

AMERICAN WINTER 2021
soybean
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A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

ADVOCACY OVER

ADVERSITY

ISSUE UPDATE
Leadership Changes
in Our Government

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE
Soy-Related Industries
and the Pandemic

SPECIAL SECTION



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The American Soybean Association (ASA) represents U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international policy issues important to the soybean industry. ASA has 26 affiliated state associations representing 30 states and more than 300,000 soybean farmers.

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ASA leadership corner

After the privilege of having served as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture these past 3-plus years, I am pleased that in early November I was able to return to ASA during this highly *unusual*—but *unusually momentous*—year. In August, we celebrated ASA’s 100th anniversary together. It was an honor to speak at the event on the Indiana farm where ASA began, watch the historical marker unveiling, and visit with a few of you in person—a rare opportunity right now. That day in Camden was special, and we have enjoyed many other wonderful—though mostly virtual—celebrations throughout the year.

While we have been celebrating, so too, have we been advocating in 2020. In September, USDA released the much-anticipated second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). CFAP2 relief is part of a long list of COVID-related priorities ASA has pushed from the pandemic onset to assure agriculture was heard. CFAP2 follows earlier CFAP assistance from USDA and relief provided to farmers through the Small Business Administration: The Paycheck Protection and Economic Injury Disaster Loan programs. We have also rallied behind replenishment of USDA’s Commodity Credit Corporation account. ASA and other groups engaged with policymakers to successfully support replenishment of these resources imperative to paying farm bill benefits like ARC, PLC and CRP.

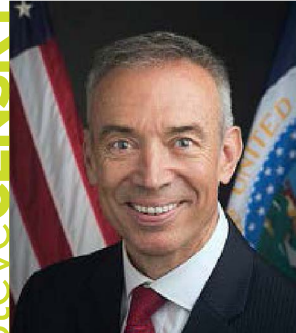
“If farmers cannot come to the Hill, we’ll take the Hill to the field!” That was the message conveyed

to more than 2,000 Congressional ag staffers announcing ASA’s fall #SeeSoyHarvest campaign. During this time when we have not been able to conduct business as usual—including D.C. fly-in’s—ASA staff have worked on solutions to continue advocating successfully for soy. The October campaign featured on-farm videos from 48 soybean growers throughout the soy states—videos that were an instrumental connection for our policy team to follow up directly with Hill staff. Read more in our cover story on this video series filled with harvest highlights, soy economic impacts, and ASA priorities that demonstrated the importance of soy to our nation both domestically and globally.

This issue’s theme is “Advocacy over Adversity”—and these are highlights only of how ASA has adapted during an unusual time of hardship and will continue to adapt and evolve in years to come. And, we have a special double-themed *American Soybean* this winter. We talk in this issue about the importance and success of women in agriculture. Just over a year ago, we hired Christy Seyfert, a self-proclaimed “farm girl” who grew up in rural Georgia, to build and lead a new internal, D.C.-based policy team. Christy is certainly a great example of women leading in agriculture in various capacities, and we hope you enjoyed last month’s cover story on the valuable advocacy efforts of Christy and her strong government affairs team.

My wife Carmen and I have moved from D.C. and are back

Steve CENSKY



Steve Censky, ASA CEO

settled in Saint Louis, but there are many transitions still taking place in our Nation’s Capital. We have new leaders of the House and Senate Ag Committees, and former Ag Secretary Vilsack will lead USDA again. Starting back in August, the ASA policy team began meeting with both campaigns to assure we established solid lines of communication, and we continue to meet with the Biden transition team to best position ASA priorities.

Rounding out 2020, some agriculture policy issues are resolved. The U.S. Grain Standards Reauthorization was signed into law, for example. Yet, we continue to watch other key issues like the Phase 1 trade agreement with China. Soybean flow there has been outstanding, however, and we are in much better position this season than last.

I end with a note of thanks. All of us here at ASA—farmer-leaders and staff alike—tip our hats to John Gordley and the Gordley Associates team for their years of dedicated and successful service to ASA. Thank you for your contributions during so many of ASA’s 100 years working effectively, through good times and more challenging times, for soy.

Missouri Soybean Association's Soy Bees

When the Missouri Soybean Association (MSA) opened its Center for Soy Innovation in March of 2020, its goal was to connect people and how directly soybeans impact their lives. The Center boasts soy-based building materials that offer benefits ranging from improved indoor air quality to reduced reliance on petroleum. Outdoor spaces highlight farmers' work with native plantings and water-quality management efforts. Located in Jefferson City, Mo., the Center is a hub for all things soy and hands-on interaction.

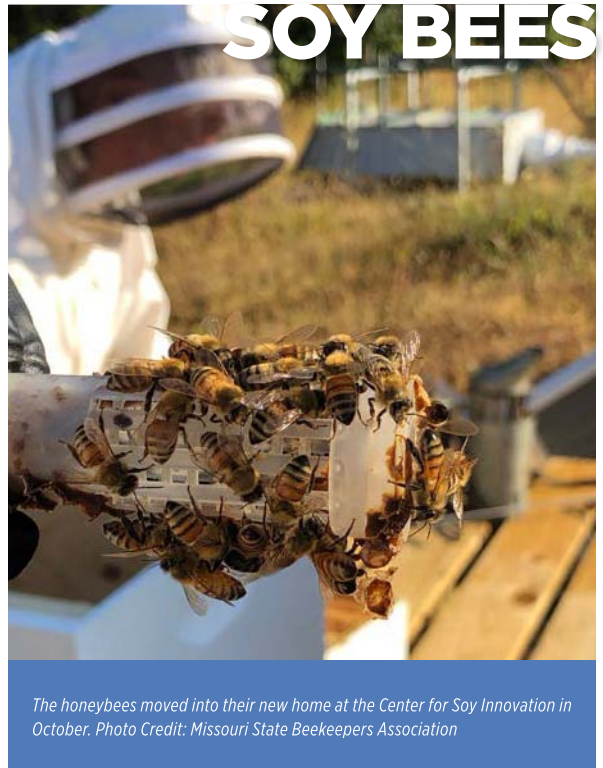
This past fall, although the Center is currently closed to visitors, it was able to continue its mission by welcoming thousands of new residents in the form of honeybees. This project was conceived when MSA Executive Director Gary Wheeler reached out to the Missouri State Beekeepers Association (MSBA) to collaborate between the two organizations. Missouri's soybean farmers and soybean organizations have been staunch advocates for pollinators and protecting their habitats, and having honeybees at the Center was a no-brainer.

"This is win-win for everyone involved," said MSBA President Randy Ewart. "We look forward to seeing the colonies expanding to both sites and visitors developing a better understanding of the role honeybees play pollinating important crops like soybeans."

In partnership with volunteers from the MSBA, the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council welcomed the colony in October, which sits behind the Center for Soy Innovation among the native plantings installed in 2020. With assistance from Debra Maier and Gail Severance of Show Me Beekeepers, the colony was safely transported to Jefferson City.

Show Me Beekeepers is a group established through the MSBA to bring information closer to the Central Missouri area beekeepers to share their experiences and help answer questions. Maier and Severance not only helped transport the colony, but they got their network of local beekeepers to help manage the hives. This collaboration between MSA and MSBA proves fruitful, as the working hives will face the conference rooms at the Center, which Show Me Beekeepers will use to hold monthly meetings and educational events.

In addition to conversations about farmers' work to support pollinators, guests can expect to learn about the relationship between pollinators and soybeans. While soybeans do not rely on pollinators as much as some other flowering plants, soybeans are one of many crops that can



provide bee food. They are also the basic ingredient in many pollen substitutes beekeepers use to substitute bee feed, including the one available to this colony during its transition to Jefferson City.

The Center is also looking forward to interactions between the public and the hives. MSA's Director of Communications, Christine Tew, shared, "Someday we hope visitors may also be able to sample honey from the hive—although that is many months away and likely dependent on COVID-19, as the Center is currently closed to visitors."

Want to know more about the Center for Soy Innovation, its bee colony and how all things soy come together in your life? Explore [MOSoy.org](https://mosoy.org) or reach out to the Center directly through the "Contact Us" tab.

Curious about beekeeping or want to meet a beekeeper near you? The Missouri State Beekeepers Association has excellent information online at mostatebeekeepers.org to help you connect and get started with your own bees.

Source: Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri State Beekeepers Association

ASA Board Elects 2021 Governing Committee

The American Soybean Association (ASA) Board of Directors elected the leaders who will guide the organization through the changing policy landscape on Capitol Hill in the coming year during its annual meeting held virtually in December.

Kevin Scott (SD) will serve as 2021 ASA president. Scott previously served as vice president, secretary and an at-large member of the ASA Governing Committee. He has been on the ASA board since 2012. Scott and his wife Jannell farm with their son and daughter-in-law in southeast South Dakota on a fourth-generation operation that began in 1886.

Immediate past president Bill Gordon (MN) moves to the role of ASA chairman. Former chairman Davie Stephens (KY) rotates off the nine-member governing committee but remains on the ASA board.

The ASA board also elected Brad Doyle (AR) to serve as vice president, a position that places him in line to serve as the association's president in 2022.

Doyle previously served as ASA secretary and at-large member of the ASA Governing Committee. He's been on the ASA Board of Directors since 2017. Doyle operates Berger Farms/Eagle seed with his wife Joyce, a second-generation soybean breeder.

In addition, the board voted to elect Daryl Cates (IL) as secretary; Stan Born (IL) as treasurer; and Josh Gackle (ND), Caleb Ragland (KY), George Goblisch (MN) and Dennis Fujan (NE) as at-large members of the governing committee.

With the retirement of ASA Director John Heisdorffer (IA), new member Jeff Jorgenson (IA) joins the ASA board.

Members of the ASA board expressed during the meeting their ongoing gratitude to those who have served the soybean industry with such great dedication and those who continue to serve through governing committee and board appointments.

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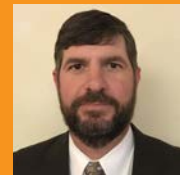
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Ryan Kirby
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Brad Kremer
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Andrew Moore
Dalton, GA



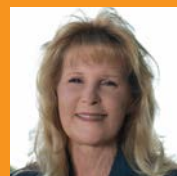
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Roseville, IL



Scott Persall
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Rob Shaffer
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Pam Snelson
Wann, OK



Joe Steinkamp
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Davie Stephens
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Steve Censky
ASA Chief Executive Officer

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Columbia, IL



Stan Born
Treasurer
Lovington, IL



Josh Gackle
At-large
Kulm, ND



George Gobligh
At-large
Vesta, MN



Dennis Fujan
At-large
Prague, NE



Caleb Ragland
At-large
Magnolia, KY



John Comegys
Hartly, DE



Kendell Culp
Rensselaer, IN



Bret Davis
Delaware, OH



David Droste
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Steph Essick
Dickens, IA



Wayne Fredericks
Osage, IA



Chris Hill
Brewster, MN



Morey Hill
Madrid, IA



Jered Hooker
Clinton, IL



Brooks Hurst
Tarkio, MO



Willard Jack
Belzoni, MS



Jeff Jorgenson
Sidney, IA



Jim Kukowski
Strathcona, MN



Don Lutz
Scandinavia, WI



Brad Macauley
Geneseo, NY



Matt McCrate
Cape Girardeau, MO



Alan Meadows
Halls, TN



Scott Metzger
Williamsport, OH



Monte Peterson
Valley City, ND



Bill Raben
Ridgway, IL



Phil Ramsey
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Justin Rivers
Chesterfield, SC



Ronnie Russell
Richmond, MO



Joel Schreurs
Tyler, MN



Matt Stutzman
Adrian, MI



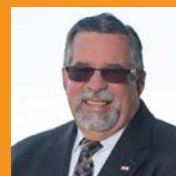
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Timberlake, NC



Dave Walton
Wilton, IA



Brandon Wipf
Huron, SD



Bill Wykes
Yorkville, IL



Casey Youngerman
Lexington, TN



ADVOCACY

OVER ADVERSITY

By Dan Lemke

“Improvise, adapt, overcome,” may be a phrase straight from a Clint Eastwood action movie, but the words aptly describe how the American Soybean Association (ASA) approached its mission during the upheaval caused by the global coronavirus pandemic.

ASA has advocated for soy for 100 years. Remaining effective in supporting soybean farmers and the soybean industry for a century requires agility and flexibility. COVID-19 presented another opportunity for the organization to demonstrate its adaptability during unforeseen circumstances.

When the realities of the COVID-19 outbreak disrupted many aspects of life in the early spring of 2020, American soybean farmers were in the process of preparing to plant the year’s crops. Suddenly the future of that crop, along with life in the United States, was thrown into disarray as farmers and others grappled with the uncertainties

of the virus and the associated fallout. Businesses and restaurants closed or had their operations restricted, livestock processing plants were shut down, stay at home orders were issued. It quickly became clear that there would be no business as usual in 2020.

ASA quickly recognized the need to assess how COVID-19 was affecting farmers and formed a 12-member task force to gather input from farmers around the country on various ways the coronavirus could potentially impact their operations. The ASA COVID Task Force consisted of representation from ASA’s farmer-leaders and senior staff, and the policy group also knew it was important that sister organizations the United Soybean Board (USB) and the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) also have a member.

Fact finding

South Dakota farmer Kevin Scott,

then ASA vice president, and chair of the COVID-19 task force says many farmers were initially concerned with the availability of inputs, including fertilizer and farm chemicals. A significant amount of fertilizer comes from Canada, so growers were worried border closings would restrict availability. Farmers also wondered whether local co-ops or farm service organizations could even come out and apply those inputs. Labor availability and even visa concerns for migrant workers also posed potential disruptions to farmers.

“We wanted to find out from across the country if there were problems, where those problems were, and what we as ASA could do to stay involved,” Scott says. “Overall, supply chain issues were a big concern.”

A major coronavirus-related disruption came in the food and livestock sectors. Temporary shutdowns at several major meat

packing plants due to COVID-19 outbreaks and concern for worker safety forced some farmers to euthanize hogs and poultry because there was no processing capacity.

“Food security was a big issue. There was no lack of food, we were destroying food because we couldn’t get where it needed to be,” Scott says. “We as ASA worked to keep things moving in the right direction because dead hogs or dead chickens don’t eat much soybean meal.”

ASA Chairman and Minnesota farmer Bill Gordon says the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the fragile nature of the nation’s food supply system.

“We have developed a system that is so streamlined and efficient—and so reliant on the productivity of the farmer and the plant—that any disruption really throws a monkey wrench and a subsequent change that is not easy to adjust to,” Gordon says. “We’re delivering pigs or chickens every day and harvesting those animals. When you have to shut down a plant unexpectedly for an extended period of time, there’s no place to go with those animals. The system behind it is so set up to operate on efficiency that we can’t detour.”

Soy industry leaders did more than just gather input, they used that knowledge to urge the Trump Administration and others to make sure agriculture was deemed essential.

“ASA impressed upon the secretary of agriculture and others involved that these industries are critical and that we had to keep them running,” Scott explains. “We pushed pretty hard on USDA to make sure that we, as well as all of our suppliers, were deemed essential.”

Scott says ASA advocacy extended beyond making sure farmers could get products to their farms and included making sure growers could access open marketing channels.

“We export a lot of soybeans, so we’ve got to keep the rail

running, the trucks running, and the port systems functioning,” Scott adds.

Scott says ASA pushed Congress and the Administration to support the Coronavirus Food Assistance Programs that delivered much-needed relief to farmers and agribusinesses harmed by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Advocacy adjustments

COVID-19 not only disrupted soybean production on the farm, but the coronavirus outbreak also changed how ASA could advocate for the nation’s soybean farmers. As a policy-driven organization, ASA staff and farmer-leaders have frequented Capitol Hill to cultivate relationships and speak on behalf of the nation’s soybean farmers for over a century. COVID-19 safety protocols shut down most in-person contact with Administration, U.S. House and Senate members and staff.

“Pre-COVID, we were walking freely into and out of House and Senate office buildings all throughout the day, on any given day,” says ASA Executive Director of Government Affairs Christy Seyfert. “It was normal for us to do in-person meetings on a regular basis. Then COVID hit and that changed everything.”

ASA staff and leaders had to adjust to the new reality and get creative with their outreach

efforts. One answer came through technology.

Seyfert says ASA staff and leaders participated in well over 60 virtual events in support of members. Lunch meetings and even fundraisers that were typically held in person moved to video conferencing or other virtual platforms.

“We had to adapt in many ways to make sure that ASA remains visible and that our message is heard loud and clear,” Seyfert says.

“The benefit of having all those years of going to the Hill and being out in Washington D.C., was we had relationships with the staffers, the representatives and senators, as well as USDA and EPA,” Gordon explains. “Because Washington is basically shut down, we’re doing an enormous amount of phone calls and using video conferencing technology. That has allowed us to maintain that face-to-face interaction and continue to advocate for the U.S. soybean farmer.”

Taking the farm to the Hill

Because farmers could no longer physically go to Washington to visit with lawmakers, ASA brought the farm to the Hill through an innovative #SeeSoyHarvest campaign. The effort featured footage captured by soybean farmers from around the country during harvest. ASA

(continued on page 10)



Capitol Hill



compiled farmers' submissions into informational videos that documented the 2020 harvest progress and delivered key statistics and information related to ASA priority issues. A series of six videos addressed the farm economy, trade concerns, infrastructure needs including transportation and rural broadband, biodiesel, as well as biotechnology and crop protection products—and thanked members of Congress for the important, ongoing relationships with ASA.

In addition to being available through social media, Seyfert says each of the six #SeeSoyHarvest videos was shared strategically with over 2,000 congressional staff members. The ASA team also conducted targeted outreach with delegation offices that had growers featured in each video.

"Farmer engagement made the #SeeSoyHarvest effort possible," Seyfert says. "We wouldn't have been able to build that campaign or carry those messages to the Hill as effectively if the growers hadn't hit the pause button on their day and captured those videos that we could leverage, marry with our priority messages and send up to the Hill."

Seyfert says the videos generated a tremendous amount of positive feedback from congressional staffers and legislators alike. One of the first responses Seyfert received during the campaign was from a lawmaker who said they could practically smell the harvest through their computer screen. Seyfert was encouraged to keep the videos coming.

"That's what you want to hear from the policymakers and staffers you're trying to share your messages with," Seyfert contends.

ASA also distributed the videos to key figures within the Administration. And state soybean organizations shared the videos with their legislative delegations.

"From a government affairs standpoint," Seyfert says, "I just appreciate that we have been able to advocate for our growers despite all the challenges and that our growers were able to turn to us for effective representation."

Wendy Brannen, ASA's Senior Director of Marketing and Communications, said the #SeeSoyHarvest campaign numbers support what ASA can accomplish during challenging times. Engagements, or the

likes, clicks, watches, and shares, on ASA Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were right at 7,000, with the six videos having almost 400 views each—well above the organization's average video views.

Nearly 50 farmers from two-thirds of the major soy-producing states submitted videos.

"Christy and her team were able to utilize the topical videos as a platform for touching base with more than 100 Congressional offices, and they made an incredible 400 direct follow-ups on the heels of that great harvest footage being distributed through email. The pandemic did not slow them down a beat!" says Brannen.

The #SeeSoyHarvest recap numbers do not include the strong social media amplification throughout the soy states or state follow-ups with Congressional staff—or shares made directly by Congressional staff!

Focus on farmers

As the ASA COVID-19 task force gathered information on farmer concerns, it became readily apparent that stress and mental health issues were increasing in the countryside. Uncertainty over coronavirus impacts piled on top of existing farm-related financial stress following several challenging years in agriculture was taking its toll on many farmers.

"We could see it on our COVID video conference calls," Scott recalls. "We had people who were stressed beyond what they should have been. I would watch facial expressions and could tell the situation was weighing on them and that things were scarier than they should have been. But, when you cannot go to funerals, or you have to put off a wedding because of COVID, that's tough stuff. It puts a lot of stress on the normal life."

ASA recognized the need and developed the #SoyHelp effort to share information and resources with people who were under stress. The campaign provided links to mental health resources,



#SoyHelp

including suicide hotlines and crisis centers. Agriculture-specific resources were also made available, along with COVID-19-specific resources.

ASA conducted a #SoyHelp webinar as part of Farm Journal's Field Day in August and continues to pursue opportunities to share resources for seeking help and dissolve lingering stigmas related to farm stress, including an upcoming learning session cosponsored with Farm Credit at the now-virtual Commodity Classic.

Links to the #SoyHelp resources, including resources broken out by each state, are now permanently available on the ASA website at soygrowers.com.

A new way of doing business

Some changes necessitated by COVID-19 may be here to stay. Scott says as video conferencing is used more routinely, more meetings may take place virtually. The technology can be used for ASA meetings, interaction with overseas customers, even connecting with lawmakers in Washington D.C. Increased use of technology, including webinars to deliver vital information to

farmers is also likely in the future.

Recently, ASA partnered with USB on a series of free webinars promoted with trade media that addressed key issues including rural broadband, trade and market development, and infrastructure needs. Those virtual events drew participants—including new audiences for ASA—from across the nation.

ASA leaders say the organization will continue to be

creative in meeting the organization's mission of advocating for the nation's soybean farmers. Additional challenges are presented by building connections to a new administration, as well as working with new members of key congressional committees.

"We're keeping lines of communication open," Seyfert says. "That is our approach with the Administration on Capitol Hill, and our approach with states. Farmer engagement and open lines of communication are just so important in our effort to represent growers effectively in D.C."

Gordon says the changes brought about by COVID-19 are impacting how ASA is delivering on the organization's mission. But, he says, the commitment to speaking up for American soybean farmers will not waver.

"It pays tribute to a great staff and the farmer-leaders on the ASA board who show their leadership and true grit," Gordon says. "When things change, these farmer-leaders don't just sit back and lament what they can't do anymore, they pivot into different opportunities so we can focus on the next problem. It doesn't matter how we get there; the key is still to reach our goal."

Virtual Meetings



ISSUE update

By Christy Seyfert, ASA Executive Director
of Government Affairs

2021 Ushers in Leadership Changes in U.S. Government

Every two and four years, U.S. citizens have the opportunity to exercise an important constitutional right: the right to vote for the President and Vice President, Senators, and Representatives. In November, our democracy took another step in history and is now moving through transition of the federal government.

Inauguration Day ushers in a new Administration, led by President Biden and Vice President Harris. Their appointed personnel will officially move into roles at the White House and throughout various government agencies.

The Senate will begin reviewing President Biden's nominations for Cabinet roles, such as USDA Secretary, EPA Administrator, and USTR Ambassador. Committees will vet nominees and review relevant background documents supporting a nomination, and the nominees will participate in a series of meetings with committee members to earn their votes. Then, public hearings will be held prior to confirmation votes of the committees and full Senate on the president's nominees. This process will continue with other nominations, such as USDA Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary roles. The Administration will appoint personnel for other specific roles, such as Farm Service

Agency and Risk Management Agency Administrators, which do not require Senate confirmation.

In the Senate Agriculture Committee, the nominations process for USDA will be led by Senators John Boozman (R-AR) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). In addition to this personnel activity, this committee will be responsible for oversight of the current farm bill, which expires after the 2023 crop year, and laying the groundwork for the next farm bill.

While the House does not have a role in the nominations process, it will share responsibility for farm bill oversight and preparation for the next. New leaders of the House Agriculture Committee, Chairman David Scott (D-GA) and Ranking Member GT Thompson (R-PA), will lead these and other efforts.

In our democracy, in addition to voting, U.S. citizens have ongoing opportunities to exercise their political voices.

Supporting political candidates is one such way, and this can be achieved by contributing directly to candidate campaigns or through a political action committee, such as SoyPAC.

ASA is pleased to report that SoyPAC's election success rate was very strong in 2020. Of the 66 congressional candidates supported by SoyPAC in 2020, 97%

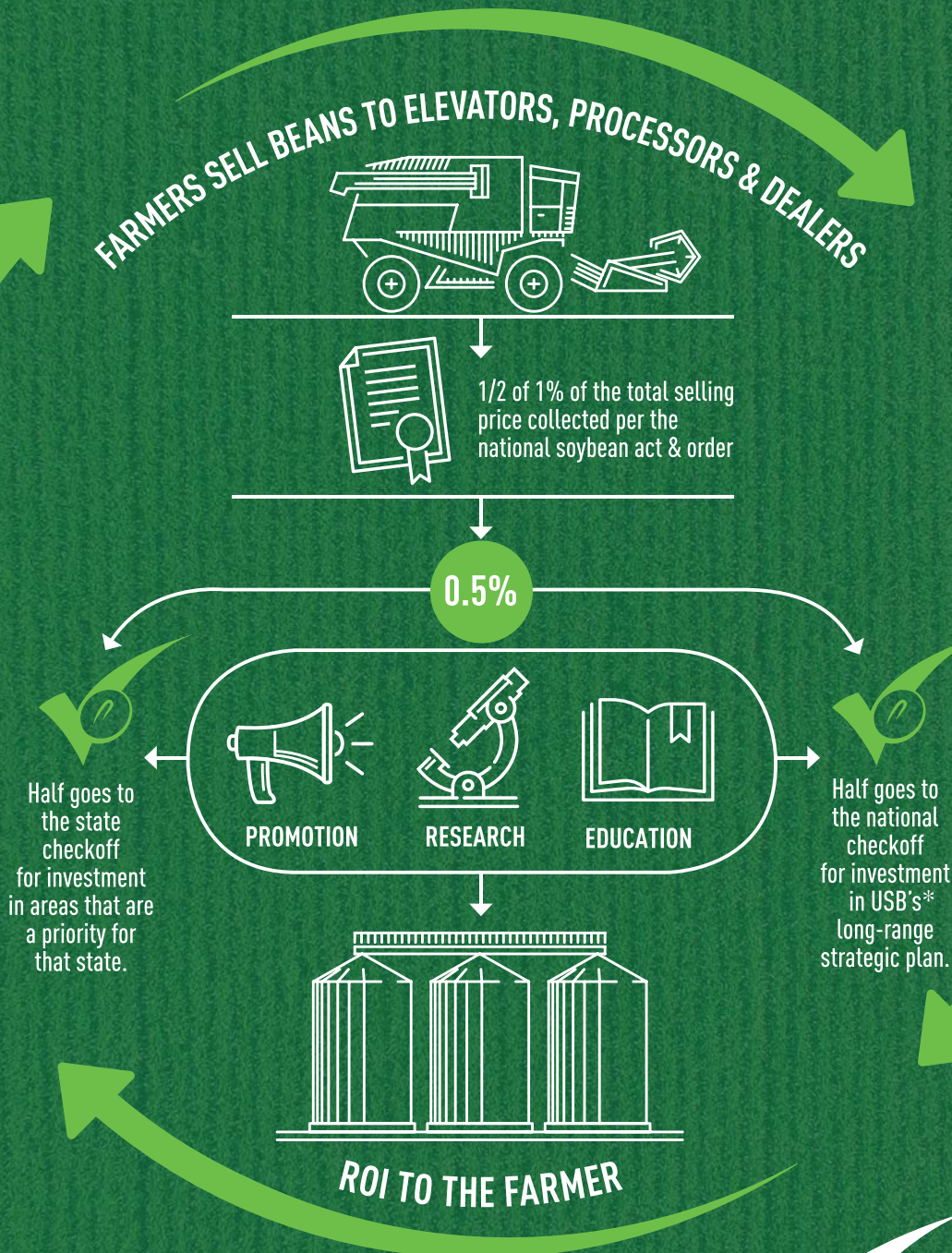
were re-elected to office—only two candidates were defeated. While this outstanding success rate will not always be replicated, a great deal of consideration is placed in developing SoyPAC priorities and in being good stewards of these resources contributed voluntarily by our members. More information can be found on a recently enhanced SoyPAC section of the ASA soygrowers.com website.

Sharing views directly with elected officials is another way to be politically active. ASA periodically asks for your engagement on specific issues. Taking the time to communicate with your members of Congress can make a difference—and did make a difference in the outcome of ASA's 2020 priority issue of increased federal investment in inland waterways infrastructure, which is important for the long-term competitiveness of U.S. agriculture. This provision made it across the finish line at year end with the help of the many soybean growers who responded to ASA's calls to action—and we thank you!

As the transition in the federal government progresses into 2021, issues will arise, and your engagement will be needed. Please join us in advancing ASA's mission by exercising your political voice!

FULL-CIRCLE RETURN

HERE'S HOW THE SOY CHECKOFF WORKS. The national soy checkoff was created as part of the 1990 Farm Bill. The Act & Order that created the soy checkoff requires that all soybean farmers pay into the soy checkoff at the first point of purchase. These funds are then used for promotion, research and education at both the state and national level.



* Led by 73 volunteer soybean farmers, the United Soybean Board (USB) invests and leverages soy checkoff dollars to MAXIMIZE PROFIT OPPORTUNITIES for all U.S. soybean farmers.

unitedsoybean.org



USB'S Response to COVID-19



Photo Credit: United Soybean Board

Almost every facet of our society has faced daily challenges surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. As representatives of American agriculture, the leaders and staff of the United Soybean Board (USB), through your soy checkoff, have committed to doing everything we can to provide a safe, high-quality product by continuing our work to support farm families and the soy supply chain. We're all connected in our livelihood and are dedicated to addressing the challenges we face together to serve U.S. consumers.

USB's staff has engaged our peer organizations across the various commodities and soybean value chain to communicate about overcoming disruptions to the U.S. food system and share important messages about the resiliency of hard-working farmers who serve as its foundation. All the while, USB continues to work closely with the U.S. Soybean Export Council, American Soybean Association and Qualified State Soybean Boards to

protect and minimize the impacts to our farmers and the soybean supply chain.

In the soybean market specifically, our farmers who grow, tend and harvest soybeans are the first essential partners in this process. But they are only one link in a robust supply chain. We also rely on truckers, processors, crushers, merchandisers, retailers and exporters to fulfill our duty. These people continue to work hard to adapt during these difficult and changing times, and to them we are grateful.

USB is also working to keep our farmers, key stakeholders and the media informed. We are continuing our work to support domestic and international programs to create opportunities for U.S.-grown soybeans. Our staff continues to analyze market conditions, examine trends, stay connected with the industry and build new relationships and programs to help ensure soy remains a reliable source of food, fiber, fuel and more

during, and after, this crisis.

We're continuously monitoring the situation and following guidance for best practices and safe work protocols from the proper authorities. USB has always placed a premium on face-to-face relationships and has fully adopted technology that helps us stay connected to farmers and other value chain partners. As our farmer-leaders work to ensure the implementation of programs to drive demand, we have embraced virtual organizational communications technology like never before.

We have made great progress in the new environment we encountered [in 2020], and we are resolute in doing all we can to keep pulling things in the right direction as we carry out the work of the soy checkoff. The global priority is to contain this outbreak, and our thoughts are with everyone who has been personally affected by COVID-19. Our industry has been tested time and time again, and

we are helping where we can and doing what we do best—providing a high-quality product for our customers and communities and collaborating with our partners to

find the best solutions.

We have continued farming, safely and effectively. Despite the year's challenges, consumers can rest assured knowing soybean

farmers harvested a strong crop to provide for the world's needs. And our soy checkoff is working for you.

Source: United Soybean Board

USB Convened Virtually to Elect New Leadership for 2021

United Soybean Board (USB) farmer-leaders elected Dan Farney from Morton, Illinois, as 2021 USB Chair and 10 other farmer-leaders to serve on the Executive Committee of USB at the annual meeting on Dec. 9-10. In addition, 19 directors were sworn in for new terms by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"What an honor to have been selected by my fellow farmers to lead the soy checkoff in 2021," said USB Chair Dan Farney. "I'm so proud of our accomplishments but look forward to going a step further to increase the value and preference for U.S. soy."

USB leadership, with oversight from USDA, guides the activity of the national soy checkoff in accordance with the strategy outlined by the 78-member board.

"As the stewards of the soy checkoff, we are committed to research and market development on behalf of all soybean farmers that strengthens the resilience of U.S. soybean production. This ranges from developing new customers abroad to building demand domestically through animal agriculture, human consumption, biodiesel and industrial uses for over 1,000 products on the market," Farney said.

USB continues to focus on three priority areas for investment: meal, oil and sustainability. During the board meeting and strategy sessions, USB directors considered market impacts and challenges in 2020 as well as opportunities that will affect soybean value into 2021.

"Soybean farmers are the definition of resilient," said USB CEO Polly Ruhland. "You can't knock them down, and you certainly can't count them out. The checkoff is a reflection of that spirit. Your dedicated farmer-leaders not only push the checkoff

forward, but they also rightly expect more from each successive project in which they invest."

Key successes for 2020 that were discussed included checkoff-funded research, planning, analysis and design to inform the dredging of the lower Mississippi River and opening new export channels for U.S. soybeans. Demand was driven domestically as well, with large companies such as Skechers and Goodyear committing to using more U.S. soybean oil than ever in their products. And companies creating new products in infrastructure, including soy-based asphalt and a soy oil-based concrete enhancer, took key steps forward to reach widespread adoption and use on roadways and bridges.

"It's been a difficult year in many ways, but soybean farmers have never strayed from their goal of providing a high-quality product to customers," said USB Past Chair Jim Carroll III from Arkansas. "I couldn't be more pleased with the work of our checkoff this past year in adapting during the pandemic to reach end users and

maximize profit opportunities in new and innovative ways."

The newly elected USB Executive Committee includes Ralph Lott II, Vice Chair (NY); David Iverson, Secretary (SD); Meagan Kaiser, Treasurer (MO); Mark Seib (IN); Rochelle Krusemark (MN); Tom Oswald (IA); Belinda Burrier (MD); Steve Reinhard (OH); Ed Lammers (NE); and Jim Carroll III, Past Chair (Ex Officio) (AR).

United Soybean Board's 78 volunteer farmer-directors work on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers to achieve maximum value for their soy checkoff investments. These volunteers invest and leverage checkoff funds in programs and partnerships to drive soybean innovation beyond the bushel and increase preference for U.S. soy. As stipulated in the federal Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soy checkoff.

Source: United Soybean Board



Farmer Dan Farney from Morton, Ill. was elected to be 2021 USB Chair. Photo Credit: United Soybean Board




unitedsoybean.org

KEEPING THE FUTURE OF SOYBEANS BRIGHT

From researching new uses for soybeans to identifying new markets for U.S. soy, the soy checkoff is working behind the scenes to create new opportunities and increase profits for soybean farmers. We're looking inside the bean, beyond the bushel and around the world to keep preference for U.S. soy strong. And it's helping make a valuable impact for soybean farmers like you.

See more ways the soy checkoff is maximizing profit opportunities for soybean farmers at unitedsoybean.org

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INDUSTRY

perspective

By Chris Crawford

Soy-related Industries Focus on Recovery

As America exits one of its most turbulent years in recent history and enters 2021 with cautious optimism, we asked representatives from soy-related industries how the COVID-19 pandemic affected their business in 2020 and what they see as the outlook for this year.

Soy Transportation Coalition



Mike Steenhoek, executive director, Soy Transportation Coalition

Mike Steenhoek, executive director of the Soy Transportation Coalition, Ankeny, Iowa, said once the pandemic hit and travel was restricted, the group advocated to relax federal and state regulations to allow for heavier truck configurations of soy.

With travel reduced, there was less gas and diesel revenue, and subsequently, less fuel tax generated, he said.

"This led to less money to improve roads and bridges," Steenhoek said. "Some states were more severely affected than others. States with registration fees remained more stable than those heavily dependent on fuel tax revenue."

As an example of general tax revenue lost, top soybean producer Illinois estimated it lost \$2.7 billion

in 2020 and projects a \$4.6 billion loss in 2021, according to the state's office of management and budget.

Additionally, Steenhoek said the COVID-related shutdown of freight from China to the United States led to fewer empty containers available to fill and ship back to Asia.

"Transportation has been wrestling with the pandemic in its own way," he added. "This seismic event has had a ripple effect throughout society."

As for agriculture in 2021, Steenhoek said there remains a robust export market that needs to be kept in motion.

"The year 2020 was obviously full of unexpected challenges," he said. "However, one encouraging development that has occurred for soybean farmers is the robust volume of exports to our international customers. As this hopefully continues into 2021, the Soy Transportation Coalition remains focused on ensuring our multi-modal transportation system is capable of connecting supply with demand."

American Seed Trade Association

When COVID hit U.S. shores, most seed companies already had conditioned seed in house and were prepared for deliveries at that time.

"Timing-wise, everyone was on time," said Andy LaVigne, president and CEO of the American Seed Trade Association, Alexandria, Virginia. "And I don't think our companies missed a beat."

LaVigne said the association advocated early on to designate the seed industry as an essential business.

Andy LAVIGNE



Andy LaVigne, president and CEO, American Seed Trade Association

It signed on to a pair of letters, along with the American Soybean Association and other agriculture groups, to the president and state governors asking them to follow the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's guidance that identified agriculture supply chain workers as "essential critical infrastructure workers."

However, making matters worse, the effects of the 2020 pandemic were compounded by the August derecho, which hit Iowa hardest.

Damage in Iowa affected an estimated 2.5 million acres of soybeans, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Risk Management Agency.

Luckily, South America offered increased seed production in 2020 that U.S. producers used to supplement what was lost, LaVigne said.

Seed transportation to and from South America proved more difficult during the pandemic, as commercial airlines were less available to carry seed.

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"We used all of the major carriers, like UPS and DHL, to move seed to South America and back again after harvesting," LaVigne said. "Our trading partners did a good job keeping seed movement consistent without hiccups."

This year, LaVigne said the seed industry looks to get back to some level of normalcy, which should begin with national COVID vaccine distribution.

"The seed industry requires intimate relationships," he said. "Seed company representatives like to walk fields with growers. So, we look forward to the ability to interact more closely with our farmer community."

"Our companies are ready to supply seed for spring plantings. Contact your seed company and plan now to have the varieties and traits you want for your farm. Early conversations with seed companies are key."

National Pork Producers Council



Rachel Gantz, director of communications, National Pork Producers Council

U.S. hog farmers were hit disproportionately hard by COVID, "a black swan event" for the entire economy, said Rachel Gantz, director of communications for the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), Des Moines, Iowa.

"After being at the tip of the trade retaliation spear for more than two years, U.S. pork producers were expected to have a profitable 2020," she said. "Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, another financial catas-

trophe for our nation's hog farmers."

As COVID spread, harvest facilities closed or dramatically reduced capacity, which created a backup of millions of hogs on farms across our country, Gantz said.

"Aside from the emotional toll, the financial crisis facing producers is devastating," she said.

The considerable surplus of pigs created by COVID-related disruptions in early 2020 led to hog values plummeting, and producers estimated a billion-dollar loss for 2020, Gantz said.

Pork producers continue to hurt and need relief to help weather this unprecedented crisis, she added, and is thankful language included in the just-passed COVID relief package includes funding to compensate hog farmers who were forced to euthanize animals due to COVID-related supply chain disruptions.

"The dual challenges of trade retaliation and the COVID pandemic have caused us to lose hog farmers of all sizes, and these funds in the COVID relief bill will provide much-needed help for pork producers to weather this difficult time," said NPPC President Howard "AV" Roth, a hog farmer from Wauzeka, Wisconsin.

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

At the beginning of the pandemic, beef exports and restaurant sales decreased, while domestic retail beef sales continued to grow, said Marty Smith, 2020 president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), Centennial, Colorado.

"Currently, everything is bouncing back, and we have seen our exports increase due to the removal of tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers as a result of the numerous trade agreements that have been signed in the past few years," Smith said. "We are finally on a level playing field in key Asian markets, and we are in a much better position to recover stronger and faster due to our strong market



Marty Smith, 2020 president, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

access to overseas markets."

When COVID-19 lockdowns began, he said the NCBA acted quickly, sending a letter to the "Big Four" packers requesting higher cash bids for fed cattle.

"We asked each of them to ensure their bids for fed cattle accurately reflected market demand and pricing conditions at the consumer level during the pandemic," said Smith.

In 2020, the association also successfully helped get agricultural enterprises included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which resulted in the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) being released. This program included \$19 billion in direct support to agricultural producers.

"NCBA is still working to eliminate CFAP's remaining disparities and deliver to our nation's ranchers and farmers the support they so badly need in the next coronavirus package," Smith said.

Finally, in early December, NCBA worked closely with the Department of Transportation and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to get another extension to FMCSA's COVID-19 hours-of-service emergency declaration, until Feb. 28.

"This is a big win for our producers and livestock haulers, ensuring that grocery store shelves are well stocked with beef going forward."

WISHH & Strategic Partners Reach 22 Countries in 2020

WISHH and its strategic partners faced unprecedented challenges to connect trade and development across global market systems in 2020. Despite COVID-19, travel bans, and Cambodia's floods, WISHH worked to build market systems that can meet the rising demand for protein required for nutritious and affordable human foods and animal feeds in in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

"We even achieved some new milestones in our activities," says WISHH Chairman Gerry Hayden, a Kentucky soybean grower. "WISHH reached 22 countries that are either developing or emerging markets."

"For the seventh year in a row, WISHH leveraged every \$1 of QSSB funding it received into \$6 of outside funding to support the use of soy in animal or human feeds," adds Hayden. "We thank the 23 QSSBs that supported our work, as well as USB. WISHH also benefited from U.S. Department of Agriculture and other outside funding."

Highlights of WISHH's 2020 work include:

In Asia, Cambodia's COVID-19 economic recovery priorities elevated WISHH's USDA-funded Commercialization of Aquaculture for Sustainable Trade (CAST) Cambodia project as a valuable partner. The government prioritized farm-raised fish as a protein-rich food for the health of Cambodia's growing population and repeatedly included CAST in its initiatives. CAST also launched a new aquaculture association in September, and its membership already reached 200 fish farmers, feed manufacturers and distributors, as well as other aquaculture industry representatives. The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry



Cambodian aquaculture leaders witnessed the benefits of soy-based feed in Cambodia's first in-pond raceway technology that WISHH demonstrated with support of the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council. The hatchery owners report they had never seen red tilapia grow as quickly as the ones in the raceway. Photo Credit: Jim Hershey

and Fisheries and more than 100 other key Cambodian aquaculture leaders witnessed the benefits of soy-based feed in Cambodia's first in-pond raceway technology that WISHH demonstrated with support from the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council. The hatchery owners report they had never seen red tilapia grow as quickly as the ones in the raceway.

In Latin America, WISHH and key food and beverage manufacturers did not let COVID-19 stop progress toward opportunities identified in WISHH's 2019 USDA Agricultural Trade Promotion-funded market assessment. WISHH's 2019 surveys revealed that nearly half of Central American and Dominican Republic key food and beverage manufacturing executives would invest their own capital into equipment and expand their businesses if WISHH could provide them with technical assistance/training and outline the cost benefits of incorporating soy protein ingredients. Early 2020 work concentrated on expanding the regional key account database,

adding 58 mid-to-large food and beverage manufacturers that acknowledged their interest in developing new products or line extensions that contained soy protein ingredients. When COVID-19 restrictions blocked travel and more, WISHH launched virtual technical assistance, supporting three times the number of companies typically served using the in-person training approach.

In Africa, WISHH made progress on its strategy to improve local fish feed production and processing in Africa by having strategic partners from four African countries trained virtually on improved feed production. WISHH's evaluation team transitioned an in-person household survey to the phones to complete WISHH's 2020 egg consumption survey in Ghana as part of the USDA-funded AMPLIFIES project. As demand for eggs grows, demand rises for soy as an important poultry feed ingredient. WISHH's prior years of trainings, as well as 2020 virtual support, helped strategic partners in Ghana and Uganda to adapt and even maintain production levels for soyfoods or feeds.

WOMEN in agriculture

By Barb Baylor Anderson

More Advocacy, Less Adversity for Women in Agriculture

Women in agriculture find they are not only increasingly advocates for their industry, but they also face less adversity than in the past being female in a male-dominated field. Women realize as their numbers increase and roles diversify, they contribute to agriculture in myriad ways. And that includes women who work directly in soybean production and those in related careers.

Women make inroads into traditional farm roles

Sixty years ago, farm wives could be found almost exclusively in the kitchen, raising children and preparing meals for hired hands. But the role of farm women has been slowly evolving, and more women are found doing the same daily tasks today as their male counterparts.

The U.S. Ag Census reports 1.2 million women in 2017 accounted for 36% of total farmers. More than half of all farms, 56%, had a female producer. Women farmers are slightly younger at an average 57.7 years old, more likely to be beginning farmers and live on the farm they operate versus male farmers. They also have increasing influence. Female producers are most involved in day-to-day decisions, recordkeeping and financial management.

Female-operated farms sold \$148 billion in agricultural products in 2017, with 49% in crop sales and 51% in livestock and livestock product sales. Female-operated farms represented 38% of U.S. ag sales and 43% of U.S. farmland—up 27% and 23% respectively from 2012. Women were responsible for the management of 388 million U.S. acres.

Young, full-time farmer

Trish Cunningham Levering is one of those female farmers. She produces corn and soybeans near Prospect, Ohio, while sharing equipment with her parents who farm nearby.

“I grew up on a diversified farm with crops, hogs

and cattle. I am fortunate as an only child to have always been my dad’s right-hand person,” she says. “I watched my mom and aunt drive combines when I was little, and I was always treated as an equal when I started buying and selling inputs and crops and servicing equipment. My involvement was viewed as normal.”

After studying animal science and ag economics at Oklahoma State University, she returned to Ohio. She worked as a seed salesperson before deciding to farm full-time.

“I have a six-year-old daughter, Blair. She asks questions and wants to know all things about the farm.

She used to ride along on my seed sales calls, too,” says Levering. “My message is that if she sees me do it, it must be normal.

Hopefully, the next generation will have less reason to question who is a farmer. In some ways, it is more difficult to be a young farmer than female.”

In addition to farming, Levering serves as chair for the Ohio Farm Service Agency State Committee, a historically male role. She has led operations for the five-person board since 2018 and is an at-large young leader for the Ohio Soybean Association, as well.

Her Advice: “Never stop

learning,” Levering says. “Work to have a seat at the table if that is what you want. It’s ok to have a hands-on role in farming. You must expect the same opportunities as men and not be intimidated by others. Be comfortable with yourself.”



Trish Cunningham Levering is involved in every aspect of operating her farm near Prospect, Ohio.

“I watched my mom and aunt drive combines when I was little, and I was always treated as an equal when I started buying and selling inputs and crops and servicing equipment.”

– Trish Cunningham Levering, Prospect, Ohio



Active farm management partner

Pat Swanson farms near Ottumwa in southeast Iowa with her husband, Don, Don's brother, and both of their families. And while she doesn't have the direct responsibilities of crop or beef production, she is an active partner on farm management decisions for the operation.

"I do the bookkeeping and provide marketing input," says Swanson. "It is vital for our farm to have family goals and be on the same page to succeed. For us, that means my role is primarily in the financial decisions, but I move equipment and hold gates, too."

Swanson grew up on a farm in northern Iowa and began weekend farming with her husband more than 30 years ago. They eventually gave up full-time jobs and began raising corn and soybeans and managing their cow-calf and feedlot enterprises. They also started Son Risk Management, a crop insurance agency, which has been mostly her day-to-day responsibility.

"We have a full-time office manager for the crop insurance agency now, so that gives me some flexibility to be more involved in the farming operation and as an active advocate for the ag industry," she says. "Since we use conservation practices like no-till, cover crops, terraces, buffer strips and waterways, I work on how we can capitalize these improvements and secure cost-share opportunities with the soil and water conservation district."



On her family farm in Ottumwa in southeast Iowa, Pat Swanson does bookkeeping, provides marketing input and helps around the farm.

"Since we use conservation practices, I work on how we capitalize these improvements and secure cost-share opportunities with the soil and water conservation district."

- Pat Swanson, Ottumwa, Iowa

Swanson also is passionate about telling their farm story to consumers and legislators. She began as an ag advocate with Ag in the Classroom and CommonGround and later became a district director for the Iowa Soybean Association and member of the ASA Agriculture Communications Team. She serves on the Wapello County 4-H Foundation and the Iowa Farm Service Agency State Committee. Most recently, she was named to the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) board.

"Ten years ago, it was eye opening to be one of the only women in the room at a farm meeting. That is slowly changing," she says. "My son Jake is the Iowa governor's ag policy adviser and still helps on the farm. My daughter Erica works in college student affairs with an eye on a possible return to the farm. I didn't think that would happen, but it warms my heart that it may."

Her Advice: "Prove you know the issues. Educate yourself. Read and ask questions," Swanson says. "Talk to other women in ag and find a mentor that can help you. And above all else, be successful not because you are female but because you want to be successful."

The U.S. Ag Census reports 1.2 million women in 2017 accounted for 36% of total farmers. More than half of all farms, 56%, had a female producer.

WOMEN in agriculture soy faces

By Barb Baylor Anderson

Taking on the Diverse Challenges of Agriculture

Addressing the challenges that come with careers in agriculture today is less about being female than it is about finding a fitting role. Discovering the right niche or passion can fuel a career, whether in agriculture advocacy, agronomy and conservation, or farm business management.

Farm and ag advocate

Kristin Weeks Duncanson is as comfortable in a D.C. lawmaker's office as she is helping manage her family's Minnesota farm. And she fills in the rest of her time serving in leadership roles of various community and agriculture organizations to advocate for related causes.

"You have to always be learning," says Duncanson. "And I have a very supportive family."

Duncanson is an owner and partner of Highland Family Farms near Mapleton, Minnesota. She and her husband, Pat, raise corn, soybeans, small grains and hogs, in addition to rye for a local distillery. Two of their four children work for the farm.

Duncanson also is a consultant for K-Coe Isom, a business, accounting and sustainability strategy firm, where she currently advises on transformational change in crop insurance, climate and conservation issues to demonstrate how farmers can be part of the long-term solutions.

"My background is in political science and communications. I started out 40 years ago doing public policy work in D.C. for a Minnesota senator on the ag, nutrition and forestry committee," she says. "I came back to Minnesota with my husband some 30 years ago to farm."

Duncanson at that time took a job in dairy feed sales, the first woman hired by the company. "Sure, there were challenges as a woman in agriculture," she says. "Farmers tested my knowledge. I always made sure I had all the information I needed. I prefer to be overprepared."

Over the years, Duncanson has volunteered as an advisor at the Meridian Institute's Agree project and

is a former and first woman chair of the Minnesota AgriGrowth Council. She led Feeding Our Communities Partners, as well as served as the first female chair for the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association. She is a trustee with the Upper Midwest Nature Conservancy.

"Sustainability and commodity board leadership are both great areas of opportunity for women in agriculture," she says. "In D.C., it is often to your advantage to be female because you stand out and get remembered. But you also must be ready to do your job as well as you can."

Her Advice: "You have to know your stuff," Duncanson says. "Determine what you want to champion and do your homework. Be resilient and always be true to yourself."



In addition to consulting work on strategies for change in crop insurance and climate and conservation issues, Kristin Weeks Duncanson is an owner and partner in her family farm near Mapleton, Minnesota.

Plant geneticist and researcher

Joyce Berger-Doyle wears many ag career hats. She farms with her husband Brad and son Cody. She is the research coordinator for the Mid-South Soybean Board, a Ph.D. plant geneticist and breeder and sometimes seed salesperson for their family's Eagle Seed Company in Weiner, Arkansas. She also does private research under the Eagle Research, LLC, moniker.

She says none of those jobs seem to have ever been affected by the fact she is female.

"I grew up in farming and my parents encouraged me to do what I loved," she says. "I watched my mom run the seed company and raise five children at the same time. She also worked with my dad helping to breed plants. She learned how to do it all."

Doyle earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from Arkansas State. She then changed course with a master's degree in agronomy. Her Ph.D. was done at the University of Arkansas under Pengyin Chen, Ph.D., who now heads soybean breeding at the University of Missouri.

"You have to work very hard and be interdisciplinary.

You have to work very hard and be interdisciplinary. Farmers don't do just one thing."

- Joyce Berger-Doyle, Weiner, Arkansas

Farmers don't do just one thing," she says.

One of Doyle's current research projects involves ASA and a grant from the Walton Family Foundation. The group is highly interested in keeping the Mississippi River clean, so Doyle is exploring agricultural contributions. Specifically, she is evaluating what cover crops work best in traditionally wet Arkansas soils to keep dirt out of the waterways. She is testing a number of cover crop seed blends for aerial application and recruiting farmers in the state to participate.

"With nearly one million women farmers, now is the best time to encourage women to go into farming. There are many job opportunities for hard workers," she says.

Her Advice: "Anything is hard at first," Doyle says. "Be resourceful and learn as you go. Find someone who is good at what you want to do and ask them to be your mentor."

Family enterprise HR specialist

Elizabeth Jack grew up in Jackson, Mississippi, getting her undergraduate degree in mathematics and psychology from Ole Miss and an MBA from Millsaps College. Little did she know, working for a Mississippi Senator following graduation would lead to her future in agriculture.

"I met Jeremy when we were both working in Senator Thad Cochran's office. We married and moved to the Mississippi Delta. Jeremy planned to work on his family's farm. My grandparents farmed close by. I had been in the area and seen the Jack farm but did not know them," she says.

Jeremy now heads the family's Silent Shade Planting Co. and trucking company, Willard Jack Trucking, near Belzoni, Miss. They grow 11,000 acres of irrigated soybeans, cotton, rice and corn. Jeremy's sister, Stacie Koger, and

parents, Willard and Laura Lee Jack, are also involved.

Elizabeth worked for a local bank for six years before joining the farm. "When I was in HR at the bank, the farm grew from 3,500 acres to 11,000. Jeremy knew they could use my skills," she says. "I do HR for both of the Silent Shade enterprises, public relations and landlord relations and coordinate our safety and compliance programs for the farm and the trucking business."

Since she was new to agriculture, Jeremy suggested she attend TEPAP (The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers), which teaches advanced agribusiness skills to attendees.

"In human resources, I was used to many women being part of professional development meetings, and TEPAP was 95% men," she recalls. "It was challenging to network, but Stacie and I saw Jeremy participating in a peer group, and we decided we could do the same."

About seven years ago, the pair started a group with six other women from Indiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Ohio, and Kentucky that all work in various ag roles. Members of the group range in age from 27-47 with 5,000 to 20,000 acres of row crops per farm. They meet in a central location each January and travel to one of their farms during the summer.

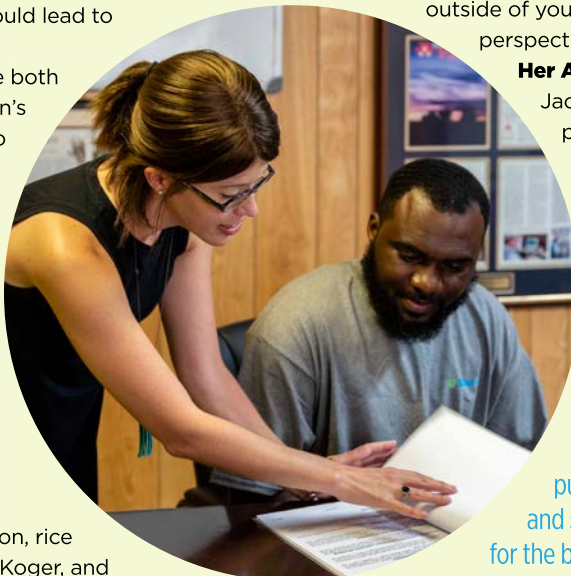
"Our peer group is an opportunity to get together and be very transparent with each other and compare notes on family farm issues, financials, insurance, using social media and more," she says. "It has helped us a lot. Sometimes on a family farm, you don't want to discuss specifics with a neighbor. Through a peer group outside of your area, it is easier to get other perspectives."

Her Advice: "Love what you do," Jack says. "Take advantage of professional development and bring your knowledge to the table. Network with others to keep up with a changing industry."

Elizabeth Jack handles human resources for her family's farm operation and trucking company near Belzoni, Mississippi. She also handles public relations, landlord relations and safety and compliance programs for the businesses.



A researcher with a Ph.D. in plant genetics and breeding, Joyce Berger-Doyle also helps on the family farm and with the family seed business.



WOMEN in agriculture soy forward

By Barb Baylor Anderson

Annie's Project Empowers Women in All Aspects of Agriculture

When Tina Wibberg's husband Bernie died in a farm accident in 2014, there was a succession plan in place. The couple had formally prepared for the farm's future.

"Annie's Project helped us start on what we would like to happen to our farm once we chose to step away from it full time," says Tina. "Little did we know that several years later my husband would pass away. Every topic covered by Annie's Project gave me the tools I needed to carry on the family farm legacy with our children, who were 13, 15 and 24 at the time."

Tina and her sons continue to farm, raising soybeans, corn, sunflowers and wheat. They also run a 60-head cow-calf operation and produce alfalfa and hay forage.

Created in 2003 by University of Illinois Extension



Tina Wibberg at work on her farm.

educator Ruth Hambleton, Annie's Project is named for Ruth's mother, Annie Kohlhagen Fleck, who took over managing her family's farm. Today, the nonprofit organization provides programs to strengthen female roles in five critical farm risk management areas:

financial, human resource, legal, marketing and production.

"We got involved more than a decade ago when my late husband noticed a flyer at our local Farm Service Agency. Through the program, we talked about what was working on the farm, what wasn't and where we saw ourselves in the future," says Tina. "The course opened our lines of communication. We created a business plan, and we implemented a more formal farm accounting system. We began treating the family operation as a true business."



In the first family photo taken after her husband died following a farm accident, Tina Wibberg (center) poses with her children and the first crop of sunflowers they grew on their own.

“Agriculture can be a lonely occupation. Through Annie’s Project, women become empowered. They learn they can get to the other side of farming challenges.”

- Karisha Devlin, co-CEO of Annie’s Project and University of Missouri Extension field specialist

Annie’s Project has expanded into 35 states and is exploring opportunities in U.S. territories and other countries. More than 16,000 women in farming and ranching have participated to date.

“All ages and all roles in agriculture are involved. Some women are producers, some are married to producers, some work in ag jobs and others inherited a farm,” says Karisha Devlin, co-CEO of Annie’s Project and University of Missouri Extension field specialist. “I am married to a farmer and I learn something new every class I teach because the groups are so diverse.”

The common ground, she adds, is all participants seek resources and networking opportunities.

“Annie’s Project is a different environment from other farm meetings. They are women-centric,” says Doris Mold, Annie’s Project co-CEO, president of Sunrise Agricultural Associates, LLC, and a farm operator. “More women identify as farmers and perform farm management activities. In our classes, women support women and boost their self-confidence. They are more comfortable and engaged asking questions among peers instead of being one of a handful of women in a room.”

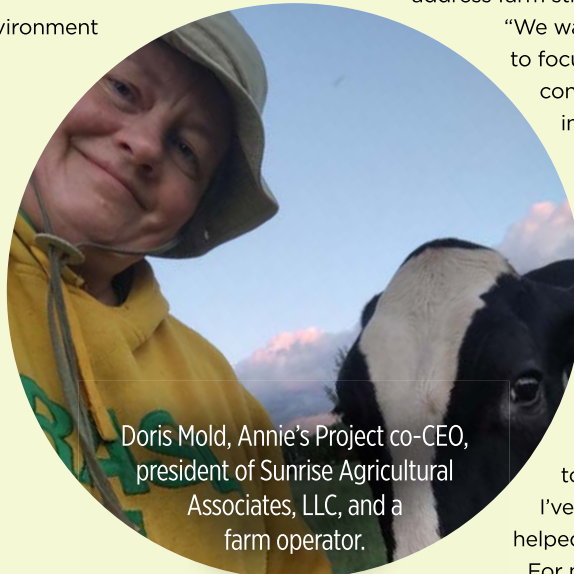


Karisha Devlin, co-CEO of Annie’s Project and University of Missouri Extension field specialist.

While classes have traditionally provided in-person education, Devlin says they were already transitioning to some virtual programs to reach even more women when the pandemic struck.

“Agriculture can be a lonely occupation. Through Annie’s Project, women become empowered. They learn they can get to the other side of farming challenges,” says Devlin.

Mold adds programs nationwide have created offshoot groups for marketing, succession and transition planning, financial analysis and practical, hands-on equipment operation. Annie’s also partners with Cultivating Resiliency for Women in Agriculture to address farm stress issues.



Doris Mold, Annie’s Project co-CEO, president of Sunrise Agricultural Associates, LLC, and a farm operator.

“We want participants to learn to focus on what is within their control and connect them to information to help weather the storms of stress,” says Mold. “We also develop programming to encourage more women to get involved in commodity, farm group and rural leadership.”

“The topics presented by Annie’s Project are vitally important to all agricultural families.

I’ve seen how much they helped mine,” says Tina Wibberg. For more information or to

find programs in specific areas, visit anniesproject.org.

“Women are more comfortable and engaged asking questions among peers instead of being one of a handful of women in a room.”

- Doris Mold, Annie’s Project co-CEO, president of Sunrise Agricultural Associates, LLC, and a farm operator

#SOY SOCIAL

ASA Takes the Hill to the Field

Since farmers could not visit the Hill this fall, ASA brought the Hill to the field! Launching Oct. 6 with outreach to ASA contacts on Capitol Hill, the #SeeSoyHarvest campaign showcased harvest

video captured by soy farmers across the growing region, along with key industry statistics and information related to soy priorities. The social campaign was a success due to enthusiastic

engagement from growers, soy states, industry partners and Members of Congress. Check out some of the posts from Congress supporting #SeeSoyHarvest below!



Rep Rick Crawford @RepRickCrawford · 4m
It's great to see @ASA_Soybeans bringing the harvest season to all of us on social media. Be sure to check out their page for more #seesoyharvest posts.

American Soybean Association @ASA_Soybeans · 2h
While we remain socially distanced and unable to meet on the Hill, ASA is taking the Hill and others to the farm! Watch this video to #SeeSoyHarvest & learn how Congress can help ensure U.S. soy's economic success. #AgPolicy #Harvest2020 ow.ly/jTx50BNctS



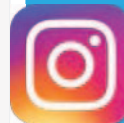
Senator John Boozman @JohnBoozman · 10m
I'm proud to support #Arkansas soybean producers. Soybeans are our state's largest row crop and I will continue to support policies that provide certainty to these growers.

American Soybean Association @ASA_Soybeans · 20h
Thank you for coming along on our virtual tour to #SeeSoyHarvest this fall! Call on Arkansas & other soy growers to learn more about the important policy issues impacting U.S. farmers. ow.ly/W9z50C3Obq #Harvest2020 #AgPolicy @JohnBoozman @SenTomCotton @RepRickCrawford



Senator Todd Young @SenToddYoung · 27m
Harvest is in full swing for soybean farmers & @ASA_SoyBeans is posting a series of videos with growers from across soybean producing states like Indiana. Check out their page for more #seesoyharvest posts like the one below featuring Hoosier Kendell Culp's farm in Rensselaer.

American Soybean Association @ASA_Soybeans · Oct 8
#SeeSoyHarvest with Indiana farmers and other growers to learn how soy "makes the grade" when it comes to jobs, wages and revenues. @SenToddYoung @SenatorBraun @RepJimBaird @Indiana_Soy ow.ly/930Y50BNdxW



Follow the American Soybean Association on:



@ASA_Soybeans



/AmericanSoybeanAssociation



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1920 (L to R) Brothers and pioneer soybean growers Taylor, Finis and Noah Fouts on their Soyland farms in Camden, Ind., on Sept. 3, 1920, at the “First Corn Belt Soybean Field Day” where ASA was founded.

2020 (L to R) John Heisdorffer, immediate past ASA chairman, Bill Gordon, ASA president and Davie Stephens, ASA chairman

FROM SOYLAND TO CAPITOL HILL

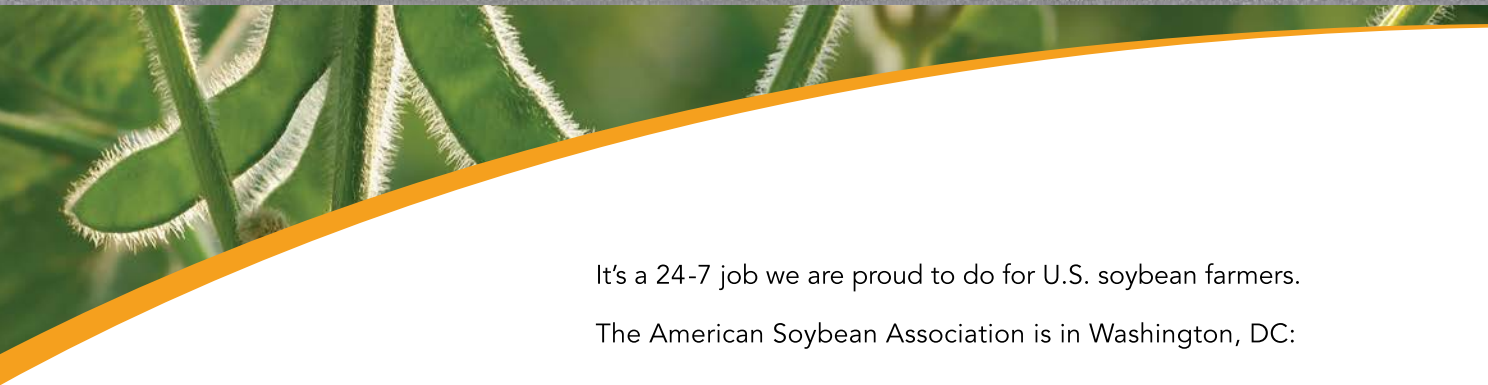
A century of growing the U.S. soybean industry and advocating for soybean farmers

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Policy makers take notice of ASA.



It's a 24-7 job we are proud to do for U.S. soybean farmers.

The American Soybean Association is in Washington, DC:

- Protecting soybean interests in the farm bill
- Fighting against burdensome EPA regulations
- Growing soybean trade opportunities

That's why ASA matters.

