

1964 - 2024

Illinois

Field & Bean

A PUBLICATION OF THE ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION



Elevating Farmer Voices

THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS ISSUE

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Visit us online at www.isoy.org/newsroom/illinois-field-bean/.



COVER: Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) works to elevate farmer voices, increase the profitability of Illinois soybean farmers, and protect your freedom to operate through legislative advocacy, public policy initiatives and education. ISG is your top advocate, working to eliminate barriers and prohibit policymakers from negatively affecting your business' bottom line. This issue of Illinois Field & Bean highlights the policies and legislative priorities ISG is working to advance in the best interest of soybean farmers.

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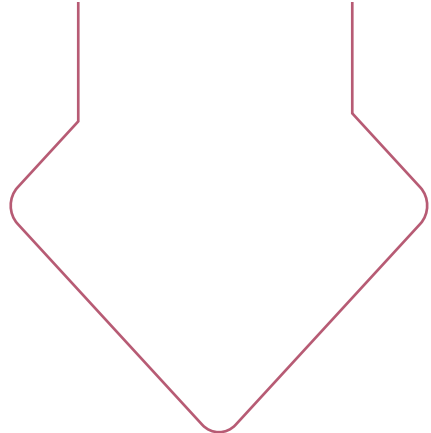
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Checkoff vs. Non-Checkoff

As an Illinois farmer, every bushel of soybeans that I sell from my farm invests one half of one percent of the price into the soybean checkoff. A checkoff is, by definition, a specified amount of money collected from a group to support a mutual cause determined by said group. The soybean checkoff was founded in Illinois 60 years ago with the mission of improving farmer profitability, expanding research, sharing information and protecting farmers' freedom to operate.

The checkoff, paired with investments by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is opening foreign markets for trade and expanding the sale of our soybeans around the globe. Amazingly, two out of three rows of soybeans grown in Illinois are sold in the global market. As the highest-volume producer of U.S. soybeans for several years, Illinois literally feeds the world.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been invested to increase the productivity and nutrient content of the soybean varieties we grow today. Soybean yields and nutrient value as a feedstock have improved dramatically. Throughout the year, there are many ways the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) shares information with farmers. ***ILSoy.org*** is full of tools, such as agronomic advice, educator resources, the Fast 5 Weekly Update, Illinois Field & Bean magazine and the Bean There Blog, which are always available, free of charge.

There is another partner of ISA that works tirelessly to promote agriculture, Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG), with its state and federal Political Action Committees (PACs). There is one huge difference between the Growers and the Association, and that is how they receive and spend money. ISG is 100 percent funded by voluntary membership dues, sponsorships and donations. ISG advocates for Illinois farmers directly in Springfield and Washington, D.C. Their top priority is making sure farmers can successfully grow and sell soybeans without unnecessary or harmful government rules and regulations.

By sending farmer leaders to the Hill in D.C. and the Capitol in Springfield, ISG works to educate legislators, government officials and policymakers on the challenges farmers face. There are over 12 million people living in Illinois, but only 43,000 of them are soybean farmers. By becoming an ISG member, your voice is not only louder but more powerful.

ISG hosts the Voice for Soy voter registration site to simplify contacting the people who represent you. This makes it easy for them to know when an important issue in agriculture is being discussed. It allows you to share your perspective on current legislation in real time. ISG also brings together industry partners through the Soy Partner Pledge program. Aligning the entire agriculture industry to support soy and its over \$5 billion market is important to your farm's bottom line and our state's economy. In addition to having an exceptional staff ready to answer any question you may have, ISG keeps you current on policy and its impact on what you do through the Policy Blog on ***ILSoy.org***.



JOHN LUMPE | CEO |
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

60 Years Later

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA), it is fitting to reflect on the many milestones our organization has achieved through the leadership of Illinois soybean farmers and supporters up and down the soy value chain. We have carved out progress together.

Over the past six decades, ISA has grown to be the largest soybean-focused ag organization in Illinois. Our team shows up every day to work for the best interests of our farmers, to create new opportunities and markets for soy from Illinois, and maximize value for checkoff and member investments. Our unwavering mission is to uphold the interests of Illinois soybean producers through promotion, advocacy, research and education. We focus our programs and initiatives in three key areas: Soybean Production, Market Development, and Government Relations. We strive to be the trusted partner of Illinois soybean farmers to ensure profitability now and for future generations.

The ISA Board and staff have worked together to grow the ISA team across the organization. We have built a strong bench of industry experts and passionate advocates for agriculture who stand at the ready to collaborate with other interested groups.

We've developed an internal Agronomy team that is working with many in-state researchers and on-farm trial networks. They ensure Illinois soybean farmers continue to have access to cutting edge and relevant information to support their farms. Our Market Development team is focused on supporting farmers both domestically and abroad to realize new uses and markets for Illinois soybeans. And our Government Relations team works directly on achieving better legislative and regulatory outcomes for Illinois farmers.

So what can farmers expect from the ISA in the next 60 years? More!

We will continue investing in production research to advance on-farm profitability and sustainability. We know our growers' abilities to operate freely and effectively depend on robust data that addresses the challenges and opportunities ahead.

ISA will continue to provide regional agronomic outreach, support and education to farmers across the state through On-Farm Field Days, our Soy Envoy Program, Soybean Summit and online farm management tools.

Through our Soy Innovation Center, we'll continue collaborating with industry experts to discover new uses and innovations for Illinois soy. We will continue to grow markets far and wide, including livestock and biodiesel producers here at home and buyers and end users in Europe and Southeast Asia.

Transportation and infrastructure will remain a focus. We understand that efficient and reliable transportation is essential for maintaining the competitiveness of Illinois soybeans in the global market.

And we will continue to champion legislative work that safeguards and advances our industry. This includes advocating for higher blends of biodiesel, ensuring that our state remains at the forefront of renewable energy initiatives.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the many people and partners who have influenced our success over the last 60 years, ensuring our sustainability well into the future:

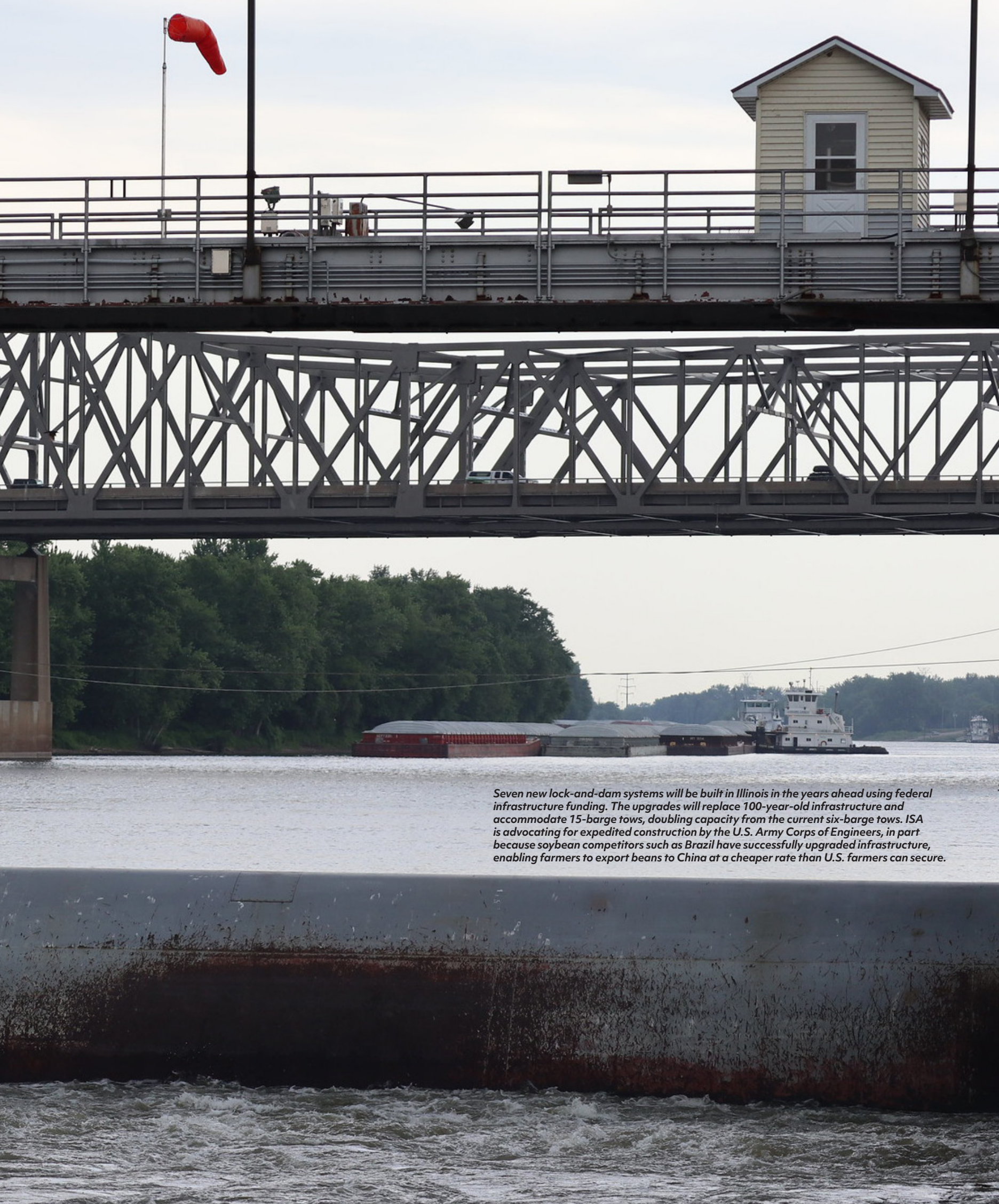
To the farmer leaders who have served on our Board of Directors over the years, your leadership and vision have guided us through decades of change, innovation and growth. Thank you for your service.

To our mission-minded ISA staff, who perform their work daily with expertise, passion and excellence, thank you for your dedication.

To our collaborators and industry partners represented across the 60 congratulatory ads in this special issue of Illinois Field & Bean Magazine, thank you for your contributions which drive advancements that benefit not just our farmers but the entire agricultural community.

And to the grassroots soybean farmers who never hesitate to step forward when hands and voices are needed, thank you for your hard work, your resiliency and your example. You are at the very center of our enduring success.





Seven new lock-and-dam systems will be built in Illinois in the years ahead using federal infrastructure funding. The upgrades will replace 100-year-old infrastructure and accommodate 15-barge tows, doubling capacity from the current six-barge tows. ISA is advocating for expedited construction by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in part because soybean competitors such as Brazil have successfully upgraded infrastructure, enabling farmers to export beans to China at a cheaper rate than U.S. farmers can secure.

A Legacy Of Legislative Wins

Farmer-led ISA advances soy biodiesel, river transport and research

Putting points on the soybean scoreboard hasn't always been as straightforward as scoring a touchdown. In fact, over the past 60 years of Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) advocacy, securing beneficial legislation has consistently required a strategic balance of offense and defense—underpinned by a single priority group of agricultural leaders.

"We have invested continuously in the state on research that influences policy that informs farmer decisions, and all of that research has been farmer-led, farmer-approved and farmer-guided," explains Corey Lacey, Ph.D., ISA's Environmental Policy Manager. "Either by our farmer board or by the stakeholders that are sharing input. That's really important to understand."

So in recognition of that farmer leadership—and in conjunction with ISA's 60th anniversary this fall—this article provides a few gameday snapshots. The past several decades have presented numerous policy wins and a few challenges in the areas of biodiesel, soybean research and river transportation.

Here are just a few of those highlight-reel moments, as described by Lacey and David Kubik, Biofuels and Trade Policy Manager at ISA.

Biofuels Boost Economy Even As Blends Hit Resistance

When the Illinois soybean biofuels story captures the imagination of an urban Chicago legislator, you know you're onto something. Kubik

experienced that firsthand several years ago while hosting an event in partnership with the Chicago Park District. The district uses biodiesel "to its fullest" across its fleet and is a longtime member of the B20 Club—made up of municipalities, businesses and other organizations using biodiesel to power their transportation needs.

The timing of the event couldn't have been more challenging. Chicago elections were underway, and seven other invited legislators stopped by to say they couldn't visit. They were too busy knocking on doors to help their aldermen secure votes.

But that didn't stop Rep. Eva-Dina Delgado (3rd District) of the Illinois House of Representatives.

"We got that 1:1 time where we were able to answer all of her questions," Kubik recalls. Inspired, she wound up sponsoring biofuels legislation benefiting Illinois farmers. "Telling our story to one person, if it's the right person, can have a huge impact."

The origin story of soy-based biodiesel dates back well over 100 years. In those days, people used vegetable oil to power diesel engines, Kubik explains. Eventually, the crop checkoffs got together to make biodiesel from soybean oil compatible with today's engines.

Public policy followed to promote this new fuel. The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) was implemented under the administration of President George W. Bush, and Illinois began to offer a biodiesel blender's tax credit.

Soybean lore also holds that 20 years ago, creative Illinois legislators added a biodiesel sales tax incentive for the state into a capital bill to win the favor of downstate Democrats, whose farmer constituents would benefit.

"That really helped promote the biodiesel industry in Illinois because now we're one of the first states to have stackable credits," Kubik explains, "meaning that we're utilizing both credits from the federal government and the state government to promote the industry."

Now, those who sold biodiesel at the specified blend rate were exempt from paying state sales taxes, Kubik says. Today, Illinois enjoys the No. 3 biggest market for biodiesel at 250 million gallons consumed per year. It held the No. 1 spot for a while, eventually unseated by California and its low-carbon fuel standard, and also by Texas with its massive population of drivers.

The economic benefits extend to farmers and rural Illinois broadly. Biodiesel adds 10 percent to 15 percent value to each bushel of soybeans—roughly \$1.15 to \$1.72 per bushel, or \$75 to \$125 per acre, at the time of this writing, depending on markets, Kubik says. Meanwhile, the biodiesel industry employs 3,000 people.

Financials aren't the only win for biodiesel. Life-cycle assessments (LCAs) have found that biodiesel reduces emissions between 70 percent and 80 percent compared to petroleum and conventional diesel. It also reduces particulate matter—which people can breathe into their lungs, espe-

cially working in railroad yards and heavy industry—by about 50 percent, Kubik says.

Partners on biodiesel policy have included the state's biodiesel refiners and renewable energy groups with plants in Danville and Seneca; Incobra in Gilman; the Illinois Corn Growers; and the American Lung Association; plus members of the B20 Club, Kubik says.

There are still opportunities to expand biodiesel access—and prevent rollbacks. For example, local governments and nonprofits miss out on the sales tax incentive, so ISA is advocating for legislation to help compensate them for using biodiesel, putting them on par with the private sector. On the federal level, ISA seeks changes to the RFS as well as to Inflation Reduction Act provisions that could curb biodiesel use.

"The regulations are not friendly to production agriculture," Kubik says. Meanwhile, some U.S. fleets are switching away from biodiesel and toward used cooking oil from China in an effort to reduce their carbon emissions intensity. Yet what some buyers don't realize is that cooking oil can be counterfeit because it contains palm oil harvested via rainforest destruction in Indonesia.

Despite such challenges, Kubik is optimistic about the future of biodiesel in Illinois. "All of these industries that utilize heavy equipment, biodiesel is going to have a role in

(See A Legacy of Legislative Wins, page 8)

A Legacy of Legislative Wins

(continued from page 7)

decarbonizing those for years to come," he says.

Ramping Up River Access

For generations, Illinois soybean farmers have enjoyed the strategic advantage of proximity to major rivers—including the Mississippi and Illinois. Yet that edge is beginning to erode amid slow progress on upgrades to the state's 100-year-old locks and dams. Meanwhile, international competitors such as Brazil have figured out ways to get cargo ships 900 miles up the Amazon River, reducing their export costs below those of the U.S. and making them more competitive for Chinese buyers.

"Without these investments, other countries are going to be able to leapfrog us," Kubik says.

To keep Illinois soybean farmers fully in the game, ISA has long advocated for accelerated implementation of new and improved river infrastructure. Whereas the current lock-and-dam system can only accommodate a tugboat pushing six barges strung together, plans are in place to accommodate 15-barge tows. The Navigation and Ecosystem Program (NESP) embedded in the 2022 federal bipartisan infrastructure bill will fund those upgrades.

It's anticipated to be a slow process. Seven lock-and-dams will be built and upgraded in the NESP system. They'll be built one at a time, and the project will take several years to complete, Kubik says. ISA continues to advocate for expedited construction by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. And it's also pushing for state-level improvements at river ports that could make rail access easier and increase the decision-making power

of local port districts to help the farmers in their respective seven-county area.

Go-to partners on locks and dams have been the Waterways Council Inc. (WCI), Illinois Corn Growers and other Midwest agriculture groups.

"For future issues for locks and dams, the answer is going to be ensuring the locks and dams are built and ensuring they're built as fast but as safe and as efficient as possible," Kubik says.

Research Provides Policymakers With Farm Insights

From the riverfront to the field edge, ISA-led research has provided decision-makers the insights they need on farmers' water management and beyond, says Lacey.

"Historically, a lot of our research has focused on nutrient reduction loss strategy, investigating ways to help farmers improve their nutrient management in-field and to better understand nutrient loss from those fields," he says.

Not only does research illuminate new stewardship opportunities, it also highlights practices Illinois farmers already use. Lacey elaborates: "What are farmers already doing in Illinois to mitigate and avoid some of these environmental concerns? The adoption of conservation practices, the steps farmers are taking to adopt no-till and residue management and cover crops where it makes sense."

Meanwhile, additional ISA research has helped Illinois farmers better understand how to minimize use of herbicides and pesticides more efficiently to grow crops productively without unintended environmental consequences such as drift or runoff, Lacey says.

In other cases, ISA serves as an independent and unbiased source of information on emerging opportunities such as ecosystem services markets. "For example,

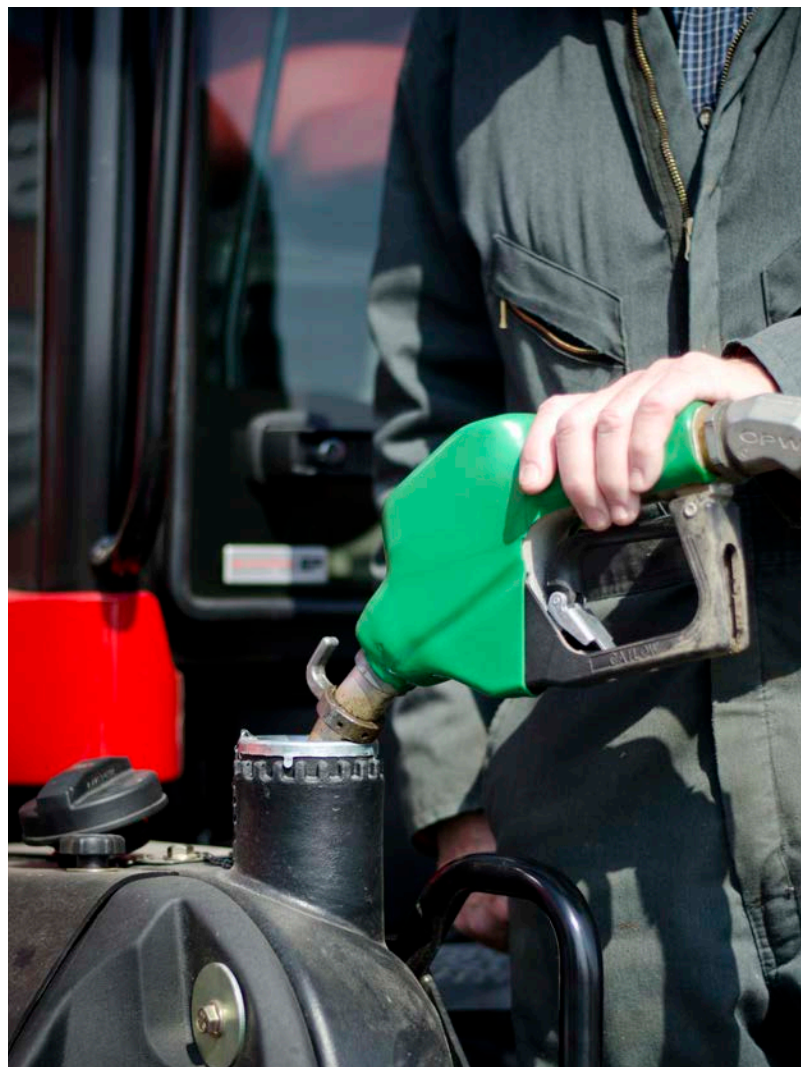
we don't promote any one carbon market program, but we do want farmers to understand the options that are out there," Lacey explains. "One big highlight is our sponsorship of groups like the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership, which helps farmers understand carbon sequestration and engage in carbon market spaces."

Additionally, Illinois farmers have engaged EPA on the Endangered Species Act and its potential negative impacts on farmer livelihoods. Those conversations has reaped benefits. "We have actually received input from the EPA about how to better sponsor and drive research that will, in the future, influence their decision-making," Lacey says.

Continued financial investment in, and partnership with, Illinois universities has led to deeper insights on stream bank erosion and new discoveries that agriculture might contribute less legacy phosphorus in waterways than once believed, he says.

Looking ahead to ISA's next 60 years, Illinois farmers will continue leading the charge—in biodiesel, river transportation and research—from the field, not the sidelines.

"Our funded research is approved by our farmer board," Lacey explains. "They provide leadership from the very start of deciding, 'Is this research relevant to Illinois farmers?' The people making the decision are Illinois farmers."



Biodiesel manufactured with Illinois soybeans will play a key role in decarbonizing the economy for years to come, predicts David Kubik, ISA Biofuels and Trade Policy Manager. Soybean farmers have played a key role advocating for federal and state policies that encourage more fleet operators to shift to biodiesel, enjoying tax credits, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and cleaner air. Credit: David Kubik



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THE NEXT GENERATION

→ BY ASSOCIATION



Congratulations to this year's class of 20 Under 40.

These men and women are leading new legacies in Illinois agriculture, inspiring this generation and the next with their on-farm success, community leadership and tremendous potential. As ISA celebrates our 60th anniversary, we look forward to seeing what the next 60 years look like with farmers like these leading the way.

VISIT IL20UNDER40.COM to meet our 2024 winners and learn more about the program.

Funded by the Illinois Soybean Association Checkoff Program.

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Congratulations on 60 Years of Leadership

Your work makes a tremendous difference for the farmers of Illinois, ISA. Congrats, and **enjoy the celebration.**



1964-2024

Take a bow, ISA

As one of soy's top consumers, the pork industry values ISA's support in bringing a nutrient-rich feedstock to Illinois pork producers.



HERE'S TO 60 YEARS.

FMC congratulates Field & Bean on it's dedication to the industry.

Like this publication, FMC has been dedicated to soybean growers from the start. Advancing agriculture by developing and delivering innovative, sustainable crop protection technologies is how we continue to support soybean growers.

Learn more about how FMC serves soybean growers at Ag.FMC.com.

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SIXTY YEARS OF GROWING TOGETHER

Congratulations to our friends at the Illinois Soybean Association on 60 years of growth and innovation. Your leadership inspires our own work to create better feed, food, and fuel from better seeds. Here's to many more years of growing together.

BENSON HILL
NOURISHING INNOVATION™



1964-2024

Partnering Today and Tomorrow

We share a commitment of keeping Illinois farms healthy and productive- then, now and for years to come. **Here's to the next 60, ISA.**



FARM JOURNAL

Congratulations on 60 years!



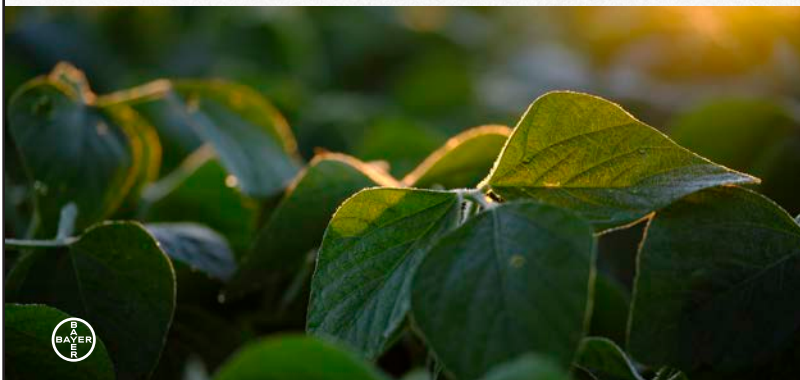
60 SEASONS OF SOY MUCH SUCCESS.

CONGRATULATIONS,
ILLINOIS SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION!



After 60 great years,
it's clear you're all
about the beans, too.

Congratulations to the Illinois Soybean Association.
We're proud to be in such fine company.



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CONGRATULATIONS



ON YOUR
60TH ANNIVERSARY

FROM
BROWNFIELD
AG NEWS





Illinois Farm Bureau
values its partnership with the
Illinois Soybean Association

Congratulations
on 60 years serving
generations of farmers!



CONGRATULATIONS ON 60 SEASONS OF SUCCESS!

It has been our privilege to partner with
the **Illinois Soybean Association** for
many years. **Farm Progress** looks forward
to continuing our collaboration for the
next 60 years and beyond.

SEASONS



FarmProgress.com



ISG Member Circle

The challenges farmers face every single day are tedious and time-consuming. It can be difficult to find time and energy to engage on public policy matters. The good news is that while work on the farm continues, soybean farmers in Illinois have a dedicated advocate working in the policy arena on their behalf—Illinois Soybean Growers.

Whether addressing policy or regulatory issues, ISG serves as the advocacy watchdog for Illinois soybean farmers. ISG stays on top of legislative and congressional issues that can affect a farm's profitability and potential.

Through a formal system of policy development and im-

plementation, ISG gathers the common concerns among Illinois soybean farmers and presents that information with the impact of an organized group. ISG harnesses the power of the collective Illinois soybean community to influence government policies and regulations.

ISG makes sure the government from Springfield to Washington hears the unified voice of Illinois soybean farmers.

Commonly asked questions...

Why do I need another group? I already pay the checkoff.

Yes, you do. But government regulations say the checkoff can

only be used for activities such as research, marketing and education. It can't be used for lobbying and political action.

That's where ISG comes in.

ISG is your voice on issues that affect soybean farmers just like you because we are led by farmers just like you. Our farmer leaders know the challenges and opportunities you face in the field and in the market. They know the issues and obstacles that can make or break your farming operation.

ISG is not afraid to take those issues to Springfield and Washington. After all, lawmakers don't often have in-depth knowledge of agricultural issues. ISG works to ensure they have the information

they need to know what's important to farmers in the countryside, including farmers just like you.

Who runs ISG?

ISG is led by farmers who receive no compensation for this work. They do it because they understand how important it is to make farmers heard to the folks who write the regulations and the laws.

These farmer-leaders volunteer their time and expertise to benefit all Illinois soybean growers.

Why should I join ISG?

We asked several respected farmer-leaders that same question. And they didn't hold back.



David Erickson (photo credit: Illinois Farm Bureau)

David Erickson farms with his wife and some paid help on a 50-50 soybean and corn, no-till operation in Altona, which is in Knox County. For more than 30 years, David has participated in and led several soybean organizations as president and board member, among other roles. He is also a former community college ag instructor.

"I got involved shortly after I started farming. I knew about the importance of supporting product and policy for commodities that we raised on the farm. I just felt it was important to be a member when I first started farming. Over the years, I got more involved.

At the farm level, I think it's important to be involved with an organization that has a mind on a crop that is growing and developing as the soybean has. Soybeans weren't raised in our part of the state until the 1970s. Compared to other crops, it's still relatively new. The research and innovation and new products, the developments in processing –these have all been important to the growth and profitability of the crop on our farm. On top of that, we need to have appropriate government policy and regulation in place.

For a very small investment, you can play a role in making sure

the crop that you produce is fairly represented in Springfield and Washington. And that the issues affecting that crop are addressed by people who are working on your behalf and have your interest at heart, because they are you."



Paul Rasmussen (photo credit: DeKalb County Farm Bureau)

Paul Rasmussen farms 1,500 acres in Dekalb County, in North Central Illinois. He raises corn and soybeans on a two-year corn, one-year soybean rotation.

Paul is a former Illinois Soybean Association Director, as well as a former Board Member. He has been an ISG member for more than 40 years.

"At the farm level, ISG helps by staying on top of what's going on in Springfield as well as Washington. And they lobby on our behalf.

Farmers need to be fully engaged in influencing legislation because we're going up against a lot of special interest groups with huge budgets.

If we're going to protect our industry, we need to be more engaged in understanding what public policy is all about.

And we need to do it as a group. As a group, we can have more power.

As individual farmers, we can't stay on top of Washington and Springfield. But if we're part of ISG, we have people who closely follow these things, who are watching out for us. People who know what's important to us be-

cause they took the time to listen.

It works like this:

We have people who watch Springfield and Washington. They keep an eye on proposed legislation and proposed regulations by agencies such as EPA and USDA. When they see issues that will impact soybean growers, they make us aware of what's going on and how we can help to either stop or to accelerate something that's being proposed.

They issue alerts and calls to action so we, the growers, can then call or write the legislators and policymakers.

Our legislators need to hear from us. And by being politically involved, we develop relationships with them, and these relationships help us gain more influence.

Without public policy people working on our behalf, individual growers wouldn't know what's really going on behind the scenes in government.

Our public policy people give us knowledge. And with knowledge comes power.

Would you rather read about these government decisions



Ron Moore (photo credit: Prairie Farmer)

American Soybean Association Board of Directors.

Ron was named an Illinois Master Farmer in 2023.

"I trust the farmers on the Board of Directors to be my voice in the policy arena in Springfield and in Washington, D.C.

The decision makers in Springfield and Washington live in a bubble, and they don't quite understand how farmers think.

But our ISG representatives know. They know because they make a point of staying in touch with members to find out what

***"For a very small investment, you can play a role in making sure the crop that you produce is fairly represented in Springfield and Washington."
– David Erickson***

after they've happened – or do you want to know about them as they're happening, while there's still time to do something about it?"

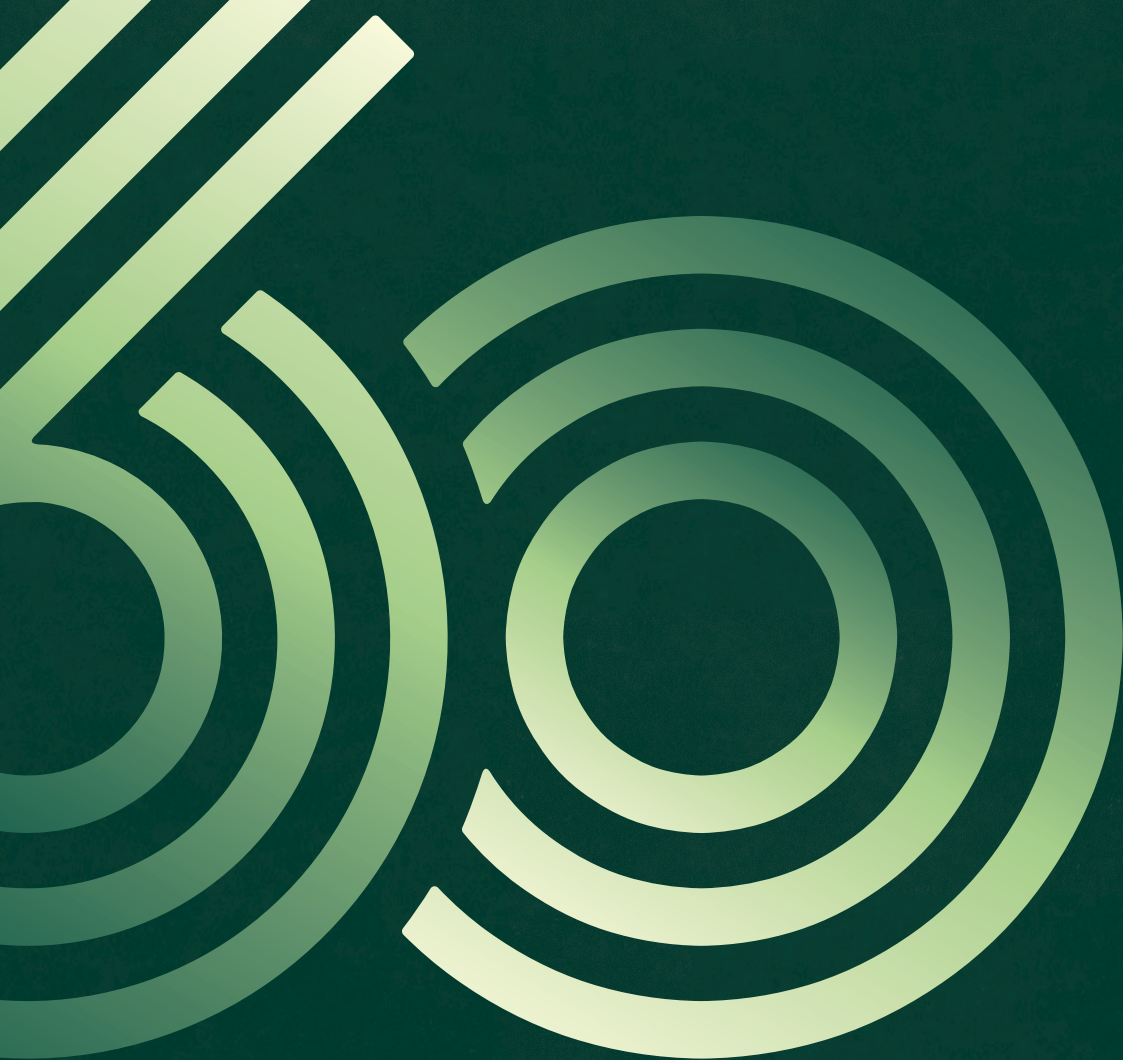
Ron Moore owns a family farm with his wife and son in Warren County, near Roseville. The operation is a 50-50 soybeans and corn rotation on 1,600 acres. It also has pasture for feeder cattle.

Ron has been involved in soybean groups since the 1990s. He has been a Board Member and Executive Committee Officer and has represented Illinois Soybean Association on the

farmers like me think on different policy issues and regulatory issues that come up.

The farmers out here in the countryside are the ones affected by the decisions that the lawmakers and regulators make. The people in Washington and Springfield don't always know or realize how their rules and regulations can negatively affect farmers. They don't understand – but the farmers representing us do, and they speak up for us.

It's incredibly important that we have ISG farmers representing us."



Congratulations, ISA

1964-2024

We salute you on your 60-year track record of helping grow more opportunities for soy from Illinois. Thanks for your ongoing partnership and support as **together we invest in programs and initiatives to promote and grow agriculture in Illinois and create a bright future for farmers and ranchers in our home state.**

Enjoy the celebration!



GRAIN & FEED
ASSOCIATION
of Illinois



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1964-2024

Together, We're Fueling the Future

The team at ADM extends our thanks for your partnership, and our **congratulations on 60 seasons of success.**



Congratulations, Partner

Here's to the next 60 years of collaboration between our organizations on behalf of Illinois farmers.



Maximizing Revenue & Growth Season After Season

Together with a hybrid consultancy & agency, **the sky is the limit.**



1964-2024

Well Done, ISA

As you celebrate 60 seasons of success, please accept **sincere congratulations from your friends at AGI.**





1964-2024

To our friends at ISA

Please accept our collective congratulations on reaching six decades of supporting Illinois farmers. With our shared commitment to research programs, we are collectively helping farmers with strategies to help maximize yield while reducing environmental impact. **Our partnership is creating a bright future for Illinois farms, our communities and the environment.**



FUNDED BY THE SOY CHECKOFF



FUNDED BY THE SOY CHECKOFF





1964-2024

A Fruitful Partnership

Just like you, we're dedicated to serving those in rural America. **Your partnership helps us do more to create returns for farmers.**



Congratulations on 60 Seasons

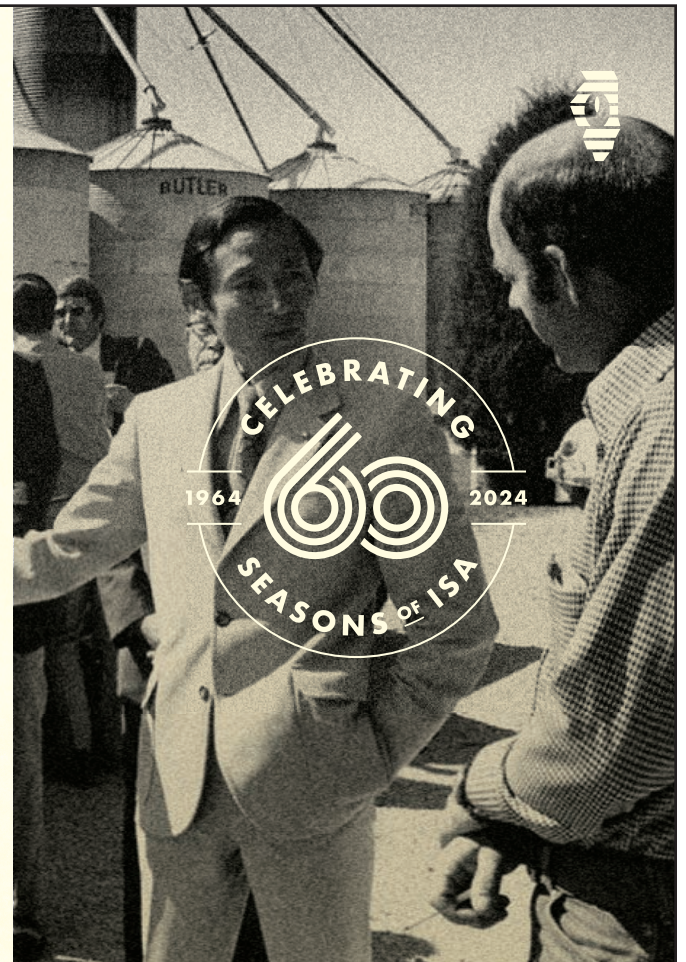
The Azotic team is proud to partner with you to support profitability and sustainability on Illinois farms.



Supporting Illinois Farmers, Together

Together with ISA, we have been committed to the success of Illinois farmers. It's our mission to help them be even more productive and profitable by sustainably growing high-quality crops.

Cheers to 60 years, and many more.





A Soy-Based Perspective on the Farm Bill Impasse

By Jonathan Coppess, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Now that the annual August recess in Congress has arrived, the effort to reauthorize the Farm Bill remains at an impasse, and reauthorization this year looks increasingly unlikely. The challenges for the Farm Bill are becoming all too familiar and increasingly problematic—budget challenges, partisan conflicts over food assistance to low-income households and demands to increase farm program payments. The House Committee on Agriculture reported a Farm Bill in May, largely along party lines and unlikely to be considered on the House floor (see H.R. 8467; House Agriculture Committee, Farm Bill 2024). The

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry has not produced any legislation or made any forward progress, but the Chair and Ranking Member have each released framework proposals (see Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Majority News, May 1, 2024 and Minority News, June 11, 2024). Let's take a look at the issues facing the Farm Bill from a soybean perspective.

At the core of the Farm Bill impasse is a demand from farm groups to increase the reference prices that are the thresholds for base acre payments through the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program and are included in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program's calculations. PLC triggers a payment on 85 percent

of the base acres for the crop whenever the 12-month marketing year average (MYA) price for the crop is below the effective reference price (ERP). The 2018 Farm Bill included the ERP calculation by which the statutory reference price (for soybeans, \$8.40 per bushel) can be increased up to 115 percent whenever 85 percent of the previous five-year Olympic moving average (drop the highest and lowest years) is greater than the statutory reference price. For soybeans, the reference price for the 2023 marketing year (ending this month) will automatically increase to \$9.26 per bushel and will reach \$9.65 per bushel for 2024 (see, farmdoc daily, October 5, 2023). The PLC problem for soybeans is that the MYA price has not fallen below the reference

price threshold and is not projected to do so. The House Farm Bill proposes increasing the soybean statutory reference price by 19 percent to \$10 per bushel. Figure 1 (see page 21) illustrates the PLC effective reference prices as compared to the MYA prices (projections by CBO) under current law from the 2018 Farm Bill and the House Agriculture Committee's Farm Bill. Figure 1 applies both reference prices back to 2014 when the PLC program was first enacted.

As is clear in Figure 1, PLC has not triggered payments for soybean base acres since it was created in 2014. Neither the increase under current law nor under the House Farm Bill is likely to trigger PLC payments for soybeans base. By comparison, the ARC program

has made payments on soybean base. Figure 2 illustrates the total payments for soybean base acres as reported by the Farm Service Agency since 2014. It includes the payments for corn base acres as well. Comparing ARC and PLC helps clarify why most farmers with soybean base acres elect to enroll them in the ARC program over PLC. It seems unlikely that the House Farm Bill would change that, in spite of the increase to the soybean reference price.

One of the primary challenges for the Farm Bill is the overall cost for increasing reference prices and other payment thresholds in farm programs. Congress created the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) in 1974 to operate as a non-partisan, unaffiliated resource for objective analysis on budget and economic matters. Congress requires CBO to project 10-year spending estimates to create an annual baseline, as well as requiring CBO to score legislative changes against the baseline over one-, five-, and 10-year budget windows regardless of the length of the authorization (2 U.S.C. §639; 2 U.S.C. §907; CBO, April 18, 2023 (cost estimates); and April 18, 2023 (baseline); see also, farmdoc daily, June 6, 2024; March 23, 2023; February 13, 2020; July 18, 2019; April 18, 2019; November 29, 2018). Increases in spending above the baseline projections are required by law to be offset with reductions in spending from other programs or increases in revenue. The 118th Congress, moreover, added a provision known as "CUTGO" that prohibits consideration of any legislation that increases mandatory spending within either a six-year or 11-year window (House, January 10, 2023, Rule XXI, clause 10; Heniff, CRS, May 9, 2023). CBO recently released the official cost estimate for the Farm Bill reported by the House Agriculture Committee in May (CBO, Aug. 2, 2024). Figure 3 illustrates the total 10-year cost estimate for the House Farm Bill's changes for farm programs and crop insurance as projected by

CBO. CBO projected that the total additional costs of farm programs and crop insurance, without offsets, would exceed \$50 billion over 10 years. The increase in reference prices for PLC will cost nearly \$35 billion, while the proposed spending offset from the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is worth only \$3.6 billion (see farmdoc daily, Aug. 8, 2024).

The budget challenges in the House Farm Bill are magnified by continued partisan fights over the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides aid to low-income households for the purchase of food. SNAP serves over 40 million Americans, on average, every month. The House Farm Bill proposes changes to the SNAP calculation that CBO projects would reduce the program by more than \$30 billion over 10 years, though the House does propose to spend \$10 billion on some aspects of the food assistance programs. This has been tried before and has created substantial problems for Farm Bill reauthorization. Both the 2014 and 2018 Farm Bills were nearly derailed by partisan fighting over SNAP in the House of Representatives, and it does not help 2024 reauthorization. More problematic, the House Farm Bill in 2024 marks the third straight attack on this critical coalitional partnership that is vital to moving legislation through Congress and having it signed into law.

In conclusion, the House Agriculture Committee advanced legislation to reauthorize the Farm Bill in May, but the bill has almost no chance on the House floor. The bill suffers from significant partisan conflict over cutting food assistance to low-income households, as well as budget challenges for the proposal to increase farm program payments. The effort to increase program payments to farmers not only complicates the coalitional dynamics in a bill that also cuts food assistance, but the increases in payments are severely disparate among farmers in different regions of the

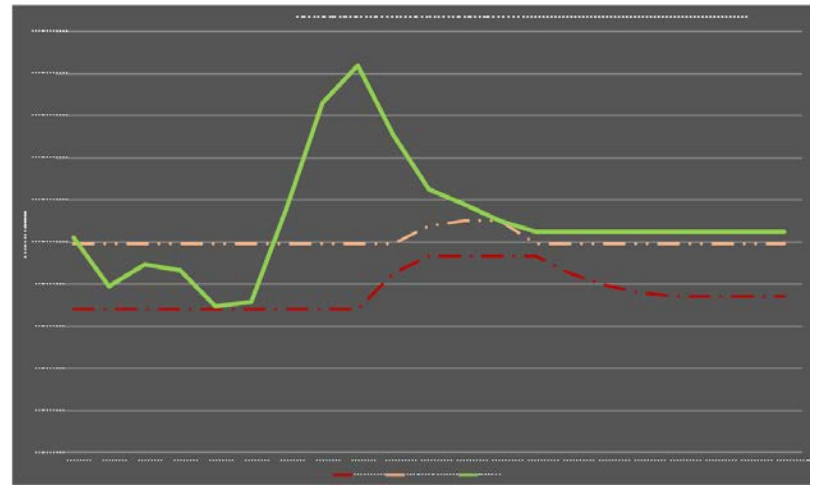


Figure 1

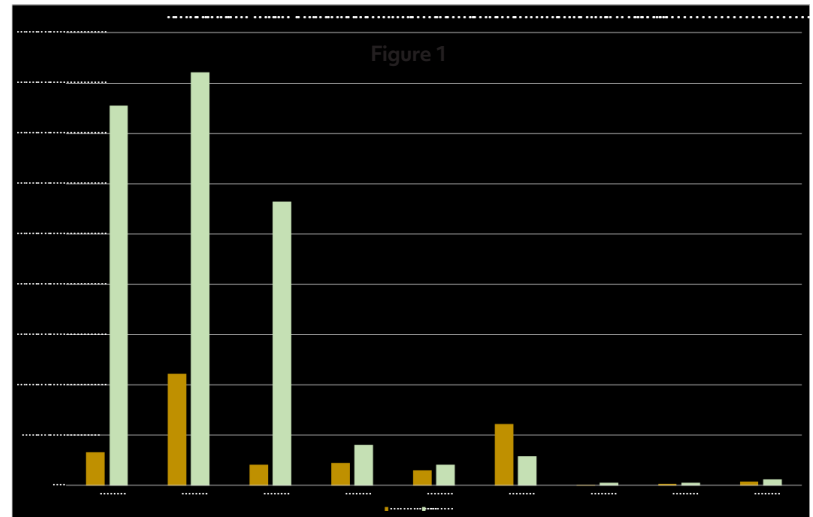


Figure 2

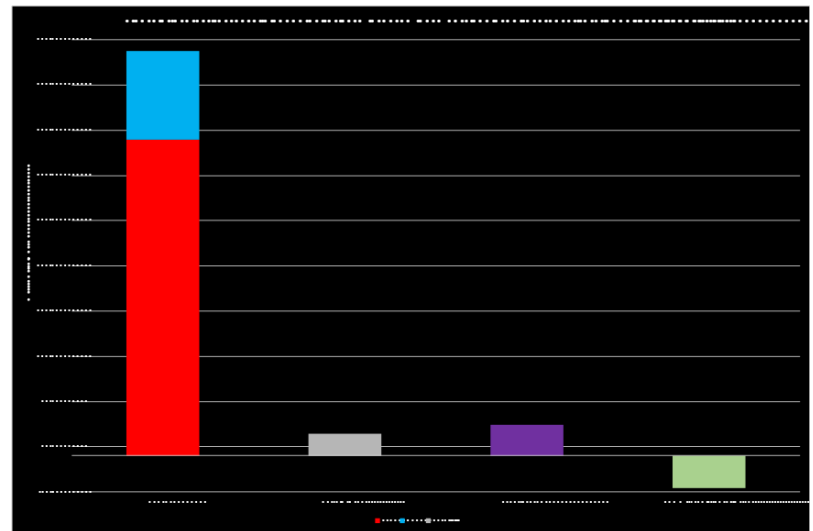


Figure 3

country with the largest payments benefiting farmers in the South (see farmdoc daily, May 21, 2024). The Senate Agriculture Committee has had to save the Farm Bill from these same problems in the House in both 2014 and 2018, but this time around, the disagreements over payments and policies have prevented that committee

from making any progress on a Farm Bill. With the legislative calendar quickly closing in an election year, the likelihood of reauthorization has become nearly nonexistent. It is likely that a lame duck session after the election will simply extend the 2018 Farm Bill for another year and hand off the challenges to a new Congress.



We're Proud to Share Your Story, ISA

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As you continue your work supporting Illinois soybean farmers, it's our great honor to be your partner in communicating your impact over 60 seasons.

From developing new transportation routes to market, to establishing a brand new industry for soybean oil and spearheading research to address some of the biggest production challenges farmers have faced, **your work then and now reinforces the vision of the farmer leaders and the value of the soybean checkoff in Illinois.**

Congratulations, we look forward to seeing further success for Illinois soybean farmers ahead.





More Power to You, ISA

Congratulations from your friends at the Dakota Access Pipeline for 60 years of innovating on behalf of Illinois farmers.



1964-2024

Growing Together

Thank you, ISA for your commitment and your vision. All of us at Incobrasa wish you a very happy 60th anniversary.



1964-2024

Congratulations, ISA

All of us at Busey Bank are so proud to partner with you to invest in the success of soy in Illinois.



Proud to Partner with you, ISA

Designing marketing strategies to create a better world for Illinois soybean farmers today and tomorrow.





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Way to Go, Partner

Soy from Illinois plays a critical role in our national efforts to support promotion, advocacy and education on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. From boosting yields through innovation and production research, to driving demand for soy abroad, we're proud to partner with you to create opportunities for farmers to succeed.

Congratulations on 60 seasons of success.





1964-2024

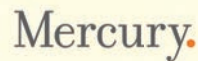
Congratulations on Keeping Soy Moving

All of us at Clean Fuels Alliance America and Soy Transportation Coalition extend our sincere **congratulations for this notable anniversary.**



Our Best to You, ISA

Thanks for the work you do advocating for soy from Illinois, and **congratulations on your 60th anniversary.**



Partners in Growth!

Working together to understand challenges that Illinois soybean farmers face and find innovative solutions to attack them head on. **Congrats, ISA!**



1964-2024

We're Proud to Run with ISA

Congratulations on 60 seasons of helping Illinois farmers be **even more successful.**



Emerging Advocates of Agriculture

Recently, *Illinois Field & Bean* magazine spoke with select federal and state legislators to learn more about their motivation for supporting agriculture and their plans for assisting Illinois farmers. Here's what they had to say:

Representative Nikki Budzinski (D-13)

Q: Why are you excited to serve on the Agriculture Committee?

When voters in the 13th District selected me to bring their voices to Washington, I immediately got to work to secure committee assignments that would give our communities a valuable seat at the table. I'm proud to be a member of the House Agriculture Committee to serve family farmers across Central and Southern Illinois. On the committee, I'm focused on reaching across the aisle to pass a bipartisan Farm Bill that supports rural communities and the agricultural economy that powers our state.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

I've heard from farmers how difficult it can be to access capital, especially for new and beginning farmers. I introduced the bipartisan Increasing Land Access, Security

& Opportunities Act to provide greater loan access and support services for land acquisition and farm improvements. I also formed a bipartisan Agriculture Advisory Council to hear directly from Illinois farmers. Last year, I hosted USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to discuss Illinois' needs. Additionally, I'm advocating for a sound crop insurance program, including improved loss ratios and risk management for midwestern soybean growers. Over 90 percent of farms in my district are family farms, relying on crop insurance as their primary safety net. In Congress, I focus on revitalizing rural America, supporting biofuels, protecting the farm safety net and helping young farmers.

All in all, I'm a tireless advocate of Illinois's farming interests. I've advocated for updated loss ratios, a more equitable and accurate base acre allocation, improving pathways for new and beginning farmers to access credit, funding for research activities - especially at our land grants like



the University of Illinois, trade opportunities through MAP and FMD, and domestic market creation through a strengthened bioprocessing sector.



Representative Eric Sorensen (D-17)

Q: Why are you excited to serve on the Agriculture Committee?

Illinois powers the world with corn and soy. But farming today comes with new challenges. Due to extreme weather, rising input costs and a volatile global market, it's difficult to farm the same land today that families have farmed for generations. I am proud to be our farmers' trusted voice in Washington to make sure they have the resources they need to be successful.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

My top priority is delivering a bipartisan Farm Bill that strengthens crop insurance, supports climate-smart agriculture and makes all of our communities more sustainable. We must ensure our farmers have the resources they need to thrive and lower costs for American families.

Agriculture, family farming and soy are not just part of our lives, they are the fabric of our being. As the farmer's trusted voice in Washington, my job is to fight for the more than 6,000 family farms in my district. We take pride in what we do, even if the big cities like Chicago and Washington don't understand us.

State Representative Jason Bunting (R-106)

Q: Why are you excited to serve farmers and represent agriculture?

I am a sixth-generation farmer hoping to be raising that seventh generation. Experience is the greatest teacher there is. I have spent a lifetime on the farm, gaining experience and knowledge that have been invaluable to me as a legislator.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

I am a co-sponsor of HB4600, which was introduced by a group of bipartisan

lawmakers to reform the estate tax on farms by raising the exclusion amount from \$4 million up to \$6 million. We need to reform or eliminate the estate tax and keep farms and businesses in the hands of the families who built them. Reforming the estate tax for farms is only one step toward the reform that Illinois needs.

As somebody that has sat on both sides of the desk, once as a strong advocate for agriculture and now as a state legislator, it is extremely important for your voice to be heard in regard to legislation that will affect your livelihood.



State Representative Sharon Chung (D-91)

Q: Why are you excited to serve on the Agriculture Committee?

Our community is a mix of metropolitan and rural areas. What makes the 91st District so special is that rural lifestyles and farming specifically can't be separated from the metropolitan areas of the district. Our restaurants and stores are filled with local produce and many of the families in our district have ties to farming. Serving on the Agriculture and Conservation Committee allows me to bring the voices and perspectives of my neighbors into the state house.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

This past session, I worked extremely hard to try and pass the Family Farm Preservation Act (FFPA) to raise the threshold that family farms would need to pay on the estate tax. This is something that was brought up by many people in the 91st District. It is important to me that we ensure that our family farms don't need to sell off portions of land to stay afloat. While we were unable to make the FFPA happen this session, it is at the top of my priority list for next session.

It is an honor to be included in this magazine, and I look forward to working with the agricultural community throughout Illinois to improve our state.

Senator Michael Halpin (D-36)

Q: Why are you excited to serve farmers and represent agriculture?

As a State Senator representing a heavily rural part of western Illinois, I see every day the deep impact farming and our farm families have on our economy, our communities and our way of life. Farming is a large part of the very fabric of our success in western Illinois.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

I am proud to work closely with our farmers on policies that support their success. I sponsored a law last year (SB 765) that eases the financial burden on farm mutual insurance companies to ensure thousands of farmers have critical protections when disaster strikes. I

have opposed carbon capture legislation that puts farmlands at risk, and I will continue to advocate for the Family Farm Preservation Act that will help shield farm families from devastating estate tax costs when ownership changes hands through generations.

One of my top priorities as a state legislator is supporting farmers and farm families because they work so hard to support and feed all of us. I am proud to work with the Illinois Soybean Association and other organizations advocating for farmers in Springfield, and I look forward to building on our accomplishments to help this industry thrive for many years to come.



(See Emerging Advocates of Agriculture, page 28)

Emerging Advocates of Agriculture

(continued from page 27)

Representative Gregg Johnson (D-72)

Q: Why are you excited to serve farmers and represent agriculture?

Agriculture is the foundation of the Illinois economy. It feeds millions of people and creates sustainable jobs right here in our state. It also has a tremendous downstream economic impact. My district is the home of John Deere, and the thousands of people that work manufacturing jobs here depend on a vibrant agricultural economy. The same is true for so many districts and industries in Illinois. I am excited to serve and support farmers in Illinois as a partner and ally in Springfield so that together, we can build prosperity for all Illinoisans.

Q: What policy or initiatives have you worked on or are planning to work on that support Illinois farmers?

Last session, I sponsored a Biodiesel Usage Incentive bill (HB4906) that would

better incentivize municipalities to shift their automotive fleets to use more biodiesel. This fuel is produced domestically here in Illinois and reduces our reliance on fossil fuels, which is good for farmers and the environment alike. I am excited to work with farmers and agricultural advocates to ensure that agriculture is a core part of Illinois' economic development agenda.

Agriculture is one of the most important things that Illinois does – it powers our economy and literally puts food on our families' tables. A strong agricultural economy is a necessary, foundational part of Illinois' past, present and future. Simply put, farmers are the bedrock on which the Illinois economy is built.



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Here's to You, ISA

Our work promoting the export of U.S. poultry, eggs, beef, pork and lamb worldwide, and advocating for the industry on trade policy issues, is made possible by partners like you. **Enjoy the well-deserved celebration.**



1964-2024

Way to Grow, ISA!

From all of us at GDM – congratulations on 60 seasons of success. **Here's to our continued partnership.**



Proud to Be Partners

Congratulations to our colleagues at ISA on celebrating 60 years of success. **Here's to the future!**





1964-2024

A Top Quality Partnership

Our work with organizations like ISA allows us to provide top quality solutions to farmers, **so they can produce top quality soy from Illinois.**



ISA: Fueling Success for Illinois Soy Farmers

Chevron Renewable Energy Group thanks ISA for its commitment to biodiesel. **Congratulations on serving Illinois farmers since 1964.**



Congratulations, ISA

Congratulations to ISA on 60 years of leadership. WJBC is proud to have been your partner in being the voice of Illinois farmers. **Here's to many more years of success!**



1964-2024

Congratulations on 60 Years

Thank you for your support in building **environmental and economic sustainability for farmers in Illinois.**





1964-2024

Dear ISA,

Your neighboring state soybean boards congratulate you on 60 seasons of checkoff activities in Illinois. While we each represent farmers in our home state, we collectively work to increase preference for U.S. soy on the world stage, collaborate on regional research initiatives to maximize production, and prioritize shared opportunities to create returns for soybean farmers.





Photo credit: Midwest Food Bank

Soy for Good

Farmers work hard to grow healthy, sustainable soybeans that feed the world. But there is still a huge gap between the field and the people who need access to staple products such as soybean oil.

Recently, your Illinois soy checkoff was pleased to play a small part in closing that gap. It donated seven pallets of soybean oil worth nearly \$12,000 to Midwest Food Bank.

The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) believes soy can play a critical role in ensuring that none of our neighbors, friends or family go hungry, and this is just the start.

“There is a story to tell with every bean Illinois farmers plant, and it’s that growers for generations have produced food to feed our families in their home kitchens and around the dinner table,” says Andrew Larson, Director of Government Relations & Strategy.

How big is the need?

Food insecurity isn’t just a global issue—it’s happening around us every day.

In Illinois, 1.5 million people face hunger—and of them, 426,600 are children. That means one in eight people, and one in six children, in our state are affected.

This situation isn’t just limited to people in poverty. Food insecurity can happen to anyone, such as when the family’s main provider becomes ill or hurt and is unable to work.

Midwest Food Bank’s ties to agriculture start from their beginning. It is a faith-based organization farmer-founded and farmer-run to this day. “I see the impact from two sides: from a food bank side and from growing up and operating a family farm raising soybeans,” says CEO Eric Hodel, who also runs his family’s Metamora operation, Quarter Mile Farms, raising soybeans, corn and sheep.

In fact, Midwest Food Bank’s first location was a convert-

ed barn on its founder's farm. Today, with three locations in Illinois plus facilities in seven more states and two countries, the organization remains headquartered in Normal.

"We serve approximately 600 food pantries across the state of Illinois," Hodel says. "And that soybean oil reaches all of them."

The Normal location alone distributes food to 132,000 neighbors in need throughout Central and Southern Illinois.

The gift of soybean oil fills a critical and high-demand need, Hodel explains. "You're providing support from both a food and cooking perspective," he says, "not only with the quantity but the fact that it's the family size soybean oil. That's something our agencies are always asking for."

In fact, soy can play a vital role in feeding those in need, something both Hodel and ISA recognize and pursue.

How Does Soy Fit In?

As a farmer, you know you're feeding the world. But did you also know the soy you grow can play a significant part in feeding the hungry and keeping them healthy? Here's how:

- Soy is rich in protein.
- Soy contains all nine amino acids the human body needs.
- Soy protein is the only plant protein comparable to animal protein.
- Soybean oil is a great choice for many cooking and baking applications with its neutral flavor and heart health benefits.

Added to that:

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has recognized soybean oil for its cardiovascular health benefits with a qualified health claim. The soybean oil health claim states: Supportive but not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 1½ tablespoons (20.5 grams) daily of soybean oil, which contains unsaturated fat, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

- Replacement of saturated fat with unsaturated fat, like that

found in soybean oil, improves circulating lipids and lipoprotein levels, the main targets for cardiovascular disease prevention and management.

And on top of that, says Hodel, "Cooking oil is a highly sought-after product by our agencies," making ISA's contribution a very valuable, and very welcome, surprise.

"Soybeans are so versatile, and there are so many products that are an outcrop of them," he says. "The ability of soybeans to feed and fuel the world is amazing."

To Hodel, the connection between ISA and Midwest Food Bank is a natural one. "The impact across the state that we

can make from that one connection is huge—that can impact thousands of lives," he says. "I'm excited to see the future impact ahead from our two organizations collaborating."

How can you help?

Fortunately, there is an opportunity for anyone to get involved, including farmers, their families and others.

"At the grower-farmer level, you can get involved by volunteering," says Hodel. "You can also donate at your local food pantry. Field & Bean readers are a lot closer to connect in person if they want to."

Both the Midwest Food Bank and their food pantry

agencies rely on volunteers to keep serving their communities. In fact, at Midwest Food Bank, in 2022 alone, more than 30,000 volunteers put in over 350,000 hours of service, the equivalent of over 175 full-time employees.

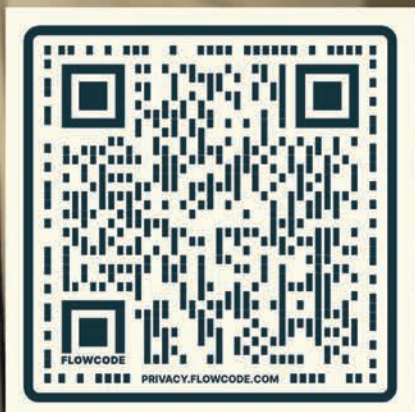
What is the difference between Midwest Food Bank and food pantries? A food bank is the distribution facility for millions of pounds of food and other products that go out to the community. Food pantries function as the arms of the organization that reach communities directly.

To find a location to volunteer near you, visit <https://midwest-foodbank.org/>.



Photo credit: Midwest Food Bank

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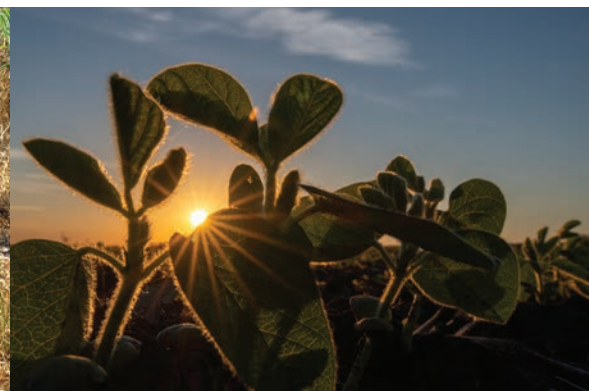
Exclusive Marketplace

Enrollment in Farmers for Soil Health provides access to an exclusive future marketplace connecting farmers to top-tier supply chain partners that are focused on sustainability.



Technical Advisor

Each state has dedicated on-the-ground technical advisors to provide research-based information and educational resources to aid in the transition of your field.



Learn more today! | FarmersforSoilHealth.com





We Stand With You

Meet the ISA Government Relations Team

By Olivia Key

The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) Government Relations team is dedicated to advocating for Illinois' 43,000 soybean farmers. Below, you'll meet this dynamic team of experts, learn about their efforts to support your interests and discover their passion for serving the needs of Illinois farmers.

Andrew Larson, Director of Government Relations & Strategy

In his role, Larson manages ISA policy goals, state and federal

governmental affairs, biodiesel programs and organizational strategy.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"Building a career in agriculture policy has been a journey I didn't expect. What really stands out is the knowledge and depth of expertise on so many topics that exist within ag organizations, companies, universities and more. Farmers have tons of highly skilled and passionate people working for them each day. We don't always see these

people firsthand, but they are engaging in improving farm policy, developing ways to improve local bridges and infrastructure, and advancing global efforts to sell Illinois ag products in countries we might never think of. In government relations and ag policy, we get to interact on all these topics. Leading our team, I see intense passion and energy in our staff engaging in their life's work on behalf of farmers. It is a huge honor to lead our policy efforts and drive to make an impact for Illinois farmers," said Larson.

David Kubik, Biofuels & Trade Policy Manager

Kubik's focus areas include biofuels political strategy, transportation, trade and taxes. Notably, Kubik led the B20 initiative, which resulted in extended tax exemptions for biodiesel blends over 10 percent and an increase to 20 percent.

Why are you passionate about serving the soybean farmers of Illinois?

"I work every day to ensure both federal and state policymakers enact policies that

will expand markets for Illinois soybeans. Whether it's domestic biofuel markets, expanding trade deals in Southeast Asia or improving lock and dam infrastructure at home, it's important that Illinois soybean producers protect markets they already serve and expand to new markets as we face new challenges in our industry," said Kubik.

Ashley Barry, Engagement Manager

Barry focuses on connecting with farmers to ensure they stay informed on policies impacting their daily lives. She manages ISA's Voice for Soy network, hosts various events and oversees the Illinois Soybean Growers Political Action Committee (ISG PAC).

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"In my role, I help make the voices of farmers at the negotiation table influential. I have the chance to offer farmers something through ISA

that they previously did not have - the ability to open doors, allowing them to establish new relationships with legislators in Illinois and across the nation. This, to me, is not only meaningful but also impactful when we're advocating on a variety of issues and when our farmers go to the negotiating table," said Barry.

Collin Cisco, Farm Policy Manager

In his role, Cisco works to assist farmers and ISA in building strategic relationships and shaping policy positions with lawmakers.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"Our farmers work tirelessly to feed the world, often on increasingly tight margins. It's our responsibility to help alleviate their financial and regulatory burdens. Illinois soybean farmers are crucial in feeding and moving the world, and we're passionate about protecting their right to farm," said Cisco.

Corey Lacey, Ph.D., Environmental Policy Manager

Lacey plays a crucial role in supporting Illinois soybean farmers through his role. His focus areas include pesticide and biotech regulation, conservation policy, climate-smart commodities and agri-environmental issues.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"In my role, I have the opportunity to advocate for Illinois farmers by ensuring their voices are heard during discussions on complex policy issues at local, state and federal levels. It's important to help farmers stay informed about ever-changing policies and ensure they can make informed decisions for their operations," said Lacey.

Ashley Rice-Haddon, Environmental Policy Specialist

Rice-Haddon is the newest member of the team and focuses her time on advocating for soybean farmers on conservation and environmental policy issues.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"As the Environmental Policy Specialist, I focus on two active issues that directly impact Illinois soybean farmers: the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy and Carbon Markets. With my passion for agriculture policy and communications, I work to understand the intricacies of these issues so I can better represent Illinois farmers in both Springfield and Washington, D.C.," said Rice-Haddon.

Matt Johnston, Government Relations Coordinator

Through his focus on legislative outreach, education and advocacy, Johnston strives to support Illinois farmers and coordinates efforts to educate and engage elected officials throughout the state.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

(See We Stand With You, page 38)



Andrew Larson, Director of Government Relations & Strategy



David Kubik, Biofuels & Trade Policy Manager



Ashley Barry, Engagement Manager

We Stand With You

(continued from page 37)

"As ISA's Government Relations Coordinator, I am deeply passionate about serving the soybean growers of Illinois. Growing up in rural Illinois, I saw firsthand the work and dedication that farmers

pour into their fields every day. Today, my work allows me to make sure policymakers understand the vital role farmers play in our state as well as country," said Johnston.

Gracie Scheets, External Relations Coordinator

In her role, Scheets concentrates on legislative outreach, education and advocacy to

support Illinois farmers. She coordinates efforts to educate and engage elected officials throughout the state.

Why are you passionate about serving Illinois soybean farmers?

"My passion for this work comes from a lifelong connection to agriculture. Engaging

with farmers is one of the most important aspects of my job, as it not only informs my work but also ensures that their voices are heard in policy discussions. My commitment to supporting Illinois farmers drives me every day, and I'm dedicated to making a positive impact both professionally and on our family farm," said Scheets.



Collin Cisco,
Farm Policy Manager



Corey Lacey, Ph.D., Environmental
Policy Manager



Ashley Rice-Haddon, Environmental
Policy Specialist



Matt Johnston, Government
Relations Coordinator



Gracie Scheets, External
Relations Coordinator

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- Trent Brass, enrolled Illinois farmer

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- Joe Paulson, enrolled Illinois farmer



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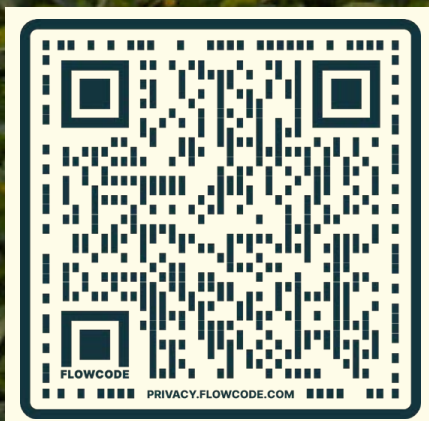
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Safeguarding Your Crop Protection Tools

By Stephen Censky, Chief Executive Officer of the American Soybean Association

It is no secret the pesticide tools farmers need to grow their crops productively and sustainably have come under attack in recent years. Misguided groups have not only successfully drummed up public

fear around pesticides but also have leveraged those anxieties to fund and fuel campaigns against these tools in legislatures, regulatory agencies and the courts.

The fallout has been very real. In several instances, farmers have directly lost tools to court rulings and errant regu-

latory decisions. And activist efforts have, in some cases, created a culture of fear in regulatory agencies that if they do not concede to demands—regardless of whether those demands are supported by science—that these groups will use the courts to accomplish their objectives. This is clearly

an unsustainable direction for continued access to pesticides by Illinois and U.S. farmers.

As despairing as these challenges may seem, there is hope. The American Soybean Association (ASA), Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) and other agriculture groups are pushing back and developing

a new strategy that can help level the playing field.

Lessons from Chlorpyrifos

When the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) banned the popular insecticide chlorpyrifos in 2021, U.S. agriculture was shocked and outraged. Less than a year prior, EPA's scientists made a finding that at least 11 high-benefit uses of chlorpyrifos could be safely maintained, including uses for soybeans. However, in response to a court ruling in a lawsuit brought by activist groups seeking to ban chlorpyrifos, EPA opted to prohibit all further use of the product. ASA, Illinois Soybean Growers and numerous other groups promptly sprang into action, filing objections to EPA's decision, which the agency quickly dismissed. It became clear that if agriculture wanted to keep this product, so important to dozens of U.S. crops, we would need to adopt a more proactive approach.

In early 2022, a coalition of 20 grower organizations—including those representing soybeans, sugarbeets, wheat and cherries—filed a lawsuit against EPA challenging its decision to ban chlorpyrifos. We argued it was inappropriate the agency could, on one hand, reach a finding that chlorpyrifos uses could be maintained safely and then, on the other, ignore its own science and ban all uses regardless of that science. After more than a year of drafting farmer declarations, filing briefs and engaging in oral arguments, the court agreed: EPA had broken the law, arbitrarily banning the product without considering all the science and data available.

This was a huge victory for U.S. agriculture in support of a science-based regulatory system. We defended successfully a tool many farmers rely on to protect crops from devastating insect pests. Many farmers had

limited or no other crop protection options. More than that, the ruling provided a new model. What if we could partner with other like-minded grower organizations in building these coalitions to push back on agency overreach and activist groups moving forward?

Challenges with Legal Advocacy

There are good reasons why agricultural groups have not historically engaged in legal advocacy. First and foremost, it can be expensive. Retaining legal counsel to file a lawsuit and argue it before the court can cost millions of dollars. Activist groups can finance their activities by launching fundraising campaigns, tapping into hundreds of thousands of donors who, though well intended, have often been misled by mistruths about pesticides. These groups have had decades to build fundraising lists and establish their war chests, which now fund successful, well-oiled litigation machines.

Agriculture groups have not been intuitively postured to take the same approach. Farm groups usually represent one group of producers in a certain geographical area and do not have the broad, borderless reach that activist groups do. Further, agriculture groups advocate on a broad array of policies, not just pesticides. Those other policies, such as the farm bill or transportation legislation, largely take place in the legislative and regulatory space. Pesticide policy also has legislative and regulatory components but in recent years has overwhelmingly moved to the courts.

A clear pattern has emerged. EPA will make a regulatory decision and, as with chlorpyrifos, if activist groups disagree, they will promptly challenge the decision in court. Pesticide companies frequently try to help EPA defend its decisions, but farm groups have not been

equipped to consistently participate, largely because of resource constraints. Agriculture groups are thus often on the sidelines as spectators while EPA either decides to side with the activists or risks being defeated in court.

The immediate impact is that sometimes quality regulatory decisions are undone by the courts, costing farmers both products and uses. The long-term effect has been that litigation-averse agencies understand they will be sued if they do not make certain decisions, resulting in even more regulations that are not based in science or that are unnecessarily averse to the needs of agriculture.

The choice is clear: if farm groups do not adapt and identify ways to better engage in pesticide legal advocacy, our fates will be decided for us.

Forging a New Advocacy Pathway

Chlorpyrifos taught us several crucial lessons. First, none of us are in this alone, and we are stronger together. While this insecticide was important to soybeans, it was also vital to numerous other crops and commodities. By building coalition networks early, we can partner with other like-minded groups that have an interest in defending these tools. We should also remember to look beyond agriculture. Many other groups use pesticides, including landscapers, golf courses and land management groups seeking to control invasive species. They can be important partners in mustering a common defense and can share additional perspectives with courts and policymakers that agriculture cannot.

A logical extension to building large coalitions to defend pesticides is sharing in the costs to protect them. The financial burden for one crop or one organization to defend



Stephen Censky, Chief Executive Officer of the American Soybean Association

a tool may be prohibitive, but many hands make for light (and less expensive) work. As with chlorpyrifos, we can share the expenses of legal advocacy, which allows us to overcome the cost barriers to participate in this essential, policy-shaping space.

It is not enough to learn these lessons. We must apply them—and quickly. Emerging regulatory perils such as recent Endangered Species Act proposals pose some of the greatest threats to farmer access to crop protection tools in a generation. ASA, ISA and others are engaging in a broad effort to put in place the coalitions and infrastructure needed to engage in robust legal advocacy if the situation demands it.

Herbicides and insecticides are indispensable to the productivity and sustainability of farming and other operations across Illinois and the U.S. Farmers need access to them to protect their crops from weeds and insects, as well as to implement conservation practices such as no-till and minimum-till that carry with them a host of other benefits. In partnership, we can rise to overcome the challenges needed to defend these tools and ensure they can remain part of the grower's toolbox for many years to come. The American Soybean Association and the Illinois Soybean Association are leading the way.



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WISHH connects trade and development across global market systems, improving food security in developing and emerging markets for U.S. soy. ISA and its visionary Illinois soybean growers served as the founding farmers of ASA/WISHH in 2000. Your leadership continues to allow WISHH to grow new markets for Illinois soy protein in both human foods and animal feeds.

Congratulations on 60 years of success, and here's to our continued partnership for many years to come.





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We look forward to our continued collaboration on ways to optimize trade strategies to support markets for Illinois soybeans.



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Feeding the Future, Together

Thank you, ISA for your commitment and your vision. All of us at Nutrien wish you a very happy 60th anniversary.



Congratulations on 60 Seasons of Success

BASF congratulates the Illinois Soybean Association on 60 years of success. Here's to past partnership and continued collaboration in helping Illinois farmers do The Biggest Job on Earth.

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

Looking Ahead

As we close out the summer with barbecues, picnics, fair season and back-to-school festivities, we know that harvest will not be far behind. This year has been a very active year legislatively for Illinois agriculture. Many major pieces of legislation have been introduced that will potentially change the future of farming in our state. Some of these failed to gain traction, others have been enacted into law and still other proposals remain somewhere in between. Our team at Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) has been actively engaging throughout the year on many key issues that you likely have read about in this and other issues of *Illinois Field & Bean* magazine. Looking ahead in Illinois, we have fall veto and lame duck sessions, as well as the 2024 presidential election. There will certainly be more change to come this year.

In this issue of *Illinois Field & Bean*, you've read about what our team has been working on this year so far. Looking toward the rest of the year, the first major turning point will be what happens in the federal election in November. Margins in both chambers of Congress are thin. Republicans currently hold a slim majority in the U.S. House of Representatives. Meanwhile, the divided U.S. Senate has a 51-49 Democratic Party majority. Many election pundits will tell you that either chamber has the potential to be controlled by the opposite party when the next Congress begins in January. It is also possible that one chamber stays with one party and the other flips. The presidential election has seen major upheaval this summer, and we are looking at a very high-profile election leading into November. There will be passion on both sides of the great national debate. One thing we must ensure is that agriculture is positioned for success no matter the outcome.

Amid this election season, Congress needs to either extend or pass a new Farm Bill. If Congress waits until next year, there could be different leadership and different priorities that get presented as part of a Farm Bill. No matter what the outcome of the election, the seats at the table and the voices in the room for the future of farm policy will change. Major impacts on topics such as climate-smart agriculture and the impacts of the Internal Revenue Service's 45z rule for carbon intensity on the farm could lead to major shifts in farm country. Groups such as ISG are working to understand the complete impact of these outcomes and working to mitigate negative effects while enhancing positive ones.

Here in Illinois, we do not expect major electoral changes in the makeup of the General Assembly. There are several major issues that could develop in either the veto or lame duck sessions that take place this fall and winter before the new General Assembly is sworn in during the month of January.

A few of those key issues include cleaning up concerns over landowner rights related to carbon pipeline, continued debate and discussion of a Clean Fuel Standard for Illinois, funding deficiencies for Illinois conservation programs including Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), efforts to ease the burden on families transferring farm assets between generations and other potentially major issues.

Although we don't yet know the outcome of many of these issues or the fall election, the team at ISG is working to position Illinois farmers for success amid an unclear and turbulent time in the political and policy arenas. Please stay engaged with ISG to learn more about issues, share your concerns and, most importantly, be a Voice for Soy.



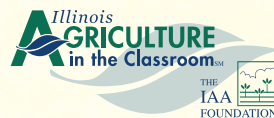


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Thank You, ISA

ISA's investment in critical education and outreach programs makes it possible for us to both develop the future leaders of the soybean industry in Illinois, and engage consumers in soybean farming in the state.

As you celebrate 60 years of helping Illinois farmers succeed, **please accept our congratulations and our promise that our important work will continue.**






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Thanks for being part of our story. Here's to the next 60 Seasons of Success for Illinois Soybean Farmers.



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