

Winter 2025

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADER

A publication of the South Dakota Soybean Association

2025 Winter Check-In

- ▶ Soy Industry News
- ▶ The European Union is a Crucial Market for U.S. Soy
- ▶ Soy Protein's Quality Makes it the Top Choice Among Plant-Based Options
- ▶ Increased Soybean Processing Keeps More Value in South Dakota



YPN Manager Jaci Pieters visits the Deinert farm. Story on page 26.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

SEASONS OF CHANGE, SEEDS OF GRATITUDE

By Kevin Deinert, President of the South Dakota Soybean Association

As you read this letter, I hope it finds you well this winter as we wrap up another year on the farm. Farming is a testament to an ever-enduring perseverance of change and cycles – planting, growing, harvesting and beginning over again. But as we know, change is part of every healthy field, prosperous farm, and thriving community.

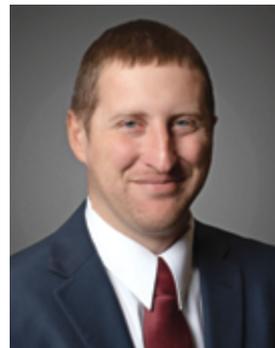
There is no way to dance around it, but one big change you'll be seeing is someone new will be filling this page next time. I will be terming off from my role as President of SDSA and truly thank you for entrusting me with such a responsibility. While I will miss our time together here in this magazine, I cannot help but be overwhelmed with gratitude, pride, and optimism as our organization moves forward. Just as each season brings new growth, new challenges, and new opportunities, so too does this transition.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all those who have helped me along my way, but most notably in the soybean family would be the staff at SD Soybean itself. Together we have worked through some unpredictable seasons, literally and figuratively, and I remain deeply proud of how they continue to advocate for our producers. They truly are some of the best in the business and continue the tradition of being one of the most respected in the ag community.

While you may have seen my picture in these magazines, what you don't see is the never-ending support of my family behind me. To my wife, I truly cannot put into words the support you have shown me over the years. Thank you for holding down the fort with the kids while I am out advocating for farmers across the state and nation. We as directors are volunteers, but we spend a tremendous amount of time out supporting producers at the expense of our families. Like all farm families across the state, our loved ones at home are the true unsung heroes of the family farm.

Serving as your President has been one of the greatest honors of my life. And while my term as President is ending, my involvement certainly is not. I will continue to stand with you, work alongside you, and champion the issues that matter to our farming community. I look forward to watching our organization continue to grow, evolve, and flourish with the incoming new leadership.

While some changes may be coming to our organization, I hope during this time of year you take comfort in the never-changing love of our Savior Jesus Christ. Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones, and may God grant you peace and prosperity in the new year. God bless, and thank you for all that you do! ■



KEVIN DEINERT
DISTRICT AT LARGE,
PRESIDENT

Kevin Deinert

Kevin Deinert





SDSL

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DAVID STRUCK, *Chairman of SDSRPC*

STRONG HARVEST, STRONGER HORIZONS

By David Struck, *Chairman of SDSRPC*

As the harvest season winds down after a truly rewarding production year, it's a good time to look back at the momentum that has brought us to this point, and to look forward to new opportunities for South Dakota soybean farmers.

A new processing plant in Mitchell has come online, greatly increasing our ability to utilize the large crop we just raised. This facility will add value and enhance market stability for soybean farmers across the state for years to come.

The South Dakota Soybean Checkoff continues to push innovation and create new opportunities for our crop. We are investing in cutting-edge research, expanding markets, and working to ensure soy remains a dependable and profitable choice for South Dakota producers. The Checkoff is supporting the development of renewable, soy-based technologies that open entirely new markets for soybeans. This includes advances in sustainable aviation fuel, high-performance industrial lubricants, asphalt enhancements, soy-based binders, next-generation biobased plastics, and soy-based foam products designed for industrial applications. One new use created through research using your Checkoff dollars is a soy-based firefighting foam technology, which is being developed as a safer, environmentally responsible alternative to traditional PFAS-based foams. These emerging soy-derived formulations aim to reduce environmental impact while maintaining effective fire-suppression performance.

Through work with the United Soybean Board, we are strengthening relationships with buyers around the world who value the consistency and quality of U.S. soybeans. USB continues to grow international markets by promoting U.S. soy as a reliable ingredient for food, feed, aquaculture, and

sustainable manufacturing. These efforts are helping expand export opportunities in regions like Southeast Asia, the EU, and the Americas, markets that are increasingly important to the long-term profitability of South Dakota producers. Your Checkoff dollars continue to fund important research on disease and weed control, as well as studies targeted at improving soybean yield, stress tolerance, and quality. We are also helping lead advancements in soil health and regenerative agriculture practices that support lasting productivity and environmental stewardship.

We also continue to invest in the MESONET weather-station network, an invaluable tool for every farmer applying crop protection products. MESONET provides real-time weather, wind, and temperature data that help producers make safer, more efficient decisions in the field. Using MESONET not only protects crops and equipment but also supports responsible stewardship of land, neighboring operations, the environment, and wildlife.

As the seasons change, we hope you find yourself with the equipment parked safely in the shed and a little extra time to enjoy a well-earned break from the rigors of field work, a Merry Christmas with family, and a very Happy New Year. We appreciate your continued commitment to South Dakota agriculture and look forward to another year of progress and innovation. ■

David Struck

David Struck
Chairman of SDSRPC

Community, Leadership, and a Touch of Ag at the Chamber's Annual Meeting

The 119th Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting was a vibrant celebration of the Sioux Falls community. Centered around the theme “Amplify: Values in Action. Future in Focus.”, the evening highlighted leadership, growth, and connection. Keynote speaker Tamien Dysart delivered an inspiring message focused on community impact and purposeful leadership, while a lighthearted roast of Mayor Paul TenHaken added humor and energy to the program.

While the event was not solely focused on agriculture, the industry was well represented and recognized throughout the evening. Jerry Schmitz, executive director and longtime agricultural advocate, was honored as Agri-Business Citizen of the Year. In addition, the Wirt Family of Parker received the Farm Family of the Year award. These recognitions underscored the vital role agriculture continues to play in the region's success.

Farmers, Football, and Community Spirit



On September 27, the three commodities came together (Soybean, Corn & Pork) to celebrate the farmers who make it all possible by hosting a Farmers Appreciation Tailgate at the South Dakota State University football game. The event was a true success, built on teamwork, great food, and shared pride in South Dakota agriculture.

Volunteers fired up the grills and served 450 cheddar and bacon pork burgers to farmers and fans alike. A sea of blue and yellow filled the tailgate tent as the hometown crowd lined up for burgers and chips that quickly became a fan favorite.

Beyond the food, the tent was filled with meaningful conversations, laughter, and sincere appreciation for farmers and their impact. The event served as a powerful reminder of how deeply agriculture connects communities across South Dakota.

Building Global Connections

South Dakota Soybean hosted a Philippine trade team on the morning of September 24 at the farm of Dave Poppens, located just east of Lennox. The visit included tours of two Poppens farm sites, where the group learned more about the operation's cattle enterprise and overall farm management practices.

Following the farm tours, the trade team traveled to Worthing for a visit to the CHS fertilizer shed and newly constructed grain elevator. Participants were given an in-depth look at the facility, including a guided tour inside the elevator pit, offering valuable insight into grain handling and infrastructure. The trade team consisted of 13 feed buyers, and the visit provided an excellent opportunity for discussion and questions about farming practices in South Dakota. The exchange highlighted the value of building relationships and sharing knowledge with international partners.





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



Focusing on US Soy

A Northern Soy Marketing hosted trade team visited South Dakota on October 1 for an in-depth look at the value of northern-grown soybeans. The delegation included representatives primarily from Indonesia, along with participants from Thailand and Vietnam.

The visit began with discussions on the role soy plays in poultry and swine nutrition, followed by a tour of the SDSU Swine Unit. The group then visited the Houdek Research Facility to learn how fish feed is developed and how pellets are customized for specific species.

A highlight of the day was a stop at the farm of Checkoff Director Jeff Thompson, where guests experienced soybean harvest operations firsthand, including combine and grain cart rides. The tour concluded with a visit to a local grain elevator before the team spent the evening in Sioux Falls.

The trade team departed Thursday morning for the Pacific Northwest to continue learning about soybean export logistics and markets.

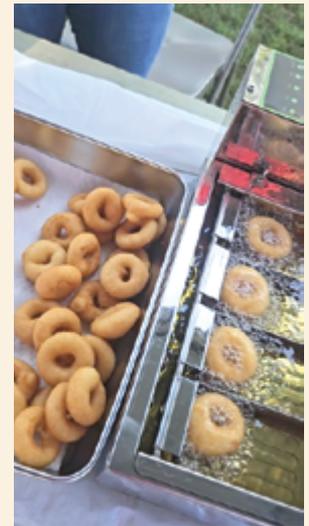


Football, Donuts, and a Sweet Overtime Win!

On Saturday, September 13, the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff proudly co-sponsored Ag Appreciation Day at the University of South Dakota football game. During the pregame tailgate, the South Dakota Soybean team served hot, fresh donuts fried in heart-healthy soybean oil, giving fans a tasty reminder of soy's versatility and benefits.

Checkoff Director Bruce Haines and his wife, Marlene, were also in attendance, lending their support and cheering on the Yotes. The tailgate atmosphere was lively, filled with music, great food, and engaging conversations about soybeans and agriculture.

The excitement continued inside the DakotaDome, where fans enjoyed a thrilling football matchup that ended with an overtime victory for the Yotes. The day delivered a winning combination of fun, flavor, and football while celebrating South Dakota agriculture.



Celebrating Local Flavor at Aberdeen's Field to Fork

SDSA Director Tara Bierman and Checkoff Director April Bowar attended the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce's Field to Fork event on September 18, an evening that celebrated local agriculture through food, fellowship, and community connection. Attendees enjoyed engaging conversations while sampling a wide variety of dishes made with locally grown ingredients. The menu featured items such as egg rolls, jalapeño potato salad, brisket mac and cheese, white turkey chili, rhubarb crisp, and more.

In addition to the meal, local vendors offered fresh produce, jams, and breads for guests to take home. Throughout the venue, educational flyers and recipe cards provided opportunities to learn more about soybeans, with many recipes highlighting soy-based ingredients.



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FEED CONVERSION, NOT JUST PROTEIN: THE COMPETITIVE EDGE OF NORTHERN MIDWEST SOYBEANS

By Jerry Schmitz, Executive Director of South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council & South Dakota Soybean Association

2026 has been a very challenging year for farm families, especially those who grow soybeans. Soybeans have dominated conversations in Washington, D.C., on the world stage, across major news networks, and even on The View. While much of this attention stemmed from tariffs and limited trade, it also highlighted the importance of soybeans and the economic importance of soybean farmers. How the rest of the market season plays out remains to be seen. There is room for both concern and optimism as we move forward.

The main concern is that we are significantly behind in soybean shipments to China which often purchases more than 40 percent of South Dakota's soybeans, but they have begun buying. Even more encouraging, several strong market fundamentals favor South Dakota produced soybeans, and several countries are taking notice creating opportunities to diversify our export markets.

During a recent soybean trade mission in Seattle that included soy buyers, traders, and shippers from 19 countries, poultry and swine feeders from those countries expressed strong preference for soybeans grown in the northern Midwest over higher protein soybeans from South America. The reason? Their poultry and livestock consistently exhibit better feed conversion with our soybeans, even though crude protein levels are lower. Many international feeders said they are willing to pay a premium for our superior product.

Crude protein as a measure of feed value dates back to the 1800s. It is calculated by multiplying the nitrogen content of a soy sample by 6.25. Research funded by your soybean checkoff has shown that crude protein is not the best indicator of feed value and soy meal users around the world agree, yet it remains the common standard in global trade. Your checkoff dollars are helping educate nutritionists and end users about better indicators of feed value.

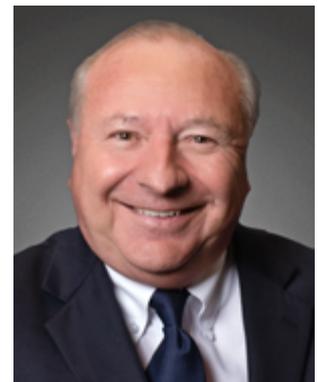
Those end users know from experience that essential amino

acid profile, fiber, fat, careful handling, and product consistency matter far more. South Dakota soybeans excel in all of these areas, even if crude protein measures slightly lower. Our beans are harvested under dry, cool conditions, are refrigerated by nature while stored, and handled with the care U.S. farmers are known for.

In contrast, while South American soybeans often have higher crude protein, they typically have lower essential amino acid levels. Hot, humid harvest conditions also reduce quality and consistency, and the beans more easily fall out of condition in storage. The world is taking notice and that recognition will increase the value of your soybeans.

Another bright spot is the growth in domestic soy inclusion rates across poultry, swine, dairy, and beef sectors. Increased local use of soybeans strengthens South Dakota farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

The global population continues to shift from rural to urban areas. As people move off the farm, they no longer grow their own food and rely on farmers and ranchers for their protein. That protein may be in a vegetable form of soy, or as incomes rise from fish, poultry, and livestock fed with soy. Soy remains one of the most complete and efficient protein sources available, supplying more natural essential amino acids than any other plant-based option. Soy demand will continue to grow as the world population increases. ■



JERRY SCHMITZ
Executive Director of
SDSRPC and SDSA



THE EUROPEAN UNION IS A CRUCIAL MARKET FOR U.S. SOY

By Jim Sutter

USSEC has been actively promoting U.S. Soy in the European Union (EU) since 1960, shortly after its predecessor institution was founded in 1951 by six countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, following World War II. It currently includes these 27 member states: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

The EU's population exceeds 448 million, accounting for 5.6% of the world's total. Germany is the most populous country in the EU, while France has the largest land area within it. Malta is the smallest in both population and size. Demographically, 39% of EU citizens live in cities, 36% in towns and suburbs, and 25% in rural areas. Additionally, every EU citizen has the right to travel, work, and live freely in any member country without special formalities.

To clarify, the European Union is not a direct customer. The EU is a “common market” comprised of 27 member states. It is a binding agreement based on treaties that are voluntarily approved by all members, eliminating all trade barriers between them, establishing a common tariff and non-tariff barriers for imports, and permitting the free movement of labor, capital, and services among the member countries.



JIM SUTTER
CEO of the U.S.
Soybean Export
Council (USSEC)

The EU accounts for about 15-20% of the world's agricultural exports and imports.

OVERALL TRADE SITUATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE EU

According to the U.S. Trade Representative, U.S. goods and services trade with EU totaled an estimated \$1.5 trillion in 2024, up 5.7% (\$80 billion) from 2023.

U.S. total goods trade (exports plus imports) with EU was an estimated \$975.5 billion in 2024. U.S. goods exports to EU in 2024 were \$369.8 billion, up 0.4% (\$1.4 billion) from 2023. U.S. goods imports from EU in 2024 totaled \$605.7 billion, up 5.1% (\$29.6 billion) from 2023. The U.S. goods trade deficit with EU was \$235.9 billion in 2024, a 13.6% increase (\$28.2 billion) over 2023.

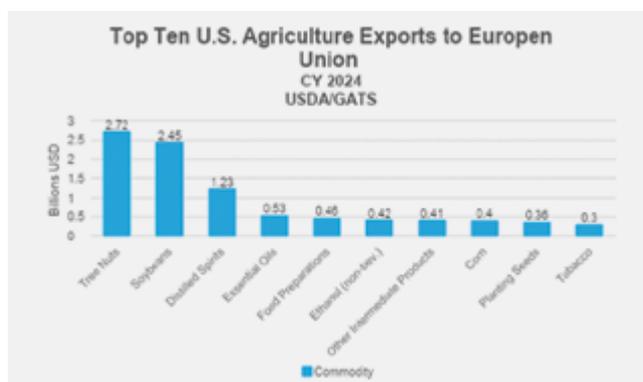
U.S. total services trade (exports plus imports) with EU totaled an estimated \$500.9 billion in 2024. U.S. services exports to EU in 2024 were \$294.7 billion, up 12.3% (\$32.2 billion) from 2023. U.S. services imports from EU in 2024 were \$206.1 billion, up 8.9% (\$16.9 billion) from 2023. The U.S. services trade surplus

with EU was \$88.6 billion in 2024, a 20.9% increase (\$15.3 billion) over 2023.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE BALANCE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE EU

For over twenty years, the United States has maintained a significant trade deficit in agricultural products with the EU. The U.S. was the fourth-largest supplier of farm goods to the EU, behind Brazil, the UK, and Ukraine. Farming and related product exports from the United States to the EU reached \$12.85 billion in 2024, making the EU the fourth-largest export market for the U.S., after Mexico, China, and Canada.

The top ten U.S. agricultural and related products exported to the EU by value include tree nuts, soybeans, distilled spirits, essential oils, food preparations, ethanol (non-beverage), other intermediate products, corn, planting seeds, and tobacco.



Source: European Union: Facts and Figures

The European Union is the third-largest source of agricultural imports into the United States, after Mexico and Canada, with an average of \$32.9 billion from 2020 to 2024. In 2024, the EU's top agricultural exports to the U.S. included wine products, grain preparations and milling products, spirits and liqueurs, and olives and olive oil.

THE EU IS A KEY MARKET FOR U.S. SOY

The EU ranks as the third-largest consumer of soybean meal globally, following China and the United States. It also comes in second as the largest importer of soybeans and soybean products. About 75% of Europe's total supply is imported from outside the EU. The primary sources of whole soybeans for the EU are Brazil, Argentina, the United States, and Canada. The leading exporters of soybean meal are Brazil, Argentina, and Ukraine, with the United States and other countries also participating in this trade.

The EU is a significant market for the U.S. Soy industry, both in whole soybeans and soybean meal exports. The region accounts for approximately 11% of the total U.S. exports of these products. In 2024, the EU was the second-largest export market for U.S. soybeans after China, with total sales of \$2.45 billion. This accounts for approximately 40% of the EU's market share for imported whole soybeans. Regarding U.S. soybean meal exports in 2024, the EU ranked as our ninth-largest market, with \$241 million in annual sales, which accounts for approximately 4% of the EU's total imports.

The increasing demand and acceptance of U.S. soybeans and soybean meal by EU member states underscore a growing preference for sustainably produced soybeans from U.S. farms. U.S. soybean exports are more dependable, resulting in higher shipments to European markets. Additionally, Europe's food and feed industries are prioritizing sustainable practices more than ever. The focus on sustainability within the U.S. Soy industry provides it with a competitive advantage in the European animal feed market. Other reasons for the rising demand for U.S. Soy include its higher feed energy content, smaller carbon footprint compared to other sources, and the minimal impact of deforestation and land use change in U.S. soybean farming compared to other suppliers.

Regarding the critical issue of deforestation mentioned earlier, the landmark EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), adopted in 2023, requires companies to prove that the products they export to the EU do not come from land recently deforested or degraded since 2020. Once again, this September, the EU announced a potential postponement of the EUDR's implementation, likely until December 2026. An official proposal has not been made.

The announcement of a likely delay of the EUDR creates market uncertainty. EU leaders recognize that consumers prefer products free from deforestation. A simple solution would be to source soy from the U.S., which the EU considers "low risk." Data shows that U.S. Soy production has had minimal recent links to deforestation. The EU has a chance to make a decisive move and meet consumer demand by providing deforestation-free U.S. Soy. Even though the EU's regulatory frameworks remain uncertain, our EU customers can act now by sourcing verifiably sustainable U.S. Soy.

U.S.-EU TRADE TALKS

The European Union has a large and growing trade surplus with the United States. That is why President Trump announced a 15% retaliatory tariff on most European products imported into the United States.

Fortunately, negotiators have made progress. On August 20, 2025, a joint statement was released by U.S. and EU Authorities highlighting agreements made when President Ursula von der Leyen and President Trump met in July 2025. It is great to see an agreement has been reached, as the EU is the second-largest market for U.S. soybeans, making this trade relationship critical for American soy farmers and exporters.

MY CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I believe these two major trading partners will continue to find a way to move forward, preserving our vital economic and foreign policy ties that have fostered growing prosperity between our nations for many decades. The EU is interested in soy that is produced on land that has not been deforested by farmers that follow laws, treat their workers well, etc. U.S. Soy is produced on multi-generational family farms which meets or exceeds all of the EU's requirements – there is a natural connection.

USSEC will continue its essential role in strengthening partnerships, customer relationships and boosting trust, awareness, and loyalty for U.S. Soy across the current 27 EU member countries. ■

SOY PROTEIN'S QUALITY MAKES IT THE TOP CHOICE AMONG PLANT-BASED OPTIONS

One of the most common plant-based proteins comes from soybeans because of its high quality. There is a lot about soy protein to be proud of, says Michelle Braun, director of research strategy and partnerships at Soy Nutrition Institute Global.

“It comes down to what makes up a protein, that’s the amino acids. Soy has the highest quality of protein because it has the proper proportion of the essential amino acids, those that we need to consume in our diets every day to meet the needs of children as well as adults,” said Braun, during an interview with the South Dakota Soybean Network. “It really is the most well-balanced plant protein source available in the marketplace as it relates to that amino acid profile.”

Expanding on the subject of soy protein quality, Braun said the other side of the protein quality score is soy protein’s digestibility combined with the added benefit of its amino acids.

“When we hear about the quality, it has a quality score that’s quite similar to animal proteins, which are held in the highest esteem of the highest quality, where soy is very similar,” said Braun. “Every protein is different. They each have a unique fingerprint, so to speak, in terms of its amino acid profile. But soy can meet the needs of humans similarly to what an animal protein source can do.”



Referring to what she does in her own kitchen, Braun tells how she blends soy and animal proteins to enhance their healthfulness and eating experience. Soy began appearing in American foods midway through the 20th Century in baby formula, according to Braun. Then came both refrigerated and shelf-stable soy beverages for all ages. That was followed by a proliferation of soy-based protein bars commonly found in grocery and convenience store snack aisles. ■

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SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN FORGES NEW INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

For South Dakota soybean farmers like Dave Iverson, international relationships aren't just good business—they're essential. As Vice Chairman of the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council, Iverson sees the untapped potential to export South Dakota soybeans to new, emerging markets across the globe.

"In South Dakota, roughly 60% of our soybeans are exported," explains Iverson, who brings nearly five decades of farming experience to his role. "So the soybean farmers in South Dakota are extremely dependent upon having an international market for our soybeans."

South Dakota Soybean is actively pursuing opportunities in emerging regions where protein consumption is growing rapidly. Iverson identifies Southeast Asia as particularly promising, with countries like Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand leading the charge.

"In Southeast Asia, there's a lot of expanding markets," says Iverson. "All of those countries are wanting to increase their protein intake into their diet, and soybeans are a great opportunity to do that and then also in their livestock industry—the soybean meal is a great opportunity for those animals to improve their diet."

The most compelling aspect of South Dakota's trade strategy lies in the personal relationships forged between farmers and international buyers. "A few years back, I was on a trip to Southeast Asia and met with buyers there," Iverson recounts. "Then the following fall, out of the blue, they made a point to come out to see my farm during harvest. They wanted to see soybeans at the source." This spontaneous farm visit exemplifies the deeper relationships South Dakota farmers cultivate with their international customers.

The return on investment speaks for itself. The soybean checkoff delivers \$12.34 for every dollar invested, demonstrating the tangible value of these international



relationship-building efforts.

Visit sdsoybean.org to learn more about international trade opportunities and how your checkoff dollars support market development efforts around the globe. ■



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alone. Our dedicated

ag team stands ready

to help you succeed.





AgOutlook





On December 4, the 21st AgOutlook kicked off as the trade show opened, drawing industry leaders and ag professionals together for a full day of learning and connection. Highlights included Eric Snodgrass (Nutrien Ag Solutions) on High Impact Meteorology and the weather trends shaping agriculture, plus lunch and networking on the trade show floor. Afternoon sessions featured Brandi Buzzard (Buzzard's Beat) on adapting for agriculture's next era, Cole Sonne (Sonne Farms) and Gail Gullickson (USDA) on cultivating the next generation of farmers and ranchers, and Bree Baatz (Terrain) with a forward-looking look at soybeans and global competition. The event concluded with a lively social hour in the trade show area, complete with hors d'oeuvres. ■



A HOME-GROWN LEGACY





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BANGLADESH SOY TRADE: **BUILDING ON THREE DECADES OF PARTNERSHIP**

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

For nearly 30 years, US Soy groups have worked alongside Bangladesh to build a reliable, sustainable soy supply chain for US Soy to be available to growing industries in Bangladesh. As the country's economy grows and demand for protein climbs, this partnership has become even more important, and the future looks promising for both sides.

Bangladesh is a nation of more than 175 million people, living on an area slightly smaller than the U.S. state of Iowa. Agriculture drives its economy, with 70% of the population in rural areas and nearly half the workforce tied to farming, especially rice production. Wheat, pulses, produce and livestock such as goats are also prominent while aquaculture and poultry production are a growing commercial sector. Protein is central to food security, which makes soy a vital ingredient in meeting the needs of a fast-growing population.

A STRATEGIC AND GROWING TRADING RELATIONSHIP

The U.S.–Bangladesh trade relationship has grown considerably in recent decades, with Bangladesh maintaining a large and growing trade surplus in goods with the United States. In 2024, U.S. goods exports to Bangladesh reached \$2.3 billion, while U.S. goods imports from Bangladesh totaled \$8.4 billion.

U.S. soybeans and soybean meal are the largest U.S. agricultural exports to Bangladesh.

When it comes to soy complex, Bangladesh is a country of progress, and untapped potential:

- Bangladesh produces about 7% of its annual soybean demand, relying on imports to meet the rest.
- A large modern crush industry has been developed which supplies the majority of the country's soybean meal and oil needs.
- About 70% of all soybean consumption supports poultry production, with the rest serving aquaculture and cattle feed.
- The country maintains a 0% import tariff on soybeans and soybean meal, creating a stable, open environment for trade.
- In the 2023/24 marketing year, the U.S. supplied 32% of Bangladesh's total soybean imports and 3% of its soybean meal imports. We are excited to see this grow significantly because of recent trade agreements.
- The supply chain in Bangladesh from imports through to food production continues to grow to support the growing and thriving food demand in this dynamic Country. We hear of new

investments coming in all sectors of this chain.

- As demand for affordable protein continues to rise alongside population growth, Bangladesh represents a promising, long-term market for U.S. Soy.

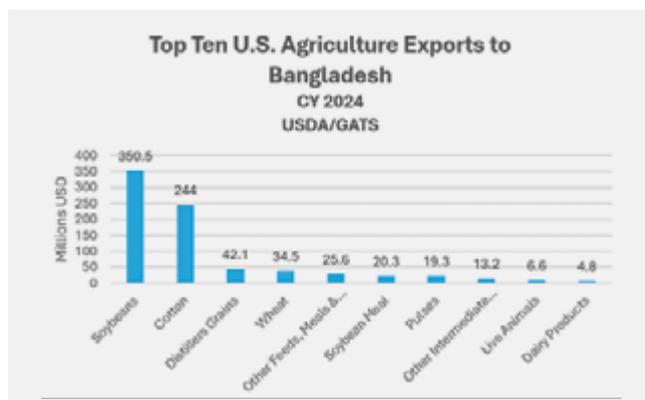
KEEPING SOY AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA

The past year has brought new challenges. In July 2025, the U.S. announced a 35% tariff on Bangladesh’s exports to address the country’s trade imbalance. After intense talks in Washington, that tariff was reduced to 20%, with Bangladesh pledging to import at least \$3 billion in U.S. goods over 18 months, including more U.S. soybeans, wheat and cotton.

Most recently, Bangladesh’s leading soy-processing firms and soybean-meal importers signed a Letter of Intent and committed to purchasing over \$1.25 billion of U.S. soybeans and soybean meal in the coming year. This landmark agreement boosts demand for U.S. Soy and underscores the industry’s joint focus on sustainability and supply-chain resilience. Participants are collaborating with USSEC to advance sourcing standards, technical engagement, and growth of the protein-feed ecosystem in Bangladesh.

USSEC worked hard behind the scenes to keep soy front and center during these talks. We knew soy could be a win-win for both nations: a reliable, affordable protein source for Bangladesh and a valuable market for U.S. farmers.

As a member of the Board of Directors for the U.S.–Bangladesh Business Council, Kevin Roepke, USSEC’s Executive Director for Middle East, North Africa & South Asia (MENASA), brings USSEC’s voice into high-level trade discussions, ensuring soy stays on the agenda at the policy level.



Source: European Union: Facts and Figures

USSEC’S WORK ON THE GROUND

USSEC’s presence in Bangladesh reflects decades of trust-building and practical collaboration. Our initiatives have helped expand local industry capabilities while showing the value of sustainable U.S. Soy to feed manufacturers, aquaculture producers, and food processors.

Our key initiatives include:

- Soy Excellence Center – developing a skilled workforce by offering technical education and best practices to producers, feed millers, and industry stakeholders.
- Right to Protein Campaign – raising consumer awareness of the importance of affordable, high-quality protein in the diet.
- Capacity-Building Programs and Workshops – providing technical training both domestically and internationally to improve efficiency, feed formulation, and sustainability practices.
- Trade Missions to U.S. Soy Farms – enabling Bangladesh buyers to see firsthand how U.S. soybeans are grown sustainably and reliably.
- In-Pond Raceway System (IPRS) Introduction and Expansion – improving aquaculture productivity and water quality while increasing soymeal use in feed.
- Trade Missions to the U.S. – strengthening commercial relationships and knowledge exchange.



LOOKING AHEAD

Bangladesh is one of South Asia’s fastest-growing economies and the sixth-largest aquaculture producer in the world. Its continued expansion of feed and crushing industries, coupled with its zero-tariff policy on soy imports, creates fertile ground for U.S. Soy’s continued growth.

The foundation we’ve built through decades of technical support, trade facilitation, and trust has positioned U.S. Soy as a dependable partner in Bangladesh’s food and feed sectors. And Bangladesh’s industry recognizes the superior quality, consistency, and sustainability of U.S. soybeans and meal.

As global demand for protein rises, our shared challenge is to ensure that this growth benefits both producers and consumers. We at USSEC remain committed to advancing innovations that support Bangladesh’s food security goals while expanding opportunities for U.S. soybean farmers.

USSEC’s longstanding collaboration with Bangladesh underscores a simple but powerful truth: when we invest in relationships and innovation, we unlock mutual prosperity. I’m optimistic that, together, we will continue to expand the reach and impact of U.S. Soy in this critical market for decades to come. ■

Hungry for Truth



A TASTE OF HOME IN AVON, SOUTH DAKOTA

In Avon, SD, soybean farmer and SDSA Director Tanner Hento and his family know that the best meals are often the simplest ones, especially those made with ingredients that tell a story.

When Tanner isn't in the fields planting or harvesting soybeans and corn, you might find him in the kitchen, baking up a batch of warm Banana-Nut Muffins. It's a recipe that's been passed down in his family and perfected over the years, offering comfort after long days on the farm.

FROM THE FIELD TO THE MIXING BOWL

Soybeans are more than just a crop, they're part of a larger cycle that supports families, communities, and sustainability. The same soybeans Tanner grows in his fields can be used to make soybean oil, an ingredient in countless everyday products, including this very recipe.

Using soy oil in place of other cooking oils not only adds a light, moist texture to baked goods but also supports local agriculture. Every bottle of heart friendly soy oil represents the efforts of South Dakota farmers who care deeply about the land and the people they feed. Choosing soy means choosing sustainability, quality, and a product that's grown close to home.

SHARING TRADITIONS, BUILDING TRUST

As Tanner stirs together mashed bananas, walnuts, and soy oil, it's easy to see how food and farming are intertwined. Every ingredient tells a story, one that begins in South Dakota's soil and ends at the family table. Through recipes like these, we're reminded that farming isn't just about crops; it's about connection, care, and community.

BANANA NUT MUFFINS

Prep time: 20 Min | Cook time: 15 Min | Total time: 35 Min



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup mashed banana
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°
2. Sift flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl and make a well in the center
3. Mix egg, milk, oil, banana, and walnuts in a small bowl
4. Pour mixture into well
5. Mix batter until moistened
6. Spoon batter into muffin pan
7. Bake for 15 minutes

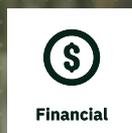
 Find more recipes at hungryfortruthsd.com



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CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS: **YPN MANAGER JACI PIETERS VISITS THE DEINERT FAMILY FARM**

By Jaci Pieters, Young Professionals Network Manager at Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce

Growing up in Sioux Falls, farming was always part of the landscape but never part of my family’s daily life. My closest connection to agriculture was my grandpa’s feed store in Kansas City which, to be honest, my sister and I mostly treated as an oversized jungle gym. Later, when I attended SDSU, I was surrounded by agriculture, yet still felt somewhat like an outsider.

That changed when I had the privilege of spending a day on Kevin Deinert’s family farm. The operation began with Kevin’s dad and is now run by Kevin and his brother, with their father still lending a hand. Between caring for cattle, managing corn and soybean crops, and tending to their mother’s beautiful garden (where I was lucky enough to pick out a few pumpkins), I quickly gained a new appreciation for the hard work and long hours that define farm life.

Interestingly, Kevin didn’t always plan to be a farmer. He once dreamed of becoming a pharmacist before realizing that working the land was where he truly belonged.

We started the day by visiting the cattle. While the cows weren’t exactly eager to make new friends, Kevin shared a funny childhood story about how he used to ride one of his cows — a vivid reminder of how deeply rooted he is in this life.

Next, Kevin showed me how to unload a semi full of corn, a process that surprisingly only takes about five minutes. I climbed to the top of the grain bin to watch the corn pour out and to take in the incredible

Having open conversations about food and farming with South Dakotans and the farmers who grow it is what we do. In fact, that’s what Hungry for Truth is all about. Recently, we had the opportunity to connect Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Network Manager, Jaci Pieters, with Kevin Deinert, a fourth-generation farmer from Mt. Vernon, South Dakota. Together, they talked about the hard work behind South Dakota farming, the next generation of agricultural leaders, and how community and connection matter both on and off the farm. Below, Jaci shares her takeaways from her day on the Deinert family farm.



view. From up there, I could see the full scope of the Deinerts' operation — acres of dedication, perseverance, and pride.

Then came the big moment: I got to drive a tractor. (I didn't tell Kevin that I'm known for occasionally hitting curbs in my car.) As I carefully navigated the massive machine, Kevin explained just how expensive even a used tractor can be. It was a humbling reminder of the investment and risk farmers take on to keep their operations running. For the record, I didn't hit anything!

By the end of the day, I was exhausted, and I hadn't done even a fraction of what the Deinerts do on a daily basis. It was an eye-opening experience that gave me a whole new respect for the people who work tirelessly to put food on our tables.

A huge thank you to Kevin and his family for welcoming me onto their farm and sharing a glimpse into their world. Their dedication, knowledge, and heart are what make South Dakota agriculture, and communities like ours, thrive. ■



Hungry for Truth.

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Hungry for Truth.

ROOTED IN FAMILY, JON NELSON GROWS TOWARD THE FUTURE

A JOURNEY ROOTED IN FARMING

Jon Nelson’s agricultural story stretches back more than a century. His grandfather immigrated from Norway in the early 1900s, served in World War I and returned home determined to build a life on the land. That dream became the Nelson family farm near Lake Preston — a legacy Jon proudly carries on as a third-generation farmer.

Today, Jon manages roughly 3,000 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat. Farming has been in his heart since childhood, when he’d follow closely behind his dad in the fields, gripping the back pockets of his coveralls to keep pace.

“I always wanted to be where he was,” Jon recalls. “That’s when I knew this was what I wanted to do.”

CROPS, CATTLE AND CARE

For much of Jon’s farming career, row crops were only part of the work. He also managed a 2,000-head cattle feedlot, a responsibility he describes as a true calling.

“It’s something you either love or you don’t,” he says.

While cold South Dakota winters bring their share of challenges, Jon notes that it’s the hot, humid summer days that really test cattle and cattlemen alike.

“The cattle can handle the cold,” Jon explains. “It’s those high heat and humidity days that are tough. You care about them, and when they’re uncomfortable, you feel it too.”

His deep sense of stewardship, for both his animals and his land, continues to influence everything he does.

BUILDING BETTER SOIL FOR TOMORROW

In recent years, Jon has turned his focus toward improving soil health. He’s adopted no-till farming, cut back on commercial fertilizer inputs and shifted away from dry phosphorus and potassium applications.

Since 2018, Jon has relied more on liquid nutrients and management strategies that build soil biology.

“We’ve built up our soils. Now we’re feeding the biology and letting it work for us,” he says. “You can dig anywhere and find earthworms. That’s how I know we’re heading in the right direction.”

WATCH JON’S FULL STORY

Discover how Lake Preston farmer Jon Nelson blends generations of experience with forward-thinking practices to build healthier soils and a stronger future. His dedication to family, legacy and innovation continues to shape the landscape of South Dakota agriculture.



This transition has helped him reduce inputs while maintaining strong yields, demonstrating that sustainability and profitability can work hand in hand.

For Jon Nelson, the future of farming is about more than yields, it's about caring for the land, the people who depend on it, and the generations yet to come. ■

A LEGACY CARRIED THROUGH GENERATIONS

Family has always been the center of the Nelson operation. Jon's son, Tyler, now works alongside him, and Jon's young grandson is already dreaming of someday taking the reins.

"He's seven, and all he thinks about is the farm," Jon says with a smile.

Memories run deep on the Nelson farm, from the home Jon's great-grandfather built to moments that span generations. One of Jon's most treasured memories is when Tyler handed him his first all-around rodeo belt buckle with the words, "Thanks for all the opportunities. I want you to wear this."

"It's not just about farming," Jon reflects. "It's about family, work ethic and leaving things better than you found them."



LOOKING AHEAD WITH HOPE

As a board member of the South Dakota Soybean Association, Jon is energized by the next generation of agricultural leaders.

"Their enthusiasm and dedication give me hope," he says. "They're smart, engaged and ready to make agriculture even stronger."



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U.S. – VIETNAM TRADE RELATIONS: ITS HISTORY, GROWTH AND POSSIBILITY

Many in the agricultural and trade communities have been watching closely for developments around a U.S.-Vietnam trade agreement following concerns raised during the Trump administration about Vietnam’s large trade surplus with the United States. The recent announcement that a trade deal has been reached is encouraging news, although details of the agreement were still forthcoming at the time of publication.

Given Vietnam’s importance as a trading partner for U.S. Soy and the U.S. economy overall, this development is viewed positively, with hope that previously identified areas for further discussion have been addressed. After the administration initially raised concerns about the U.S.-Vietnam trade imbalance, Vietnam proposed several measures aimed at strengthening trade relations and mitigating the surplus. These “goodwill” offers included:

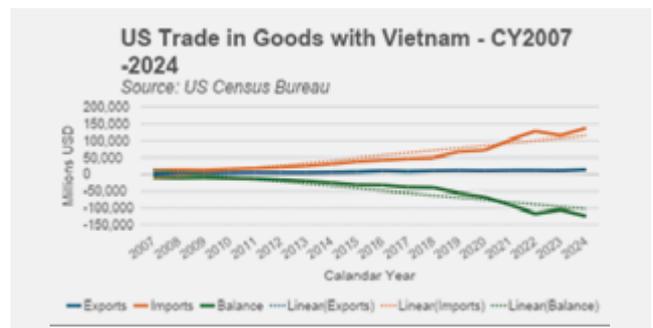
- Lowering tariffs on U.S. goods
- Committing to purchasing more U.S. imports
- Exploring additional steps to reduce its trade surplus with the United States

As stakeholders await clarity on whether these measures are included in the final agreement, it is an appropriate time to examine the history of trade between the two countries, the current trade balance, and opportunities for mutually beneficial growth.

WHAT IS DRIVING THE CURRENT TRADE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES?

Vietnam maintains a significant trade surplus with the United States, meaning it exports substantially more goods to the U.S. than it imports. This trend began in 2007, when Vietnam joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). As the WTO’s 150th member, Vietnam became eligible for trade benefits such as lower “most-

favored-nation” tariffs and reduced import quotas. Over the past decade, trade between the two countries has grown rapidly, driven largely by Vietnamese exports, while U.S. exports have remained relatively stagnant.



Source: European Union: Facts and Figures

Vietnam’s trade surplus with the United States reached a record high of more than \$123 billion in 2024, making it the fourth-largest source of trade surplus for the U.S. That year, Vietnam exported an estimated \$136.6 billion in goods to the United States, including mobile phone components, clothing, furniture, seafood, electrical machinery, coffee, telecommunications equipment, and more.

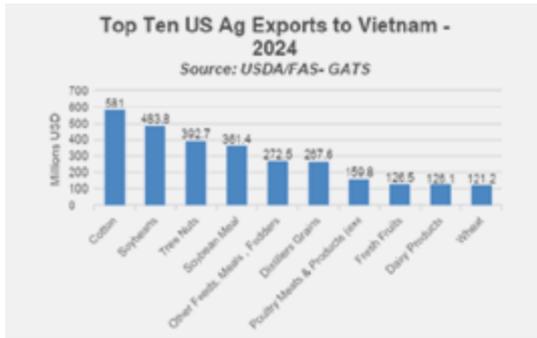
U.S. goods exports to Vietnam totaled \$13.1 billion in 2024 and included computers, electronics, machinery, soybeans and soybean meal, plastic materials, and cotton.

VIETNAM MAINTAINS A LARGE TRADE SURPLUS IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS WITH THE UNITED STATES

The United States is currently the largest export market for Vietnam’s agricultural, forestry, and fishery (AFF) products. In 2024, Vietnam’s AFF exports to the U.S. reached approximately \$13.5 billion, accounting for 22% of the country’s total AFF exports worldwide and representing nearly a 25% increase from the previous year.

Vietnam ranks tenth among U.S. agricultural export markets. In 2024, U.S. agricultural exports to Vietnam totaled \$3.4 billion, accounting for more than a quarter of total U.S. exports to the country. Despite this, Vietnam continues to hold a substantial agricultural trade surplus with the United States, exceeding \$10 billion.

The graph to the right illustrates the top 10 agricultural products exported from the U.S. to Vietnam in 2024, measured in



Source: European Union: Facts and Figures

millions of dollars. While U.S. soybeans and soybean meal lead the list, these essential protein products account for just 32% and 13% of Vietnam’s total market share, respectively.

There remains tremendous potential for U.S. Soy in Vietnam’s expanding market, particularly as demand for high-quality protein continues to grow.

THE TRADE OUTLOOK WITH VIETNAM HAS NEVER BEEN BRIGHTER.

An agreement that further opens the Vietnamese market to American goods, especially agricultural products such as soybeans and soybean meal, aligns well

with U.S. interests. This is particularly important given Vietnam’s extensive trade network, which includes 18 free trade agreements with more than 50 trading partners.

This year also marks 30 years of collaboration between U.S. Soy and Vietnam. Vietnam has become Southeast Asia’s second-largest importer of U.S. Soy, driven by a growing middle class and increasing demand for

pork, poultry, and seafood. As Vietnam’s economy continues to expand, demand for high-quality, sustainably produced soy is expected to grow as well.

The progress of Vietnam’s agricultural sector over the past three decades has been remarkable, and the partnership between U.S. Soy and Vietnam remains strong. Looking ahead, the future of U.S. Soy, and global trade more broadly, with Vietnam appears promising. Participants across the U.S. Soy value chain continues to demonstrate what is possible through a win-win approach and remains committed to supporting Vietnam’s sustainable agricultural growth for years to come. ■



South Dakota Soybean Association
SCHOLARSHIP

The South Dakota Soybean Association is proud to offer two (2) \$1,000 scholarships to help support the next generation of leaders in agriculture and beyond.

Who can apply:
Eligible applicants must be high school or college students who are a child or grandchild of a dues-paying member of the South Dakota Soybean Association. Applications due March 31st.

For more visit our website www.sds soybean.org



INCREASED SOYBEAN PROCESSING KEEPS MORE VALUE IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Upon the grand opening of High Plains Processing, LLC, in September 2025, South Dakota's nameplate soybean processing capacity is now approximately 120 million bushels per year. The new state-of-the-art facility, which sits just south of Mitchell, will process other oilseed crops in addition to soybeans.

"We are very, very fortunate to have four processing plants here in South Dakota," says Bruce Haines, District 1 Director for the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council. Haines farms ground not far from High Plains Processing, and he believes the new crush plant — along with the three plants already operating in Aberdeen, St. Lawrence, and Volga — will dramatically impact farmer profitability. "Once everything gets online and finetuned, we'll be able to process 45 to 47 percent of the soybeans that we raise in South Dakota," he says. "That's going to help us a lot with our basis."

ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM INCREASED CRUSH CAPACITY

It stands to reason that basis at local elevators will be more favorable to farmers with increased processing happening in-state. "That takes the transportation number out of the equation, and we're not shipping [as many soybeans] to the East Coast, West Coast, down the Mississippi," explains Haines. In fact, a recent study commissioned by United Soybean Board and American Soybean Association determined that a new soybean processing plant coming online impacts basis prices at local elevators by 9 to 23 cents per bushel, depending on proximity.

The increased volume of soybean processing happening in-state impacts more than just basis levels. Crush plants primarily yield two high-demand co-products — soybean oil and soybean meal — that will keep more value right here in South Dakota by securing additional opportunities for biofuel production, livestock expansion and other activity to support our local economy.

WHY ARE NEW PROCESSING PLANTS COMING ONLINE?

The opening of High Plains Processing is part of a growing trend in the U.S. over the past several years, during which new soybean processing plants and expansions to existing sites have dramatically increased domestic crush capacity.

What's behind this trend? In short, this is largely due to increased demand for biomass-based diesel fuels like biodiesel, renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel. Clean Fuels Alliance America has conducted research indicating a projected

demand for these three petroleum diesel alternatives exceeding 6 billion gallons by 2030. A vast majority of this biofuel production will occur domestically, utilizing feedstocks that are largely produced in the U.S.

"Almost anything that we could make out of petroleum can be substituted with soybean oils," says Haines. "I think the growth of soybeans and the growth of soybean oils is in its infancy. My goal is to see soybean processing hit the same numbers as ethanol hit with corn twenty years ago."

FARMERS' SOYBEAN CHECKOFF PLAYS A KEY ROLE

Haines is quick to point out that soybean farmers cannot fund brick-and-mortar projects like High Plains Processing through their checkoff. But one key role the soybean checkoff has played in this new development was exploring rail transportation options surrounding the plant.

"The soybean checkoff helped to engineer a rail study to be able to move train cars in and out of that plant more efficiently and more effectively," says Haines, who helps determine how checkoff dollars are spent through his role as a director for the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council.

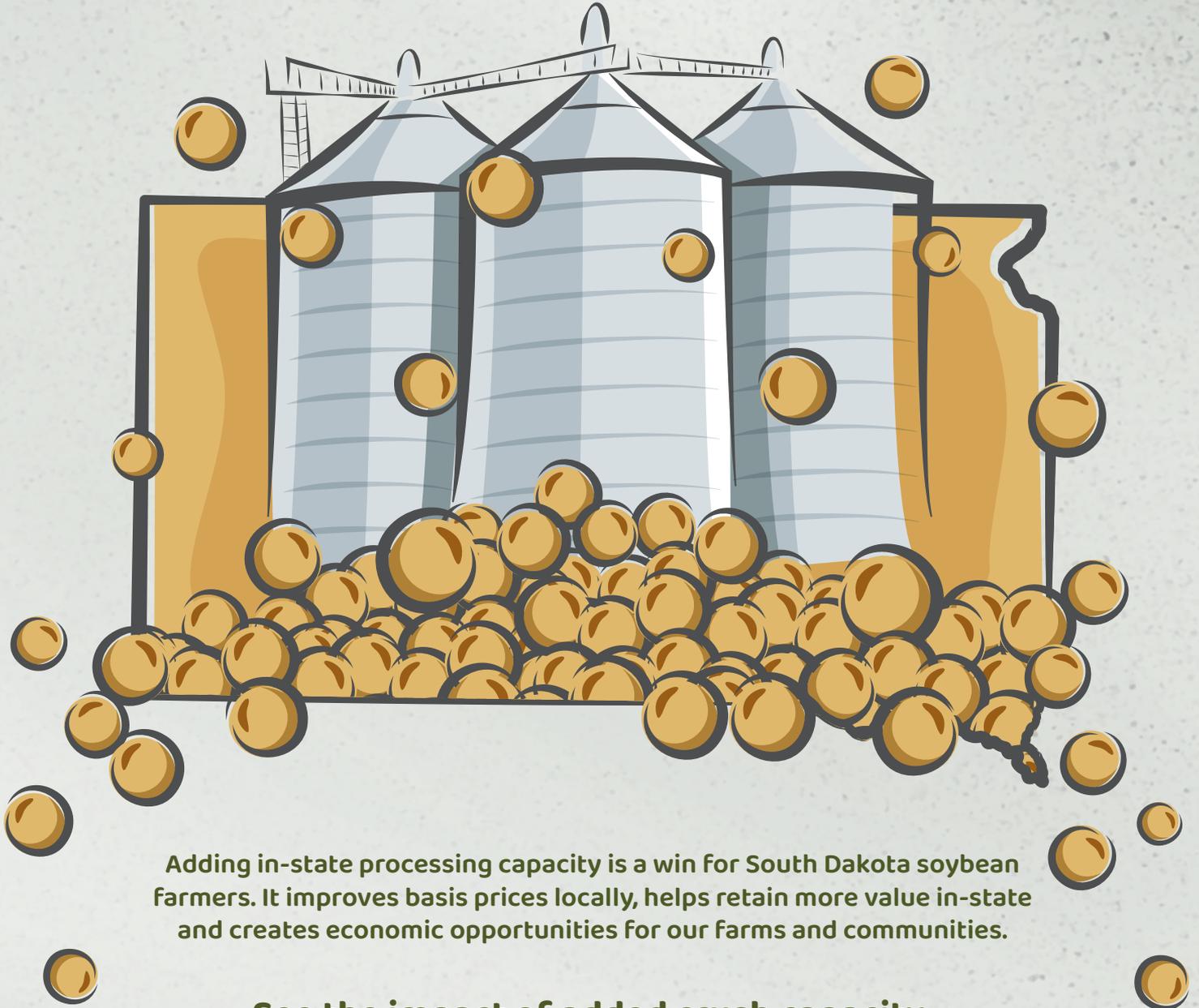
The checkoff also actively promotes soybean uses to help support demand, both domestically and internationally. This includes educating consumers about the benefits of biomass-based diesel fuels, funding research on soybean inclusion in livestock rations and promoting sustainability practices adopted by South Dakota farmers. "If we see a need to help develop markets and/or products, that's where we come in," says Haines.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS?

A strategic investment has taken place in South Dakota that positions farmers for a strong future, and the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council is poised to seize that opportunity. "We're working very hard," says Haines. "We're leaving no stone unturned. Those checkoff dollars are allowing us to look at everything with a new set of glasses to say, 'Where are those markets that we can develop?'"

To learn more about the work of South Dakota Soybean, please visit sdsoybean.org or talk to your district director. ■

Process-Driven Success



Adding in-state processing capacity is a win for South Dakota soybean farmers. It improves basis prices locally, helps retain more value in-state and creates economic opportunities for our farms and communities.

See the impact of added crush capacity.



learn more



2025 YIELD & QUALITY CONTEST RESULTS

“The South Dakota Soybean Yield and Quality Contest continues to highlight the ingenuity and commitment of our farmers,” says Johnna Ringkob, SD Soybean Market Development and Research Director. “Each year, this program—supported by the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff and South Dakota Soybean Processors and guided by the South Dakota Soybean Association—demonstrates how innovation and hard work drive our industry forward. It’s more than a competition; it’s a catalyst for elevating soybean production across the state.”

“As we review the results from this year’s quality contest, we’re really looking deeper

than awards,” explains Kari Vander Wal of SD Soybean Processors. “The data gives us a clearer picture of what truly defines soybean quality in South Dakota. Every entry helps us refine our understanding and continuously improve how we grow and process soybeans, ensuring our state remains a leader in quality.”

“The information gathered through this contest is extremely valuable,” says Joe Schefers. “It’s more than a data set, it represents insight from producers across the state. Their shared knowledge helps guide soybean production in South Dakota. It’s a great collaboration to make our farming community stronger.”

2025 South Dakota Soybean Yield Contest Results					
Name	Category	Award	Seed Brand	Variety	Yield
Chris Johnson	Group 0 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Asgrow	09XF3	71.877
Toby Johnson	Group 0 - Non-Irrigated	2nd Place	Asgrow	09XF3	71.079
Adam Manthey	Group 0 - Non-Irrigated	3rd Place	Asgrow	09XF3	55.324
Thomas Brown	Group 1 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	19Z52E	81.446
Denis Parsley	Group 1 - Non-Irrigated	2nd Place	Asgrow	19XF3	76.872
Aaron Grosz	Group 1 - Non-Irrigated	3rd Place	Partners Brand Distributed by Legend Seeds	17XF434N	63.842
Jarrold Hagena	Group 2 - Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	27Z41E	93.435
Steve Hagena	Group 2 - Irrigated	2nd Place	Pioneer	27Z41E	92.187
William Chenoweth	Group 2 - Irrigated	3rd Place	Hefty	22902E	82.456
Ethan Schmeichel	Group 2 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Channel	2622RFX	80.733
Roger Schaeffer	Group 2 - Non-Irrigated	2nd Place	Becks	2009XF	79.829
Steve Schmeichel	Group 2 - Non-Irrigated	3rd Place	Channel	2123RFX	77.247
Daniel Schaeffer	Group 2 - No-Till	1st Place	Becks	2009XF	89.633
James hora	Group 2 - No-Till	2nd Place	Becks	2009XF	88.910
Don Logue	Group 2 - No-Till	3rd Place	Pioneer	27Z41E	83.947
Steve Hagena	Group 3 - Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	98.761
Jarrold Hagena	Group 3 - Irrigated	2nd Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	97.020
Steven Beeson	Group 3 - Irrigated	3rd Place	Asgrow	30XF4	75.349
Lance Olesen	Group 3 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	90.834
LaRohn Hagena	Group 3 - Non-Irrigated	2nd Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	85.257
Tim Even	Group 3 - Non-Irrigated	3rd Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	68.019
Tyler Andersen	Group 3 - No-Till	1st Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	88.178
Andrew Schaeffer	Group 3 - No-Till	2nd Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	85.491
Harold Wipf	Group 3 - No-Till	3rd Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	82.922
Tim Hofer	Master		Partners Brand Distributed by Legend Seeds	29XF453N	133.261

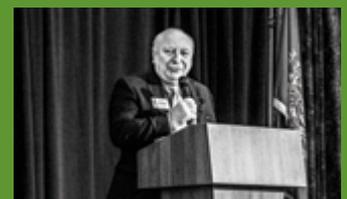
2025 South Dakota Soybean Youth Yield Contest Results					
Name	Category	Award	Seed Brand	Variety	Yield
Samuel Wiese	Group 0 or 1 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Asgrow	10XF4	83.71
Ashlyn Hagena	Group 2 or 3 - Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	95.18
Jackson Hauglid	Group 2 or 3 - Non-Irrigated	1st Place	Pioneer	22A67E	72.45

2025 South Dakota Soybean Quality Contest Results					
Name	Group	Award	Seed Brand	Variety	ProOil Value
Adam Manthey	Group 0	1st Place	Asgrow	09XF3	52.9
Paul Voigt	Group 0	2nd Place	Asgrow	09XF3	52.6
Keith Waldner	Group 1	1st Place	NK	17-M2XF	53.2
Thomas Brown	Group 1	2nd Place	Pioneer	19Z52E	53.0
Tim Hofer	Group 2	1st Place	Partners Brand Distributed by Legend Seeds	29XF453N	53.4
Steve Schmeichel	Group 2	2nd Place	Channel	2622RFX	53.2
Mitch Mehlfaf	Group 3	1st Place	Pioneer	31Z03E	54.1
Brian Schmidt	Group 3	2nd Place	Asgrow	30XF2	53.7

2025 South Dakota Soybean Youth Quality Contest Results					
Name	Award	Seed Brand	Variety	ProOil Value	
Callie VanderWal	Group 0 or 1	1st Place	Pioneer	19A37E	52.9
Max Steffen	Group 2 or 3	1st Place	Partners Brand Distributed by Legend Seeds	24E453N	53.8

2025 South Dakota Soybean Yield Contest Additional Prizes					
City	Prize Type	Award	Seed Brand	Variety	Yield
Olvet, SD	Highest Overall Yields	Crystal	Partners Brand Distributed by Legend Seeds	29XF453N	133.260
Davis, SD	Highest Overall Yields	Crystal	Pioneer	31Z03E	98.761

On December 3, SDSA hosted its annual meeting, followed by the Yield & Quality Contest and the Uniting Ag Social, where attendees exchanged ideas, explored industry trends, and strengthened the relationships that fuel innovation and growth. South Dakota Secretary of Agriculture Hunter Roberts addressed the crowd during the social.



Mark your calendars for Soy100 on February 19th, 2026, in Brookings, SD. Dr. Cheryl Reese, agronomy and soil science instructor from SDSU will be addressing soybean trends and ways to reach 100-bushel soybeans! More information at www.sdsosoybean.org.

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FROM PRAIRIE TO PACIFIC: **SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEANS GAIN NEW GLOBAL REACH**

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEANS FIND NEW PATHS TO MARKET THROUGH PACIFIC NORTHWEST MISSION

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) convened in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) in November for a mission bringing together more than 125 U.S. soybean farmers, regional exporters and processors, and soy buyers from key growth markets in Northeast, South and Southeast Asia.

Including representatives from the South Dakota Soybean Growers Association, the group spent four days networking, learning about the U.S. Soy Advantage in value and quality, and hearing how significant investments in rail, processing and port infrastructure have positioned the PNW as a key strategic export gateway for Pacific Rim destinations.

SOUTH DAKOTA FARMER SPEAKS TO SUSTAINABILITY, PRODUCTION INNOVATION, AND FAMILY FARM VALUES

South Dakota soybean farmer Dawn Scheier, a United Soybean Board director, sat on a grower leader panel during the mission, sharing with a roomful of potential new international soybean buyers about her family farm's commitment to growing high-quality soybeans, adapting to market demands and engaging face-to-face with international customers, especially as her son takes over as the primary operator of their family farm.

"We're always looking to improve our product. We've got to listen to our customers, hear about what they're looking for, and make sure we have a good line of communication," Scheier said. "My son has hosted trade teams on the farm and he really gets value out of it. It's bringing together future generations and learning from you guys what you need by working together to make sure we're raising a safe nutritional product for you and the rest of the world."

MISSION CONNECTS FARM TO PORT

Already the second largest export gateway for U.S. Soy after the U.S. Gulf, the PNW represents diversification for U.S. Soy exports in key growth markets across the Pacific Ocean, including regions like Vietnam, Thailand and Bangladesh. In 2024, 21% of the U.S. soybeans and soybean meal exports were moved through the PNW's 10 regional ports located in Washington and Oregon states.

Scheier was joined at the mission with several South Dakota Soybean Checkoff (SDSC) representatives, including Jerry Schmitz, executive director, and Jeff Thompson, farmer/board member.

"South Dakota is a prime soybean region, just a rail shipment away. It's coming here," Thompson said. "So it's been really nice to see the number of different countries involved in the PNW Mission and the level of interaction we've had."

NEW PROCESSING INFRASTRUCTURE TRANSFORMS SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN MARKETING

In her panel participation, Scheier highlighted the transformative impact of new processing infrastructure coming online in South Dakota, particularly a new processing facility, giving her farm new marketing strategies to consider as they plan out their future crop rotations.

"We have a new processing place; it's one of the newest ones. And when you get a new processing place, they bring a lot of technology," Scheier said. "Our soybean meal quality, I think we're going to hear a bit about this because as we get these new plants, the quality of the soybean meal goes up. So, we've got some interesting things going on."

SOUTH DAKOTA SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES: CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP

As a farmer in the prairie pothole region, Scheier described the multifaceted sustainability practices that South Dakota farmers employ to protect and enhance their operations. From Conservation Reserve Program enrollment to innovative water management strategies, these practices reflect deep-rooted commitments to land stewardship that international soybean buyers can use to build value through the U.S. Soy Sustainable Assurance Protocol (SSAP), a program that verifies the sustainability metrics of U.S. Soy shipments, and the Sustainable U.S. Soy labeling program, which gives buyers of SSAP-verified U.S. Soy access to a free-of-charge branded label for their consumer marketing.

"When my ancestors homesteaded out here, they plowed everything, and some of that ground should not have been plowed. So, we're taking that ground out of production but more intensively farming our other ground," Scheier noted. "Some of that ground we're putting into pollinator habitat. Or we're planting shelter belts, five rows of trees a half mile long, to slow down the wind, because we don't want wind erosion."

SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS PRIME FOR EXPANDED MARKET OPPORTUNITY

By building confidence in the quality, value, sustainability and reliability of the U.S. Soy supply and infrastructure serving PNW export destinations, the PNW Exploratory Mission laid the foundation for new capacity and diversified export markets for key U.S. soy-growing regions like South Dakota. As soybean consumption continues to grow globally, South Dakota soy farmers should see a return on this investment with increased demand and higher confidence in U.S. Soy's ability to serve key Pacific Rim export markets.

By connecting farmers like Scheier directly with international buyers and showcasing the infrastructure that connects South Dakota farms to global markets, USSEC is helping ensure that South Dakota's soybean farmers remain competitive on the world stage. ■



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THE SOYBEAN POD



with host, Tom Steever



Soybeans and Shifting Markets: What Happens Without China?

Soybean farmers are struggling without China among the list of U.S. export customers. To maintain soybean demand, growers are heavily dependent on exports, particularly exports to China. The world's largest soybean importer has backed away from buying U.S. soybeans, which is hurting farmers' bottom line. On this edition of The Soybean Pod, from South Dakota soybean farmers and their checkoff, Tregg Cronin, a farmer and market analyst from Gettysburg, South Dakota, says there are no easy answers, and there is no quick resolution on the horizon.

Nutrition Scientist Highlights Major Health Benefits of Soybean Oil

There's been a lot of noise about seed oils, including soybean oil. Some of it, specifically from U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Junior is critical, blaming the oils for inflammation and chronic diseases like type II diabetes and obesity. Dr. Mark Messina could not disagree more. On this edition of The Soybean Pod, Dr. Messina, director of nutrition science and research at Soy Nutrition Institute Global, cites evidence of a much different story.



Soy-Based Bio-Adjuvant Advances Crop Protection in South Dakota

A bio-adjuvant being developed with support from the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff at Dakota BioWorx in Brookings, South Dakota, will enhance the efficacy of crop protection sprays while yielding a dry material that shows promise in treating white mold and other crop ailments. "The beautiful thing about it is this is derived from soybean," says Dr. Matthew Cole, founder and CEO of Pioneer Biotech. "We're fermenting bio-adjuvants from soybean."



From Lab to Market: Dakota BioWorx at the POET Bioproducts Center

Dakota BioWorx is housed in the new POET Bioproducts Center at the South Dakota State University Research Park. The firm is home to a bunch of bioprocessing labs, bioreactors and processing facilities that help scale up bioproduct ideas that are getting closer to commercial launch and success. In this edition of the Soybean Pod from South Dakota soybean farmers and their checkoff, we'll talk to Dakota BioWorx CEO Neal Connors about what goes on at The Soybean Checkoff-supported pilot facility.




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