC, has been proudly partnering with farmers and landowners for more than 157 years. Whether overseeing the rental of land, assisting with day-to-day operations, developing strategies for long-term

planning or even offering guidance on nontraditional considerations, Busey Ag Services is committed to providing clients with the knowledge and support needed to make informed decisions about their assets and to maximize the value of their farmland for future generations. Learn more about Busey's expansive services during the Summit.



Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI) provides a range of resources including a 24/7 helpline (1-833-327-6767) run by trained professionals to assist with farmer and farm-related mental and physical health needs. FFRI also provides telehealth counseling services with Southern Illinois University School of Medicine counselors, offering up to six

sessions for individuals, couples or groups. Email FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com for more information, or stop by their booth!



Fendt is a leading agricultural machinery company and technology innovator, and has been a trusted partner for farmers since 1988. They provide farmers with premium tractors, combines, planters, sprayers and smartfarming solutions that maximize efficiency and profitability. Stop by Fendt's booth at Soy Summit to visit with Fendt expert Dan Oest and learn more about the company's latest innovations such as the Vario tractors, IDEAL combines, Momentum planters, Rogator

(See Soybean Summit Trade Show, page 12)



Soybean Summit Trade Show

(continued from page 11)

applicators and precision farming technologies with PTx.



Phospholutions' mission is to enhance global phosphorus use. That's why they designed RhizoSorb 8-39-0 to increase phosphate efficiency by 50% and replace MAP and DAP dry fertilizer. According to their research, RhizoSorb has been proven in hundreds of small plots and on-farm trials demonstrating consistent yield results and cost savings, providing an average of \$20 in return on investment per acre. Stop by the Phospholutions's table at Soy Summit to see how the company can help you save on your farm's phosphate costs!



Pinion is an advisory and accounting firm dedicated to the food and agriculture industry. Pinion's clients include producers, input suppliers, processors, packagers, distributors, biofuel manufacturers, equipment dealerships, landowners, lenders and other agencies and policy organizations. Their expertise areas include accounting, tax compliance and strategy, audit and assurance, estate and succession planning, food and agriculture policy, sustainability and overall thought leadership. Bring your tax and succession-planning questions to their booth at the Summit.



Rabobank

Rabobank is one of the world's largest cooperative banks and a global leader specializing in food, agribusiness and energy. In North America, Rabobank's subsidiary, Rabo AgriFinance, serves clients with corporate banking, agricultural and equipment financing solutions, leveraging its global strength and reach to provide knowledge and a competitive advantage across the entire food and energy value chain. Local Relationship Managers will be at the Summit to meet with you and hear about your financing needs.



Valent BioSciences, with headquarters in Illinois, develops innovative, science-driven biorational and biostimulant solutions. They offer soybean growers a full portfolio of effective biostimulants to help maximize their crop potential. Stop by the Valent BioSciences booth to chat with their team of biostimulant experts and learn more about how their solutions help growers make the most of every acre.

Connect With ISA Leaders On Key Farm Issues

Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) will also have tables where attendees can connect with Agronomy, Market Development and Government Relations staff members.

Attendees may be interested

in engaging with Agronomy staff about their 2026 research projects, opportunities to participate in on-farm trials, free soybean cyst nematode testing and the ISA Agronomy Farm's first full growing/harvest research season in 2025.

On the Market Development front, ISA is working to grow domestic and global markets. Through the Soy Innovation Center, ISA supports the commercialization of soy-derived products that offer renewable alternatives to traditionally petroleum-based products. In addition, the New Uses International Commercialization Initiative aims to gather stakeholders to work together to expand existing uses and develop new food and industrial uses for soybeans to drive new demand around the world.

The ISA Government Relations team continues to engage, educate and advocate for soybean farmers in Springfield and Washington. In 2026, the team is working on estate-tax issues, engaging in pro-soy federal biofuel policy, increasing conservation support in Illinois and continuing to engage with state and federal policymakers. Soy Summit participants will also

have the opportunity to join Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG). ISG actively advocates on your behalf for positive and impactful legislation. Your ISG membership is used toward efforts to advocate for pro-agriculture, pro-farmer issues.

ISA's LEAD Program (Leadership, Education, Advocacy, Development) is designed for both aspiring leaders and seasoned experts seeking to advance Illinois agriculture and shape the future of farming. The purpose of the LEAD Program is for participants to gain a comprehensive understanding of the soybean supply chain, explore the benefits of the soy checkoff and its role in Illinois agriculture and to build skills to inspire and mentor future leaders in the industry. Chat with an ISA staff member to learn how you can participate in the next LEAD class!

Everyone can find value at the 2026 Soybean Summit from Jan. 27-28 in Champaign thanks to the numerous speakers, presenters, company leaders and farmers who will participate. For more information or to register for this free event, visit the "Events" tab at ilsoy.org. Have questions? Feel free to call the ISA home office





**DIFFERENT ROLES,
COMPLEMENTARY MISSIONS
ALL FOCUSED ON DRIVING VALUE
BACK TO THE U.S. SOYBEAN FARMER.**





Soybean Management

The Never-Ending Contest

*By Dr. Matt Montgomery, CCA,
2025 IL Soy Envoy*

Field strategies for soybean production are often considered over the span of a few months, from just before the season begins to just past harvest. Is that the best way to approach in-field management, though?

Let's start answering that question with this important point: Raising soybeans is a way of life, but it is also a business.

Growers are entrepreneurs and business owners and the goal of a well-run business is never just to survive for today. The "win" in a well-run busi-

ness is the victory of staying in business indefinitely and doing so with increasing efficiency, even when the battle legitimately feels "year to year."

That means something profound when it comes to any row-crop management system, and thus, it applies perfectly to soybean production.

Successful soybean production is a year-round and year-across-year endeavor. Said another way, soybean production is not a finite contest. Instead, soybean growers are engaged in a never-ending contest, a chess game in which thinking ahead makes all the difference.

Our 2026 Soybean Summit

keynote titled "Soybean Management – The Never-Ending Contest" will approach in-season management from this perspective.

The session will break down soybean management into three strategic categories, providing examples of agronomic management in each category.

Those strategic categories include Pre-Plant/Post-Harvest Considerations, In-Season Considerations and Harvest-Time Considerations. Each category represents moves that have immediate and long-term

(See Soybean Management, page 16)



Soybean Management

(continued from page 15)

benefit. Additionally, these categories provide a template for growers to better strategize their own never-ending soybean contest. Let's provide one example for each of those categories.

Pre-Plant/Post-Harvest Considerations: Even when times are tight, maintain the

discipline of doing *something* when it comes to annual soil fertility. If pH requires correction, start there. If pH is OK, look at P and K, replacing what you have taken off. Do not fall into the trap of "mining it all." You are in a long-term fertility battle.

In-Season Considerations: When engaging in weed management, ask yourself if your efforts will deplete the weed seed bank or if your efforts will result in a net-zero change or, worse yet, a net increase.

The advent of metabolic resistance necessarily means making a long-term dent in that weed seed bank. This season's management stretches across future seasons.

Harvest-Time Considerations:

So long as conditions allow, be hammer-down on soybean harvest and pay attention to soybean moisture. If you see dramatic drops in soybean moisture on your own farm, be conscious to watch soybean seed quality going into the next spring. Harvest conditions directly influence planting quality.

These categories can help you consider in-field management from a multi-year perspective, and that perspective is critical to survival. However, this template is not enough on its own.

A multiyear mindset requires more than facts, figures and arguments. It requires a mental shift that cannot be accomplished through any one session or presentation. It requires that soybean production feel different, down in the gut, for the individual grower.



So what can a grower do to make it easier to think long-term? The answer is simple but significant.

Do things that force your mind to think long-term. That can mean grand endeavors, but it can also mean simple, but equally profound, endeavors.

On the grand side, consider engaging in activities that benefit soybean production or your own operation directly. Engage in estate planning or lobby for multiyear rental agreements. See what can be done to lock in long-term input pricing, where the dollars make sense. Consider becoming involved with commodity groups or local Farm Bureaus. All such "grand endeavors" force you to think about your operation long-term, even when prices cause walls to draw close.

On the simple yet equally profound side, make a commitment to do the often-unseen things. Get involved with your

local church or a community group. Consider finding a young ag enthusiast and take them under your wing. Mentor others. We do these things, first and foremost, because they are good things to do. Here is the side benefit, though: These activities force you to think about the future. These little, unseen things will make you see your own operation less "year by year" and more "multiyear."

Engaging in those grand and simple things becomes even more important when times are tight and when stressors tempt us to pull away.

Use a version of the long-term management template we'll present during our session. Do the difficult internal work, the work that forces you to think long-term (when every business metric tempts you to do otherwise). That's a must for today's soybean producer.

After all, we are the never-ending soybean contest.



Dr. Matt Montgomery, CCA, 2025 IL Soy Envoy

**Producers
don't have to
go it alone.**

2026

Farm Peer Group Meetings: FORMING NOW

pinion 

From isolation to connection, find out why more farmers are turning to peer groups as a business tool.

www.pinionglobal.com/services/peer-group-programs



Year Two Under the Trump Administration

What's Ahead for Illinois Soybean Farmers in 2026

By Matt Johnston, Policy Specialist,
Illinois Soybean Association

As the Trump administration enters its second year, Illinois soybean farmers face a policy environment full of both opportunity and uncertainty. From new federal health initiatives to domestic biofuel incentives, a necessary skinny Farm Bill and shifting global trade patterns, federal decisions made in 2025 will directly shape the 2026 growing and marketing year. Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) is tracking each development closely to ensure farmer interests are represented.

MAHA: A Cautious Eye on a Potential Regulatory Threat

Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) is one of the most significant federal initiatives introduced in 2025. Designed to address childhood chronic disease through nutritional guidance, environmental exposure reductions and chemical review, MAHA represents an approach that touches many parts of the food and agriculture system.

For soybean farmers, MAHA presents potential regulatory risks. Early MAHA materials referenced both pesticide exposure and concerns

about seed oils, including products created from soy. Although the initiative is still in its strategic phase, the scope and tone suggest future recommendations or rulemaking could influence pesticide access, labeling or nutrition policy in ways that impact soybean markets.

ISA is approaching MAHA with caution. Farmers recognize the importance of health and nutrition but also know that decisions must be

grounded in accurate science, not fear-based narratives or misperceptions about safe, approved crop protection tools. ISA is working to ensure any federal consideration of pesticides or oils includes farmer input, environmental realities and the economic role soy plays in food, feed and fuel markets.

Federal Biofuel Policy Evolution: 40A, 45Z and the Path Forward

Biofuels remain one of the

strongest demand drivers for Illinois soybeans, but the current mix of incentives brings both promise and uncertainty.

The new 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit, active in January 2026, provides valuable short-term momentum for biodiesel and renewable-diesel producers. The credit's carbon-intensity-based design rewards lower-carbon

(See Year Two Under

the Trump Administration, page 20)



Year Two Under the Trump Administration

(continued from page 19)

feedstocks, and soybean oil continues to hold a central place in the industry's pathway.

However, farmers and biofuel producers alike are concerned about the January 2025 expiration of the longstanding 40A Biodiesel Blender's Credit, which was the most durable and stable incentive the industry has had. Illinois soybean farmers benefited from policy certainty, something 45Z alone does not provide. The opportunity for biofuels is large, but so is the need for clarity. The outlook for 2026 hinges on whether Congress provides long-term stability for soy-based fuels.

2026 Skinny Farm Bill: A Necessary, Targeted Update

As Congress turns attention to the next Farm Bill, expectations are increasingly centered around a "skinny" package — a streamlined bill that updates essential farm programs without reopening broader political battles.

Much of the heavy lifting for agriculture was already completed in the administration's earlier omnibus package, often referred to as the One Big Beautiful Bill. That measure included many policy updates that would traditionally be part of a broader Farm Bill debate. As a result, lawmakers appear ready to focus on essentials rather than on major structural changes.

For Illinois soybean farmers, the top priority is preserving a strong, reliable crop insurance program. With volatile markets and rising input costs, crop insurance remains the most important risk-management

tool available. A skinny bill that protects crop insurance, addresses rising loss ratios in Illinois for corn and soy farmers, and avoids unexpected disruptions, would be the most beneficial outcome for 2026.

ISA is advocating for a Farm Bill that maintains predictability for growers and prevents sudden changes that could complicate planting or marketing decisions.

Trade Direction and Global Markets

As Illinois soybean growers look ahead to 2026, global trade dynamics continue to evolve, and the role of China, historically our largest customer, has shifted significantly. In 2024, China imported a record 105 million metric tons of soybeans, but only about 22 million tons came from the U.S., placing our country's share at roughly 21%. That represents one of the lowest market shares in over a decade and highlights how competitive the global marketplace has become.

This past fall, U.S. exporters even saw periods with no new Chinese purchases during harvest. More recently, China has begun booking additional U.S. soybeans for the 2025/26 marketing year, which is an encouraging sign. But it's far from a return to the dominance U.S. soy once held. Brazilian and Argentine supplies remain strong, and Brazil continues to expand both production and export capacity, strengthening its position with major buyers.

For Illinois producers, this means trade will likely remain more dynamic and less predictable than in years past. The long-term fundamentals of global demand remain strong, but the U.S. will continue competing aggressively with South America for market share. Looking forward, diversifying markets,



supporting infrastructure improvements, and expanding domestic demand, such as

crush and biofuels, will be key strategies for building resilience.



Verone®

BioNematicide | BioFungicide | BioNutrition

Take control and maximize your seed treatment efficacy

Learn more at Agrauxine.us/verone



Agrauxine

by Lesaffre



Your return on investment for your 0.5% checkoff contribution? **The world.**

ILLINOIS SOYBEANS, GLOBAL DEMAND;
YOUR CHECKOFF WORKING IN MORE MARKETS.

+49% U.S. soybean
meal exports
to Indonesia

In partnership with the U.S. Soybean Export Council, the Illinois Soybean Association supports global Soy Excellence Centers, which provide agribusiness training to local professionals across four continents. By promoting the benefits of and securing preference for U.S. soy, we're ensuring your soybeans always have a home.

192,922
METRIC TONS
in MY 2023/24

Learn more at ilsoy.org

Funded by the Illinois Soybean Association Checkoff Program





The State of Trade

The Global Impact of Illinois Soy

By Jim Sutter, CEO, U.S. Soybean Export Council

Changes are coming to soy trade, they might not be the ones you're thinking about.

To fully understand the impacts of Illinois soybeans on the global level and the future of the market, one must first examine the bigger picture of global markets for our top commodities.

Global commodity demand has grown exponentially since the early 90s, with corn up 164%, wheat up 56% and soybeans up an incredible 305%.

World trade for soy is ultimately driven by population and income growth. The strongest markets for trade? The regions with oilseed deficits. And, those developing and emerging countries that are transitioning with demand for more animal and plant-based proteins.

Global soy production continues to deliver on those global soy demands, thanks to some

major players who will continue to impact trade for the foreseeable future.

The Major Players: Brazil

U.S. soybean farmers are not the only ones with a commodity to sell. In the past decade, we've seen Brazil ramp up its production even more to meet growing needs around the globe. They're producing and exporting at a higher rate than ever before.

Faster is not better in all instances. Brazil's rapid approach to production growth by harvesting more acres has certainly caught global attention. Land-use change is still a very big concern for buyers around the world, and they are watching it closely.

Brazil's infrastructure has not kept pace with its acreage growth, but ultimately the country's approach has positioned it well for the future to export its farmers' products.

The country will remain the leading global producer in

soybeans over the next decade, and it will gain a larger share of the whole soybean market by 2034/35.

The Major Players: United States

The U.S. soybean approach to production is vastly different than that of our South American peers. Our production gains come down to the expertise we have in managing our acreage. Genetics, along with technology and practice adoption, are driving our growth in production – not increased acres.

Our commitment to growing more with less is not lost on our global markets and helps make U.S. soy stand out long-term.

The U.S. has also invested heavily in infrastructure, with crush capacity continuing to experience significant growth. By 2034/35, we will likely see soy crush exceed exports as the biggest driver of soybean demand in the U.S., though collective-

ly, soybean and soybean meal exports together are projected to represent 39% of the U.S. crop. International markets will continue to have a significant influence on U.S. soy.

The U.S. is positioning itself for increased domestic demand for soybean oil thanks to the strong renewable-fuels market for biodiesel, renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel. This means that the U.S. will look to export more soybean meal in the near future than it has historically.

We expect meal exports to grow 41% in volume by 2034/35, primarily to countries that have a need for feed including: Colombia, Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand and Vietnam, among others.

It is also worth noting that despite the growth in soy crush and soy meal exports, we expect that whole-bean exports will be 70% of U.S. soy exports. Some people say, "Let's crush the whole crop and only export products." That is not practical, as many

markets that have a need for both meal and oil want to import whole soybeans. U.S. soybeans have loyal customers around the world, and we want to continue supplying them with our differentiated, high-quality, sustainable soybeans.

Differentiation in Markets

Did you know that USSEC has a presence in more than 90 countries around the world? Relationship-building, technical education and overall positioning of U.S. soy has been taking place for decades.

Our trade markets have been in the headlines over the past year and I can't think of a time when the strategic foresight to build relationships and awareness mattered more than it does now.

The fact is that U.S. soy has many advantages – sustainability, quality, consistency and reliability. It's why we've built the relationships we have throughout the world.

U.S. soy exports to destinations other than China are up for marketing year 2025/26 compared to the same timeframe a year ago. This growth in exports did not just happen overnight. It reflects the diverse, check-off-funded work being conducted in these regions for decades.

A Future in Trade

Trade is such an important part of soybean farmer profitability and one we're working daily to impact. USSEC values free, fair and open trade, and we want to help as trade patterns shift.

The growth we have seen in global markets is a testament to the reputation U.S. soy has around the globe and demonstrates that U.S. soy is positioned well for the future. There is a lot to be optimistic about as we kick off 2026.

I look forward to discussing this in more depth at the Soybean Summit.



Jim Sutter, CEO, U.S. Soybean Export Council



 **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.
TM. ® Trademarks of Corteva Agriscience and its affiliated companies. © 2025 Corteva. 034692 PIO (11/25)


CORTEVA
agriscience



Stem Watch

Tracking Soybean Pests Across Illinois

By *Stephanie Porter, CCA,*
Outreach Agronomist, Illinois
Soybean Association

As pest pressures continue to shift across the Midwest, Illinois researchers are closely monitoring two insects raising concerns in neighboring states: soybean gall midge and dectes stem borer. Dectes stem borer is an established pest that appears to be growing in importance in Illinois, while soybean gall midge remains a potential invasive species that has not yet reached the state. A multiyear effort funded by the Illinois Soybean Checkoff is helping farmers understand where these pests stand today and what to watch for heading into 2026.

**Soybean Gall Midge:
Still No Signs in Illinois**

Soybean gall midge has still not been detected in Illinois after three years of statewide monitoring. In 2025, Kelly Estes, University of Illinois Agricultural

Pest Survey Coordinator, and her team surveyed 200 soybean fields across 45 counties. Sweep-net samples were collected to monitor adult dectes stem borers and other soybean pests. Because soybean gall midge adults are extremely small and not typically captured in sweep nets, detection efforts rely on examining soybean plants, particularly along field edges where early

signs of injury are most likely to appear. To date, no soybean gall midge has been found in Illinois.

**Dectes Stem Borer:
A Growing, Localized
Concern**

Meanwhile, Dr. Nick Seiter’s lab at the University of Illinois focused on larval populations of dectes stem borer. From 2021 to 2023, they surveyed no-till

fields across the state, especially in southern Illinois, to identify where larvae were most prevalent. In 2025, they narrowed their focus to two locations in southern Illinois with known infestations, sampling soybean residue throughout the summer to track the development of overwintered larvae.

Dectes stem borer populations were consistently detect-

District	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northwest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northeast	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.10
West	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.50
Central	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.15	0.03	0.10
East	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
West-Southwest	0.16	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.08	0.00	1.20
East-Southeast	0.10	0.00	0.40	0.08	0.08	0.20	0.00
Southwest	1.60	0.40	3.52	6.40	2.10	0.53	1.20
Southeast	2.54	0.40	2.50	2.30	4.40	0.53	1.00
State Average	0.55	0.21	0.75	1.01	0.76	0.18	0.46



Why I Became a Member of Illinois Soybean Growers — and How Policy Engagement Has Helped My Farm

By Bryan Severs, Chairman, Illinois Soybean Association

I didn't join Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) because I was looking for meetings to attend or another group to put my name on. I joined because, over time, I realized something important: The decisions made in Springfield and Washington have a direct impact on whether my family farm can keep operating the way it always has. I've spent my whole life in the fields, growing soybeans and corn on the same ground my family has worked for generations. I'm plainspoken by nature and I've always believed in putting my head down and doing honest work. But policy, whether we like it or not, reaches right into our barns, fields and balance sheets. That's what pushed me to become a member.

One of the biggest motivators was ISG's work on biodiesel. I saw firsthand how increased soybean-blend biodiesel demand added real value to the bushels I was hauling out of the field. For our operation, the growth in biodiesel markets has meant roughly 10% more value per bushel. Ten percent isn't a fancy number on a report, it's money that pays for seed, repairs equipment and helps keep this farm running for my kids and the next generation. Seeing ISG stand up for biodiesel, promote higher blends and protect that market showed me that they weren't just talking about helping farmers, they were actually doing it.

Another major reason I joined is because ISG acts as a watchdog when it comes to regulations. There seems to always be some proposed ban or rule floating around, limits on seed treatments, attacks on 2,4-D, glyphosate challenges, you name it. Every time one of those regulations gets pushed, it threatens the tools we use to farm. ISG has been out front defending those tools and making sure lawmakers understand what happens in a field, not just what they read in a report. On top of that, they've fought to protect landownership rights, something every single farmer should be wary about.

To be frank, I never once pictured myself walking into a legislator's office. Like a lot of farmers, I assumed lawmakers wouldn't care about what I had to say. I figured they were too busy, too political or too disconnected from real farm life. But ISG opened the door for me to take part in lobby days in both Springfield and Washington. And to be honest, I went into that first meeting with pretty low expectations.

What happened next surprised me. I sat down face-to-face with policymakers from both sides of the aisle, and they listened. Not only that, but over time I watched some of the concerns I raised — the same issues that affect my own fields — get worked into actual bills. Some of those bills even became law. To go from assuming my voice didn't matter to seeing it make a difference was something I never expected. That experience showed me that being at the table matters and ISG is the group that gives farmers like me that seat.

What I value most isn't flashy. It's the straightforward benefits: policy changes that keep my operation viable, real conversations with lawmakers and the chance to explain what farming actually looks like in contrast to the big-city skylines many lawmakers are used to. I've talked with legislators I've never voted for and with others I've supported for years. No matter their political affiliation, they respected me, and they listened. That changed how I see advocacy. Most of these politicians mean well and are trying their best to do good by you, me and everyone else. But they can't solve my problem or yours if we don't tell them what it is.

Joining ISG gave me a voice, plain and simple. It gave me the tools to help protect my family farm and make sure the next generation has the same opportunities I did. For me, that's worth every bit of the time and effort. I hope you will join me in becoming a member to make a difference for our businesses and our families!

To learn more or to sign up as an ISG member, go to www.ilsoy.org/illinois-soybean-growers/membership-application/

FROM YOUR FIELDS TO FIREFIGHTERS HANDS

The more we discover about soybeans, the more valuable they become. One innovative product, SoyFoam™, creates a new, sustainable use for your crop that protects firefighters and the planet.

See how your Soy Checkoff is unlocking new markets for soybeans at unitedsoybean.org



Sent to you compliments of:

Illinois Soybean Association
1108 Trinity Lane
Bloomington, IL 61704

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN
GROWERS



January 27-28, 2026
I Hotel, Champaign, IL

We're all connected and working hard to drive profitable production and sustainable solutions. Learn about the latest in agronomic practices, market outlooks and regulatory updates at the 2026 Soybean Summit.

ilsoy.org/events/soybean-summit-2026

