

Summer 2026

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADER

A publication of the South Dakota Soybean Association

2026 Summer Check-In

- ▶ Soy Industry News
- ▶ Reflecting on Jerry Schmitz's Legacy as He Retires
- ▶ U.S. Soybean Farmers Celebrate 70 Years of Collaboration with Japan
- ▶ High Oleic Soybeans: New Market Opportunities for Growers

Kelsey Geraets, Colton, South Dakota.
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PRAYER, PERSISTENCE, AND PARTICIPATION

By Rob Skjonsberg

Farmers and ranchers spend a lot of time driving around looking at crops, grass and livestock. It's kind of a national past-time for those of us in production agriculture. I'll bet a silver dollar you know exactly what I'm talking about.

Last night, I went for a drive and couldn't help but sulk a bit over the lack of grass for hay season. Frankly, I'm a little worried about how we'll get our cattle through the winter. It's dry in Jones County and we're praying – hoping that we'll still see some early summer rains.

But, sometimes, prayer and hope aren't enough. Action and execution, some kind of "try" are built into our DNA. Mother-Nature may be in control – but that doesn't mean we can't fight her when she's being a little...fickle.

The same can be said about policies and politics. If you're a member of the South Dakota Soybean Association – you obviously agree. You're willing to do something extra in order to make a difference. We can sit around and "hope" for the best – but if you don't show up, don't complain. If you don't try, don't sit there and belly ache.

In 2024, it felt like more South Dakota voters visited the north pole than took the time to vote in the primary election. We didn't even hit 17% turnout. Fast forward to 2026, we doubled turnout. Voters woke up, at least a few.

If you missed it, for the first time in state history, we have a republican governor nominee run-off on July 28th. I guarantee most voters will have something more important to do on July 28th – none of those folks will have something more consequential. I implore you not to be one of those people. If I can impart one piece of good advice – go vote today.

I'm not bold enough to encourage a candidate for you to vote for, nor dumb enough to think you'd care. What I would suggest – is that you do your own research. Not every politician knows the difference between red and clear diesel and I guarantee – the one that does – is likely to get my vote. I'm voting for agriculture. I encourage you to do the same.

Former South Dakota Governor George S. Mickelson is credited with saying, "A lot of plans are created everyday, but things get done by people who show up." ■



ROB SKJONSBERG
OWNER 605 STRATEGIES,
RANCHER





SDSL

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADER

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DAVID STRUCK, *Chairman of SDSRPC*

Now that planting season has wound down, things are looking good across much of South Dakota thanks to some timely rains. As we move into the next phase of the growing season, spraying season is upon us.

I'd like to remind everyone about the Mesonet system, a network of weather stations located throughout South Dakota. This is a valuable resource that the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff has invested in to provide producers with important weather information. One of its key benefits is helping predict temperature inversions and providing conditions that can assist with safe and effective spraying decisions.

We continue to invest in projects that create demand for soybeans. Some of our current efforts include increasing the use of soybean meal in cattle rations and promoting biofuels and renewable diesel. We are also continuing our partnership with Dakota BioWorx, a world-class research facility that is working on innovative projects that showcase the potential of soybeans in ways many of us never imagined.

The markets have certainly been wild this spring. Hopefully, many of you were able to take advantage of some of the rallies and opportunities that presented themselves.

There is also a significant transition taking place at the South

Dakota Soybean office. Jerry Schmitz is retiring after many years of dedicated service to South Dakota soybean farmers, most recently serving as Executive Director. Throughout his career, Jerry has helped elevate South Dakota Soybean to new heights through his leadership, vision, and commitment to our industry. We thank him for his service and wish him all the best in retirement.

As Jerry steps away, I'm pleased to share that Kevin Scott will be stepping into the role of Executive Director. Kevin has been instrumental in advancing South Dakota agriculture and has made significant contributions at both the state and national levels. I am confident he will provide strong leadership and continue moving our organization forward.

As always, thank you for your support of South Dakota Soybean. Wishing everyone a productive growing season. Please stay safe, and we look forward to seeing a successful crop this fall. ■

David Struck

David Struck
Chairman of SDSRPC

Advancing Supply Chain Knowledge in Chicago

On April 8th and 9th, SD Soybean Executive Director Kevin Scott and Industry rep, Terry Schultz, traveled to Chicago, IL, to attend the Transportation Go! Conference. During the event, they explored a range of topics, including value-added supply chains, insights into the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway, and opportunities to expand the use of rail.



Celebrating 30 years of Feed Industry Advancement

On May 29, USSEC celebrated the 30th anniversary of the U.S. Soy collaboration in the Philippines, the leading importer of U.S. soybean meal for nine consecutive years. USB representative Mike McCranie, USSEC Chair from South Dakota, and Scott Metzger, ASA President from Ohio, unveiled a commemorative book highlighting the people and programs that have shaped the U.S.-Philippines partnership.



South Dakota BBQ Championships Draw Competitors and Visitors to Huron

USB Director Tim Ostrem, Checkoff Chairman David Struck, Program Manager Valerie Willson, and former board member Dawn Scheier attended the South Dakota BBQ Championships in Huron on June 6-7. The event brought together barbecue enthusiasts, competitors, and visitors from across the region while highlighting soy's role in food production and consumer engagement.





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Shop Talks Bring Timely Insights to South Dakota Producers

On March 12 and 17, South Dakota Soybean hosted Shop Talks in Mitchell and Florence, bringing together more than 80 producers and industry partners for practical, timely insights ahead of planting season.

Attendees received updates from our national congressional offices on key agricultural issues impacting farmers today and in the future. USDA Farm Service Agency State Executive Director Roger Chase also shared perspectives on agency programs and priorities that will help shape agriculture in the years ahead.

Industry partners provided valuable expertise on topics critical to farm success. Farm Credit Services of America reviewed recent crop insurance updates and risk management tools available to producers. Bassford Remele presented “Top Ten Things Farmers and Ranchers Should Know About Estate Planning—Plan Now, Prevent Chaos Later,” offering practical guidance for protecting family operations. The South Dakota Center for Farm/Ranch Management reinforced the importance of managing the farm as a business, emphasizing sound financial and operational decision-making.

The Mitchell event included a behind-the-scenes bus tour of the High Plains Processing plant, giving attendees a firsthand look at the innovation and investment driving soybean processing in South Dakota.

Shop Talks continue to combine education, networking, and meaningful conversation, helping producers step out of the wind, gain valuable insights, and enter the growing season with confidence.



Agricultural Leaders Engage with USDA on Trade and Market Development

On April 23, U.S. Department of Agriculture Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Luke Lindberg met with members of South Dakota’s agricultural community during a roundtable discussion hosted at Walt Bones’ farm.

Participants discussed the importance of strong domestic and international markets to South Dakota agriculture and shared perspectives on trade opportunities, market access, and policies affecting producers.

Conversations such as these help inform efforts to strengthen market opportunities and support the long-term success of South Dakota farmers and ranchers.



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PUTTING U.S. MEAT ON THE WORLD'S TABLE





CHANGE IS OCCURRING AT THE SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN OFFICE.

By Kevin Scott, Executive Director of South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council & South Dakota Soybean Association

After serving as Executive Director for the past eight years, Jerry Schmitz retired in July 2026.

Jerry's connection to South Dakota Soybean, however, reaches back much further than his time as Executive Director. In the early 1980s, Jerry and a small group of dedicated farmers helped launch the South Dakota Soybean Association, quite literally out of the trunk of his car. At a time when many farms were struggling financially, there was a growing need for an organization that could carry farmers' concerns to policymakers. Through countless hours of promotion, phone banking, and grassroots organizing, momentum grew. Farmers came together around a unified vision, leading to important policy victories at the State Capitol and the establishment of a state assessment to fund soybean research, promotion, and industry development.

Soon, South Dakota soybean farmers gained representation within the American Soybean Association, giving local producers a voice in Washington, D.C. That's a remarkable amount of change in just a few years, from the trunk of a car to the nation's capital. In many ways, change has been the defining characteristic of the soybean industry since the South Dakota Soybean office was established more than 40 years ago. During that time, soybean acreage in South Dakota has grown from fewer than 500,000 acres to more than 5.3 million acres today.

The uses for soybeans have expanded just as dramatically. Once valued primarily for food and feed, soybeans are now found in products that would have seemed unimaginable in the 1980s. Soy-based innovations include fuels, tires, printing inks, fire suppressants, cosmetics, environmentally friendly building materials, and countless other products developed through farmer-directed and farmer-funded research and promotion. Exports have always played a critical role in South Dakota's soybean industry. For many years, limited in-state processing meant that most soybeans were shipped elsewhere to be processed into meal and oil, with feed products often returning to support South Dakota's livestock sector.

Today, that story has changed. South Dakota now processes approximately half of the soybeans grown within its borders. This growth has been fueled in part by farmer-driven investments

that provide returns through facility ownership while also creating stronger local markets. Producers located near processing plants often benefit from improved basis levels and more competitive prices for their soybeans. At South Dakota Soybean, our directors and staff will continue to focus on producer profitability and the long-term success of the industry. That commitment will not change.

One thing that will change is that Jerry will no longer be in the office each day, monitoring the details and addressing the issues that impact South Dakota soybean farmers. Over the past six months, I have had the opportunity to work alongside Jerry and our talented staff to gain a deeper understanding of the work ahead. I am incredibly grateful for their guidance, patience, and support.

As Jerry has introduced me to many of South Dakota Soybean's partners, stakeholders, and friends, I have heard one comment repeatedly: "You have big shoes to fill." Having known Jerry for many years, I couldn't agree more. Fortunately, Jerry has also left behind a roadmap for success. His vision, passion, integrity, attention to detail, work ethic, and genuine love for people have shaped this organization and positioned it for the future. Thank you, Jerry.

As we look ahead, change must continue. The soybean industry must find new ways to create value from every bushel in order to keep producers financially sustainable. Innovation has always been part of our story, and it will continue to be part of our future.

So, if you happen to have a good idea sitting in the trunk of your car, tell us about it. Sometimes a great idea just needs a little push, and we can help with that. ■



KEVIN SCOTT
Executive Director of
SDSRPC and SDISA



LEADING WITH VISION, SERVING WITH HEART: **REFLECTING ON JERRY SCHMITZ'S LEGACY AS HE RETIRES**

In June, Jerry Schmitz, Executive Director of SDSA and SDSRPC, was honored as the 2026 South Dakota Governor's Agriculture Ambassador, a prestigious award recognizing outstanding leadership and service to the state's agricultural industry. In July, he will begin a new chapter as he retires from South Dakota Soybean after decades of service to soybean farmers and agriculture.

Schmitz's soybean story began more than 40 years ago. A lifelong farmer, he was instrumental in the founding of the South Dakota Soybean Association in 1982 and remains one of the organization's founding members. His interest in soybean advocacy was sparked by a simple but powerful question: "What if..." That curiosity and vision led him to become deeply involved in building an organization that would help South Dakota soybean farmers strengthen their voice and expand opportunities for future generations.

One of the people who helped bring that vision to life was retired farmer Mark Berg, a longtime friend who first met Schmitz while both were students at South Dakota State University.

"We didn't have the same pursuits from a major standpoint. He was in the ag school, and I was in the engineering school, but we met within student government," Berg recalled.

The two bonded while opposing a South Dakota Board of Regents proposal that would have negatively affected SDSU's engineering college. Their successful effort to stop the proposal launched a friendship and partnership that would later help shape South Dakota agriculture.

Years later, Schmitz called on Berg to help recruit enough soybean growers to establish a state soybean organization. Berg remembers gathering in an ambulance building in Elk Point with three telephone lines and making calls night after night.

"Three of us got together five nights in a row and we got our 200 people within one week," Berg said. "That's how the South Dakota Soybean Association was formed from those calls that occurred in 1981. Then we were officially affiliated as the 25th American Soybean Association state in 1982."

Schmitz went on to serve as president of the South Dakota Soybean Association and, eight years ago, was hired as executive director of both the South Dakota Soybean Association and the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff Council. ■





For 70 years, U.S. soybean farmers and Japanese customers have built a partnership founded on quality, trust and innovation.

U.S. SOYBEAN FARMERS CELEBRATE 70 YEARS OF COLLABORATION WITH JAPAN

70 Years of Collaborative Partnership

Japan has been a vital export market for U.S. soybeans for more than 70 years. Since 1956, U.S. Soy has connected American farmers with Japanese companies, emphasizing sustainability and quality.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) is celebrating the 70th anniversary of the opening of the American Soybean Association (ASA)'s first overseas office in Tokyo, Japan, which marked the first time a commodity group partnered with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) on overseas market development. In 2005, USSEC was co-founded by the ASA and the United Soybean Board (USB) to create a dedicated team to promote soy exports worldwide.

With USDA support, ASA collaborated with leading Japanese soy industry associations to establish the Japanese American Soybean Institute (JASI) on April 18, 1956. JASI built critical communication networks among Japanese producers and strengthened ties among American soy exporters, Japanese importers and consumers.

Seventy years later, the partnership between U.S. soybean farmers and Japanese customers remains one of the most successful and enduring relationships in agricultural trade. What began as

an effort to introduce U.S. Soy to Japanese buyers has evolved into a trusted partnership built on quality, reliability and a shared commitment to meeting consumer needs.

Today, Japan remains one of the most important international markets for U.S. Soy. The country ranks second in the world in per-capita soybean consumption and imports approximately 93% of the soybeans it uses. Demand is driven by traditional food products such as tofu, miso and natto, as well as livestock feed, aquaculture and other growing applications.

Over the past seven decades, U.S. soybean farmers and industry leaders have worked closely with Japanese customers to build confidence in the quality and consistency of U.S. Soy. As a result, the United States now supplies nearly 70% of Japan's soybean imports and maintains a strong presence in the country's food-grade soybean market.

Japan is also one of the leading destinations for U.S. agricultural products. In 2025, the country ranked as the fourth-largest market for U.S. agricultural exports, purchasing \$12.8 billion in products from American farmers and ranchers. Soybeans continue to rank among the top U.S. agricultural exports to Japan, alongside corn, beef and pork.



Staff of the Japanese American Soybean Institute (JASI) in July 1957. Established in 1956, JASI helped strengthen ties between U.S. soybean exporters and Japan's soybean industry.

Several factors have helped U.S. Soy remain the preferred choice for many Japanese buyers. U.S. soybeans are known for their consistent quality, strong protein content and dependable supply. American farmers also provide specialty food-grade and identity-preserved soybean varieties that meet the exacting standards required for many traditional Japanese foods.

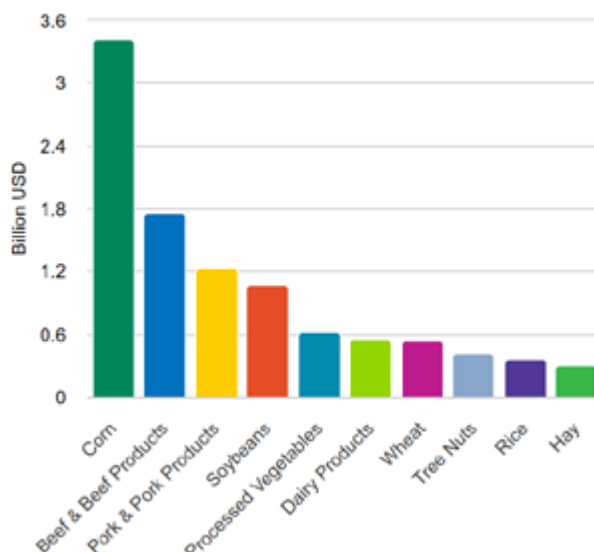
Sustainability has become another important advantage. Nearly all U.S. Soy exports are verified through the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP), giving customers confidence that soybeans are produced using responsible environmental and conservation practices.

Beyond the product itself, relationships remain at the heart of the partnership. For decades, U.S. soybean farmers, processors and exporters have worked alongside Japanese importers, food manufacturers and industry organizations to ensure a stable supply of high-quality soybeans. These longstanding connections have helped strengthen trust while creating opportunities for growth on both sides of the Pacific.

As USSEC celebrates this milestone anniversary, it continues to build on the foundation established in 1956. The organization works closely with Japanese buyers, nutritionists, food manufacturers and industry leaders to expand market opportunities for U.S. Soy and support American farming families.

For U.S. soybean farmers, Japan represents more than an export destination. It is a valued partner whose collaboration has helped shape one of the most successful international relationships in agriculture. As both countries look to the future, the partnership remains positioned for continued growth and innovation in the decades ahead. ■

Export Value by Commodity 2025



Japan remains one of the leading destinations for U.S. agricultural exports. Soybeans rank among the top products purchased from American farmers. Source: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service.

REFERENCES

- U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC)
- American Soybean Association (ASA)
- USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
- Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR)



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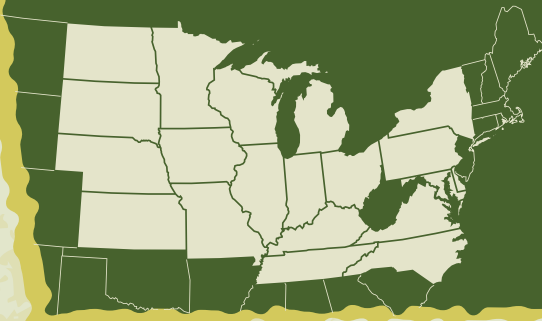
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A LIFELONG CONNECTION TO THE FARM

For Kelsey Geraets, agriculture has never been just a career path. It has been a way of life shaped by generations of family farming and years of hands-on experience.

“I’ve loved this place ever since I stepped foot on it,” she said, reflecting on her upbringing on her family’s operation near Colton, South Dakota.

Growing up on the farm meant early exposure to every part of the work. From riding along in equipment to pulling a red wagon through the yard as a child, Kelsey’s childhood was rooted in daily farm life. That early connection eventually turned into a professional commitment to the operation.

After leaving for college, Kelsey initially expected to pursue a different direction. But like many in agriculture, she found herself returning home.

“I kind of thought I would come back,” she said. “And my parents said if I wanted to come back, I should go to college, get new ideas, and bring them back with me.”

Today, she works alongside her family, helping manage the feedlot and supporting the broader row crop operation, which includes corn, soybeans, wheat, and alfalfa.

As a feedlot manager, Kelsey’s day-to-day responsibilities center on animal care, observation, and decision-making. Her work begins with feeding cattle and continues through constant monitoring of herd health and behavior.

“The most important thing to me when managing a feedlot is that the cattle are healthy, happy, and well taken care of,” she said.

Much of her time is spent in equipment such as the feed truck, where she observes cattle behavior closely. Those observations help guide decisions throughout the day, from feed management to identifying potential health concerns early.

“It’s pretty easy for me to read cattle when I pull up with the feed truck,” she said. “If cattle are running around having a good time and wanting to eat, I know they’re feeling good.”

Alongside physical care, organization plays a role as well. Kelsey often uses time in the loader or feed truck to plan her day, listen to podcasts, and stay informed on both agriculture and topics outside of farming. That balance, she said, helps her maintain perspective in a demanding role.

AN INDUSTRY BUILT ON COMMITMENT AND INNOVATION

Kelsey describes agriculture as an industry made up of committed people who depend on consistency and teamwork to get the job done.



“We are an industry of fully committed people,” she said. “We make sure the job is done every day and we are committed to doing it together.”

At the same time, she recognizes how the industry has evolved. Labor demands have increased over time, and expectations for efficiency continue to grow.

Her father once told her that earlier generations were expected to do the work of multiple people, and that today’s producers may be asked to do even more.

“There is a lot of work that goes into it,” she said. “Thankfully technology is getting to a point where that helps out a lot, but it is definitely still a challenge.”

Advancements in equipment, data, and management tools have helped improve efficiency, but Kelsey notes that agriculture still relies heavily on skilled people making daily decisions in real time.

LEADERSHIP AND LIFE AS A WOMAN IN AGRICULTURE

Kelsey’s experience in agriculture has also included navigating the challenges of being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated industry. While the work has not always been easy, she credits those experiences with strengthening her mindset and resilience.

Being named Dakotafest Farmer Rancher Woman of the Year in 2023 was a meaningful milestone in her journey.

“I was very surprised,” she said. “I was put up against some women who have done a lot in this industry. I was thankful and grateful, and it gave me a lot of courage.”

For Kelsey, recognition is less about individual achievement and more about representing the broader role women play in agriculture today.

CONNECTING AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMERS

Kelsey believes one of the most important shifts in agriculture today is the growing public interest in where food comes from. She sees social media as a key tool in bridging that gap.

“A very hopeful part of the future of agriculture comes from people wanting to actually know where their food comes from,” she said. “Social media has definitely helped us do that.”

By sharing day-to-day farm life, producers can offer transparency into how animals are cared for and how food is produced. Kelsey believes that visibility helps build trust and understanding between producers and consumers.

“It is important that people can see our passion and that we care about the food that we put in front of them,” she said.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Like many next generation producers, Kelsey is also thinking about the future of her family’s operation. That responsibility brings both motivation and pressure.

At times, she admits the weight of that responsibility can feel overwhelming. But a shift in perspective has helped her approach it differently.

“Someone once told me that pressure is a privilege,” she said. “That really changed how I see things. I am blessed to be here.”

That mindset has helped her recognize the opportunity she has

to continue her family’s legacy while contributing to the future of agriculture in her own way.

A LEGACY IN PROGRESS

From raising bottle calves as a child to managing a feedlot today, Kelsey’s journey reflects both tradition and progress in modern agriculture. Her story highlights the balance between hard work, innovation, and family connection that defines many farming operations across the Midwest.

As she looks ahead, her focus remains on the same principles that have guided her since the beginning: animal care, responsibility, and commitment to the work.

“I am blessed to be here,” she said. “And I am not going to take that lightly.” ■





Hungry for Truth

MORE THAN JUST PLANTING SEEDS.

By McKenzie Mertens

Join McKenzie Mertens as she visits Jordan Scott's family farm and discovers the hard work, legacy, and dedication that go into South Dakota agriculture.

A visit to Jordan Scott's family farm gave McKenzie Mertens a renewed appreciation for the work that happens long before seeds are planted. From learning about the equipment that keeps the operation running to hearing stories of generations past, the experience offered a firsthand look at the dedication, resilience, and family legacy that continue to shape South Dakota agriculture. McKenzie reflects on what she learned and why seeing farming through a different lens left a lasting impression.

MORE THAN JUST PLANTING SEEDS

Growing up around farming and cattle, I have always had an appreciation for agriculture. But recently, a visit to Jordan Scott's family farm reminded me just how much work, dedication, and perseverance go into a farmer's livelihood.

Jordan grows corn and soybeans, and during my visit he took the time to walk me through his operation. We looked at his planter, combine, and the equipment that keeps everything moving throughout the season. What struck me most was learning how farming begins long before a single seed is planted. There are countless decisions to make, repairs to complete, and challenges to navigate before the first pass is ever made across a field.

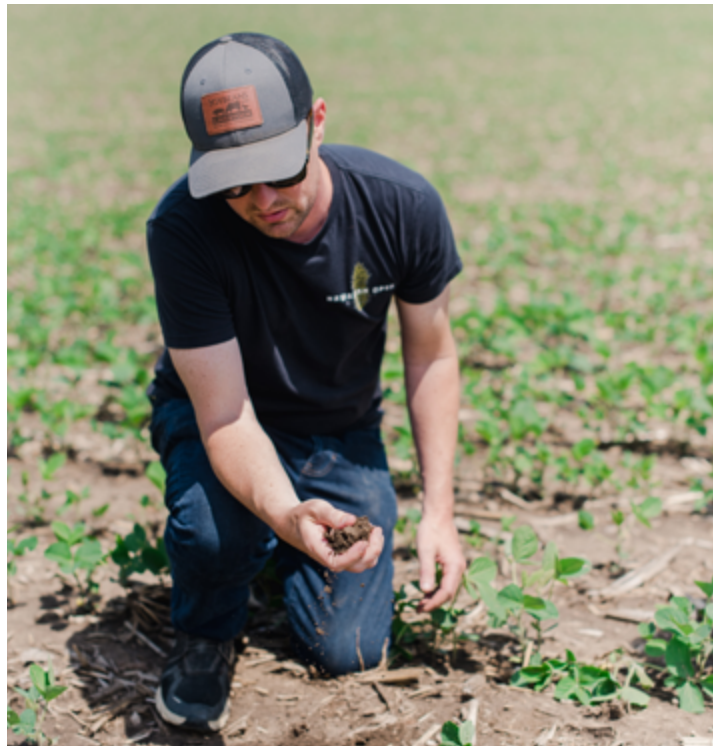


As Jordan explained the equipment, the maintenance, and the unexpected difficulties that can arise, I found myself thinking about how many moving pieces exist within agriculture. Every machine, every weather forecast, every timing decision matters. It gave me a renewed appreciation for farm life and the hard work and resilience required to make a farm successful.

One of the most meaningful parts of the day was hearing the history behind the farm. Jordan purchased the farm, and he still has equipment that belonged to his great-grandfather when he farmed the same ground years ago. Standing there, looking at machinery that had served multiple generations, was a powerful reminder that farming is often much more than an occupation—it's a legacy.

While I was raised around agriculture, this experience allowed me to see it through a different lens. Instead of simply recognizing the work, I was able to focus on the person behind it—the livelihood, the challenges, the sacrifices, and the pride that come with carrying on a family tradition.

I left the farm with a deeper respect for Jordan and for farmers everywhere. Their work starts long before the seeds go into the ground and continues long after harvest. Seeing that firsthand was both humbling and inspiring, and it's an experience I won't soon forget. ■



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HUNGRY FOR TRUTH 2026 FARM TO FORK DINNER CELEBRATES SOUTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, June 10th marked our annual Farm to Fork Dinner, bringing together farmers, industry leaders, and advocates to celebrate South Dakota agriculture and the people behind it.

From the green-themed venue to soybean facts displayed throughout the table settings, every detail reflected the importance of agriculture and the many ways soy touches our lives. Guests enjoyed a social hour featuring appetizers accompanied by cards explaining how soy was incorporated into each dish.

Hosts Bruce and Marlene Haines welcomed attendees with warm hospitality before newly appointed Executive Director Kevin Scott kicked off the evening with opening remarks. Guests then gathered around the table for a delicious meal, followed by a sweet treat from the South Dakota State University ice cream truck—home to the invention of cookies and cream ice cream.

As dinner was served, keynote speaker Cole Sonne shared his journey from growing up on the farm to using YouTube to tell agriculture's story. His message offered an authentic look at the challenges and rewards of farming and highlighted the importance of connecting consumers with those who grow their food.

It was an evening filled with great food, meaningful conversations, and a shared appreciation for the people and stories that make South Dakota agriculture so special. ■





Hungry for Truth



AT HOME WITH A FARMER: HOMEMADE VANILLA SOY ICE CREAM WITH BRUCE & MARLENE HAINES

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. In our At Home with a Farmer series, we're stepping into the kitchens of South Dakota farmers to share their favorite homemade recipes and stories that tie back to soy. By connecting farming to food and family tradition, these moments highlight the authenticity of farm life while building trust and awareness of the vital role farmers play in our communities.

Outside Mitchell, South Dakota, Bruce and Marlene Haines are continuing a family tradition that's been passed down for generations. On their farm, life centers around hard work, family and time spent together — and in the Haines household, that often includes a batch of homemade ice cream.

For Bruce, this recipe goes back to childhood. Now, he and Marlene proudly carry on the tradition as the “head ice cream makers” of the family. It's not about fancy ingredients or complicated techniques — it's about making something special to share. Real vanilla, fresh milk and a little patience are all it takes to create a dessert that brings everyone to the table.



VANILLA SOY ICE CREAM

 **Ready in: 4hrs 5 mins**

 **Ingredients: 5**

 **Serves: 5**

INGREDIENTS

-  1 ¼ cups powdered sugar
-  5 egg yolks (or ½ cup egg beaters)
-  1 ¼ tsp. cornstarch
-  2 cups soymilk
-  1 ¼ tsp. vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the egg yolks, sugar, and cornstarch into a bowl. Whisk the mixture together.
2. Heat the soy milk. Slowly pour the hot soy milk into the mixture while continuing to beat.
3. Add the vanilla extract.
4. Gently heat the mixture until it thickens.
5. Let the mixture cool in the refrigerator for 3-4 hours.
6. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker; make ice cream following the instructions of the machine.

 Find more recipes at hungryfortruthsd.com



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Hendri Chandra

Director, PT Shahabat Yaya Tio Perkasa, Indonesia

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HIGH OLEIC SOYBEANS: NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWERS

In the context of challenging commodity markets, an emerging opportunity for soybean producers is increased demand for soybeans with high oleic acid content. Available through some of the major seed companies, high-oleic soybean (HOSB) varieties are often grown under Identity Preserved (IP) contract and can help farmers secure a premium that routinely exceeds the per acre ROI of conventional soybeans.

CONSUMER INTEREST IN HIGH-OLEIC SOYBEANS

A primary reason for increased high-oleic soybean demand rests with consumers' shift toward health-conscious decisions about nutrition. High-oleic soybean oil — boasting a greater percentage of unsaturated fat — is preferred as a healthy substitute to conventional frying oil, which is used widely across the restaurant industry. The same goes for the vegetable oil found in thousands of commercially prepared baked goods, snack foods, salad dressings and more.

It is worth noting that some IP contracts on today's market are for non-GMO soybeans to meet consumer demand for food ingredients that have not been genetically modified. For most

farmers, growing non-GMO soybeans will require a significant change in weed management practices. There are nevertheless effective strategies at your disposal, but careful consultation with an agronomist is recommended.

HOSB AND ANIMAL NUTRITION

Another important factor in the expanding high-oleic soybean market can be attributed to implications for animal nutrition. Including HOSB in dairy feed formulations can make a positive impact on milk production volume and milkfat composition, which, in turn, support a producer's profitability. For swine and poultry operations, inclusion of high-oleic soy at higher rates translates to improved carcass and meat quality.

DAIRY RATIONS

Professor Adam Lock, Ph.D., is Associate Chair for Farm Operations at Michigan State University, where he oversees the Dairy Lipids Nutrition Program and Laboratory. He has led a growing number of studies — including several projects funded by soybean farmers through their national and state checkoff — on high-oleic soy in dairy rations.



His HOSB research has yielded positive results, and the dairy industry is taking notice. "We consistently see strong improvements in milk yield and milk components," said Lock. "What some of the larger dairy producers are doing now is contracting with local soybean growers and paying them a premium for high-oleic soybeans. So, to me, that's a win-win."

Because high-oleic soybeans need to be roasted to a specific temperature and then ground for inclusion in dairy rations, some dairy operations have invested in their own processing technology. Others rely on local feed suppliers for preparing rations with HO soybeans. Either route still represents a net cost savings for producers, who would otherwise be inclined to pay far more for commercial energy and protein feedstuffs.

These developments bode well for South Dakota soybean growers given the increasing presence of dairy operations along the proverbial I-29 corridor.

SWINE NUTRITION

Farmer-funded research has demonstrated that swine diets with higher inclusion rates of high-oleic soy can dramatically change the fat content in pigs. Bob Thaler, Ph.D., is Farm Credit Services of America Endowed Chair in Swine Production and Distinguished Professor at South Dakota State University, where he has earned a reputation as one of the world's leading swine specialists.

"One of the cool things about pigs is whatever type of fat you

feed them, that's the type of fat they put on their body," said Dr. Thaler. "As long as you meet the nutrient requirements, they're going to grow the same and have the same efficiency. All we're going to change is the composition of the fat, be it marbling or the subcutaneous fat in the carcass."

According to this rationale, feed formulations with a greater percentage of unsaturated fat would result in pork products with improved unsaturated to saturated fat ratios. Thaler cited a checkoff-funded study he worked on alongside colleagues at North Dakota State University that examined inclusion rates of TruSoya, a high-oleic soybean variety, and their impact on swine carcass and meat quality. Their work confirmed that diets containing TruSoya boosted the concentration of unsaturated fatty acids, including oleic acid, in subcutaneous pork fat.

"Initially, I think it's going to be a niche market," said Thaler, explaining that harvested HOSB are typically extruded prior to being included in swine feed formulations. "You're going to have a higher-quality product on the plate, and people are willing to pay for that."

ADDING VALUE FOR SOYBEAN PRODUCERS

Uncovering new opportunities for soybean producers to secure added value is central to the work of the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council. For more information, please visit sdsoybean.org or talk to your local district director. ■



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ROASTING FACILITY BRINGS ADDED VALUE TO SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN GROWERS

By Melisa Goss For the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff

A new soybean roasting plant in Parkston is aiming to create new markets for local farmers while supporting South Dakota's rapidly expanding dairy industry.

Kaylor Agri Services opened the state's first soybean roasting facility late last year and roasted its first load of soybeans on October 6, 2025, marking a significant milestone for the 50-year-old company.

Lance Thury, general manager of Kaylor AgriServices, said the idea for the plant stemmed from a desire to become an end user of soybeans, similar to the company's role in the hog sector, where it already uses corn as feed.

"We wanted to try to be an end user of soybeans," Thury said. "We had a customer call us who was interested in high-oleic roasted soybeans, so we looked into it and decided to take the leap of faith and build a plant to help service our dairy customers."

The plant specializes in roasting high-oleic soybeans, specifically Pioneer Plenish varieties, to create a consistent, high-quality feed ingredient for dairy operations.

South Dakota's dairy sector has experienced significant growth in recent years, with new operations moving into the state and additional processing capacity coming online. Thury said that growth was an important factor in the company's decision.



"The dairies are moving toward South Dakota," he said. "The state is really friendly toward the dairy industry. And as more processing gets added, that means more cows that need to be fed."

Roasted high-oleic soybeans provide dairy producers with a valuable feed component, delivering energy and protein in a form that supports milk production. Ensuring a consistent product, however, has been one of the company's early challenges.

"There's not a lot of people around here that roast soybeans," Kaylor said. "We had to call around and get knowledge from

people in places like Pennsylvania. Then we had to figure out how to tweak the roasting temperatures and process to meet the specs that the dairies request. They want a constant product.”

That learning curve has required careful testing and adjustments during the plant’s first months of operation.

Beyond serving dairies, the facility is also creating a value-added opportunity for soybean growers across the region.

Kaylor AgriServices offers a \$1 per bushel premium for Pioneer Plenish high-oleic soybeans delivered to the plant. In today’s challenging commodity price environment, that premium can make a meaningful difference.

“You’ve got a product that’s benefiting the local farmers who grow it, and you’ve got a product that’s benefiting the dairies,” Kaylor said. “It’s a win-win-win.”

The company sourced soybeans this past year from a broad footprint, stretching from Chamberlain to Hartford, and from Viborg to Springfield and Wagner — covering roughly eight or nine counties. Thury expects to double the intake in the 2026 growing season.

Convincing farmers to try the specialty soybean variety initially posed another hurdle.

“There were some questions about yield drag,” Kaylor said. “At first, it was hard getting farmers to try it.”

Despite those concerns, growers planted 19,000 acres of Pioneer Plenish soybeans for the plant’s first year. Favorable growing conditions helped build confidence in the crop’s performance. Thury expects to double the intake in the 2026 growing season.

South Dakota Soybean Checkoff has been instrumental in helping Thury spread the word about the roasting facility and the benefit it brings to both South Dakota soybean producers and area dairies, Thury said.

The Parkston roasting plant joins a broader movement toward in-state soybean processing and value-added agriculture. By creating additional local demand, facilities like this can help strengthen basis levels and keep more dollars circulating within South Dakota.

“This is bringing value-added commodities to the state,” Kaylor said. “Along with other processing plants, it’s another outlet to help increase the basis and keep things not only in the state but in the region.”

By reducing reliance on distant export markets and adding nearby end users, the plant provides farmers with another marketing option, one that may offer improved price stability.

Research conducted by the United Soybean Board has supported the development and validation of high-oleic soybean varieties, helping demonstrate their nutritional and performance benefits in livestock feed applications. That research foundation has helped bolster confidence in products like roasted Plenish soybeans.

While Kaylor AgriServices has had limited direct involvement with state soybean organizations to date, the broader research and promotion efforts behind high-oleic soybeans have played a role in bringing products like this to market.

Compared to large-scale soybean processing facilities in the region, the Parkston roasting plant remains relatively small. Kaylor describes it as a niche operation focused on serving specific customer needs rather than competing with major processors.

Still, even a smaller plant can have an outsized impact in a time of tight margins.

“With prices of commodities not very good, every little bit helps,” Thury said. ■



SIGN UP FOR THE SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN YIELD & QUALITY CONTEST TODAY!

Win up to \$2,000 in prizes!



The South Dakota Soybean Yield and Quality Contest is more than just a competition; it's an opportunity for producers to learn, improve, and be recognized for their hard work. Each year, practices, varieties, and field decisions stack up against other top producers. Along the way, they help generate valuable agronomic data that benefits the entire industry.

Contest participants gain insights into what practices are driving success in different regions of South Dakota. Data collected through the contest helps identify trends in variety selection, planting practices, fertility programs, pest management and irrigation strategies. That information is later analyzed and shared with farmers through events like Soy100 and other educational programs, giving producers practical, local data, trends, and management practices they can apply on their own operations.

The contest also encourages innovation. Producers are constantly looking for ways to push yields higher while improving efficiency and profitability. Participating in the contest gives growers a chance to test new ideas, fine-tune management decisions, and compare results with some of the best soybean farmers in the state. The contest was created to encourage the development and testing of innovative soybean management practices.

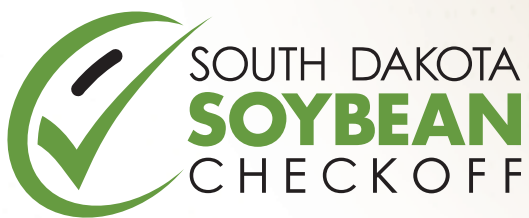
In addition to the educational benefits, there are strong incentives to participate. Cash prizes are awarded across multiple categories, including irrigated, non-irrigated, no-till, and youth divisions. First-place winners in the main categories receive \$2,000, with additional awards for second and third-place finishers. New this year, we will also be adding a raffle drawing for a trip to Commodity Classic or the See For Yourself trip with SD Soybean. Participants must complete a harvest form to qualify for the raffle drawing.

Most importantly, the contest showcases the success and innovation of South Dakota soybean farmers. Every entry helps build a stronger database of real-world production information that can help improve soybean performance statewide. Whether your goal is to compete for top honors, evaluate new practices, or contribute to industry knowledge, the South Dakota Soybean Yield and Quality Contest offers value for every producer.

To enter into the Soybean Yield & Quality Contest, visit www.sds soybean.org/programs-events/yield-contest or scan the QR code below. A completed entry form and accompanying payment are required for official contest participation. ■

Scan to Enter ➔





High Oleic High Value

Growing high-oleic soybeans (HOSB) can provide additional revenue opportunities in a challenging market environment. Explore the ways shifting consumer preferences for health-conscious food options and emerging research on animal nutrition are boosting demand for HOSB.



See The Impact
www.sdsoybean.org



CONNECTING ACROSS SOUTH DAKOTA: **A SUMMER OF SOYBEAN ENGAGEMENT**



Summer in South Dakota brings more than warmer weather and a growing soybean crop. It also brings opportunities to connect with farmers, industry partners and communities across the state. From Dakotafest and county fairs to the South Dakota State Fair, South Dakota Soybean looks forward to showcasing the impact of South Dakota soybeans and the people who help drive our industry forward.

The 25th annual Soybean Open on Monday, July 20th will once again bring together farmers and industry partners for a day of networking, friendly competition and support for soybean advocacy.

Looking ahead to August, South Dakota Soybean will once again connect with farmers and industry partners at Dakotafest. The South Dakota Soybean Checkoff tent will be in the heart of the grounds, where staff and board members will serve crowd-favorite heart-healthy donuts, fried in soybean oil, from 9 to 11 a.m. each day while visiting with attendees throughout the show.

On Wednesday August 19th at 12:15 p.m., the Checkoff will host an educational session in the Reaves Building titled "South Dakota Soy, Beyond the Borders." The session will feature Houdek, a South Dakota company creating new opportunities for soybean meal through fermentation. Houdek transforms both conventional and non-GMO soybean meal into highly digestible, high-protein ingredients for aquaculture and pet food applications. International aquaculture markets continue to create demand for soybean-based feed ingredients, while growing opportunities in the pet food sector point to additional value-added markets for South Dakota soybeans and the potential for expanded demand in the years ahead.

Summer would not be complete without fair season. The Checkoff will participate in the Sioux Empire Fair during Soybean Feature Day at the Pipestone Barn and will also support the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce Ag Appreciation Day.

We are especially excited for the South Dakota State Fair, where the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff will serve as the official Sunday sponsor for the first time. Visitors can find us in the Day Sponsor Tent from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to learn more about the soybean industry and connect with South Dakota Soybean staff and leaders.

Educational sessions with Keep Farmers Farming and Bassford Remele will focus on protecting farm legacies and planning for future generations. Be sure to stop by at noon for a special meet-and-greet and autograph session with SDSU men's and women's basketball players.

These events are just a few of the ways South Dakota Soybean will be connecting with farmers and consumers in the months ahead. Be sure to follow South Dakota Soybean on social media and visit our website regularly to stay up to date on all our events and activities. ■



HOW EGYPT'S GROWING APPETITE FOR PROTEIN OPENS DOORS FOR U.S. SOY

When a researcher at a WorldFish facility in Cairo handed South Dakota farmer Tara Bierman a small fingerling and asked if she wanted to try tagging it, she didn't hesitate.

**“Who wouldn't want to tag a fish?”
Bierman laughed.**

It was a small moment, but a telling one: a South Dakota soybean farmer standing in Egypt, learning how the beans she grows fuel a global protein economy she'd never fully seen up close. That's exactly what the Soy Checkoff's See for Yourself trade mission is designed to do.

Bierman, a soybean, corn, oats, and poultry farmer who also serves on the South Dakota Soybean Association board, came away from the Cairo trip with a sharper understanding of why international demand matters back home. Even when South Dakota beans don't flow directly to a market like Egypt, building strong global partnerships and reliable customers move the pile and supports commodity prices for growers across the country.

TRACKING FISH, UNDERSTANDING MARKETS

The WorldFish facility made the connection between U.S. soy and global food systems tangible for Bierman. The tagging process works much like livestock tracking back home — fish are weighed, measured, and tagged at the start, then scanned again at harvest to track growth over time. But the bigger takeaway went beyond mechanics. Seeing firsthand how central soy is to aquaculture feed and how much Egyptian buyers value the quality and consistency of U.S. soy brought the global story home.

THE FOUR DS: WHY U.S. SOY STANDS OUT

Bierman has a straightforward framework for explaining why U.S. soy is favored in global markets: the four Ds. U.S. soybeans dry naturally in the field, which reduces damage and makes them more digestible than beans from competing origins like South America. They're also produced without deforestation, an increasingly important distinction as buyers worldwide grow more conscious of environmental impact.



TARA BIERMAN TAGS A FINGERLING AT WORLDFISH IN CAIRO.

“Those four Ds help us better market U.S. soy all around the world,” Bierman said. “Egypt really appreciates that we are sustainable. It matters to them.”

A GROWING MARKET WITH ENORMOUS POTENTIAL

Now ranking as the fourth largest export market for U.S. soy, Egypt's demand for protein is being driven by one of Africa's fastest-expanding populations. Currently, many Egyptians can only afford meat once a month — but as quality of life improves, demand for poultry and fish will rise, and with it, demand for soy.

Egypt is also a leader in African aquaculture with ambitions to export protein products to the EU and the broader region, making it a market of strategic importance for U.S. soy farmers.

WHY EGYPT MATTERS TO SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS

Most South Dakota soybeans head to Pacific Northwest ports before reaching Asian markets, not Egypt directly. But global demand is deeply interconnected, and the Soy Checkoff's market diversification strategy has already increased U.S. soy exports by 12% year-over-year.

“As a farmer, you must think big picture and long term,” Bierman said. “Any place in the world where we can export our product and build reliable relationships is going to help us.”

That big-picture thinking is exactly what the See for Yourself trade mission is built on — and for Bierman, the experience only sharpened her sense of what's at stake when farmers show up on the world stage.





COLOMBIA: A GROWING MARKET FOR U.S. SOYBEAN MEAL

Ritz Ag Consulting, Inc.

Soybean leaders recently traveled to Colombia to explore one of the fastest-growing markets for U.S. agricultural exports. What they found was a country with expanding demand for animal protein, strong confidence in U.S. soybean meal, and new opportunities for future trade growth.

Farmer leaders from Iowa, Missouri, and South Dakota joined AG Processing Inc. (AGP) on a trade mission to Colombia this spring, meeting with some of the country's largest feed manufacturers and agricultural importers. The trip provided firsthand insight into the importance of the U.S.-Colombia trade relationship and the growing role soybean meal plays in supporting Colombia's livestock and poultry industries.

Colombia is currently the seventh-largest export market for U.S. agricultural products. In 2025 alone, the United States exported approximately \$259 million in soybeans and \$843 million in soybean meal to the country. Since implementation of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement in 2012, tariffs on U.S. soybeans and soybean meal have been eliminated, strengthening the competitiveness of U.S. products and supporting long-term trade growth.

DEMAND DRIVEN BY GROWING PROTEIN CONSUMPTION

One of the most significant takeaways from the mission was Colombia's growing appetite for animal protein. Chicken remains the country's most consumed protein source, with annual per-capita

consumption approaching 38 kilograms. Pork consumption has also grown steadily and is now nearing 16 kilograms per person annually, while beef consumption remains stable around 18 kilograms per person.

Population growth is helping fuel this trend. Colombia has welcomed approximately two million immigrants from neighboring Venezuela in recent years, increasing demand for affordable protein sources and creating additional opportunities for feed manufacturers and livestock producers.

As meat consumption rises, so does the need for high-quality feed ingredients. Soybean meal remains a critical component of livestock and poultry rations, making Colombia an increasingly important market for U.S. soybean farmers.

MEETING THE INDUSTRY LEADERS

During the mission, the delegation met with executives from several of Colombia's largest feed manufacturers, including Itacol, Contegral, and Solla. Together, these companies produce millions of metric tons of feed annually and import substantial volumes of soybean meal from the United States.

At Itacol, one of the region's largest feed producers, company leaders reported producing approximately 3.5 million metric tons of feed each year, with plans to expand production to 4 million metric tons by 2029. Representatives noted a 25% increase in soybean meal imports and emphasized their continued reliance on U.S. suppliers because of product quality, consistency, and favorable trade conditions.

Contebral, another major player in Colombia's feed industry, produces more than 2.1 million metric tons of feed annually and imports roughly 600,000 metric tons of soybean meal each year. Company representatives expressed a strong preference for U.S. soybean meal, citing dependable supply chains and consistent product quality.

At Solla, executives shared that approximately 90 percent of their soybean meal purchases originate from the United States. The company expects continued growth in both the pet food and aquaculture sectors, creating additional demand for protein-rich feed ingredients in the years ahead.

LOGISTICS MATTER

While demand remains strong, logistics continue to influence purchasing decisions.

Most U.S. soybean meal enters Colombia through ports along the Atlantic coast, where transit times from Gulf export terminals are typically four to five days. Deliveries to Buenaventura, Colombia's primary Pacific port, require longer transit times of eight to nine days. However, several importers expressed interest in evaluating shipments from the Pacific Northwest, particularly if freight rates become more competitive.

Delegates also learned that inland transportation can represent a larger expense than ocean freight. For example, moving soybean meal from Cartagena to a feed mill near Medellín can cost more than twice as much as shipping the product from the United States to Colombia.

Panama Canal constraints and changing freight economics are encouraging importers to explore alternative shipping routes and combination cargo opportunities that include soybean meal, corn, and distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS).

STRONG OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

The mission reinforced confidence in the future of U.S. soybean exports to Colombia. Feed manufacturers consistently highlighted the quality, reliability, and sustainability of U.S. soybean meal. Several companies reported double-digit growth and expect soybean meal demand to continue increasing as Colombia's poultry, swine, aquaculture, and pet food sectors expand.

For South Dakota soybean farmers, that growth represents more than just export statistics. It demonstrates how international partnerships create demand for U.S. soybeans and soybean products while supporting rural economies back home.

As Colombia's livestock industry continues to grow and consumers seek more protein-rich diets, opportunities for U.S. soybean meal appear well positioned to expand. The trade mission offered a valuable reminder that relationships matter, and that maintaining strong connections with customers around the world remains essential for the long-term success of U.S. agriculture. ■





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Listen to Agricultural Biotech Company Houdek on "South Dakota Soy, Beyond the Borders"

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Houdek