

# MISSOURI

## Soybean Farmer

DECEMBER  
2017

### High-Speed Investment

Broadband is coming to rural Missouri thanks to the ag community.

### Starting Sustainably

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# The Impact of Soybean Research in **Missouri**



Since 1983, investments in soybean research programs have exceeded **\$37 million – \$3.1 million** in the last year alone. The Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council funds research projects at the University of Missouri to address:

- Production costs
- Yields and profits
- Conservation efforts
- Herbicide resistance
- Pest management
- Drought and flood tolerance



Photo by Kyle Spradley - University of Missouri

In partnership with MSMC, University of Missouri researchers have also developed the **only non-GMO high oleic soybean technology**.

High oleic soybean oil contains at least 70 percent oleic acid – double the typical 30 to 40 percent oleic acid content. At high temperatures, the increased level of oleic acid makes the oil more stable than typical soybean oil, and better for food uses like baking and frying.

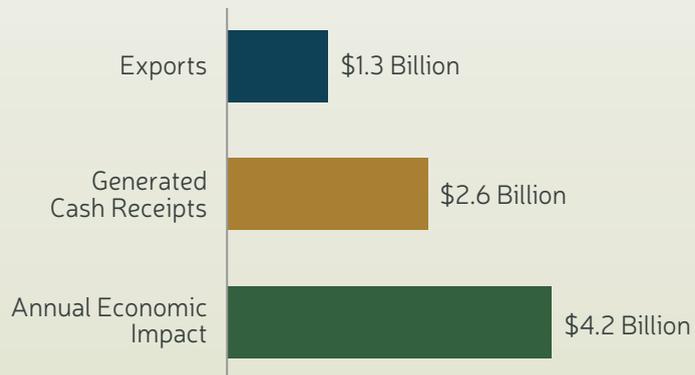
**Thanks to continued research**, improvements in the soybean industry have reduced the impact on our **environment** and boosted the state **economy**.

## **Our Environment:**

Compared to the 1980s, one bushel of soybeans can now be produced with:



## **Missouri Economy:**



**“Research is the highest priority for soybean checkoff funding in our state. It’s tied directly to our mission of innovating to solve problems and maximize profitability, and it’s what growers statewide continue to tell us they see as most valuable.”**

–John Kelley, farmer from Faucett, MO and chairman of the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council.



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# MISSOURI Soybean Farmer

DECEMBER 2017 | VOLUME 21 | ISSUE 6

## Staff Contacts

Executive Director / CEO  
Gary Wheeler  
gwheeler@mosoy.org

Chief Financial Officer  
Kim Hill  
khill@mosoy.org

Director of Communications &  
Public Relations  
Christine Tew  
ctew@mosoy.org

Director of Policy  
Casey Wasser  
cwasser@mosoy.org

Director of Business Development  
& New Markets  
Tony Stafford  
tstafford@mosoy.org

Director of Research  
Greg Luce  
gluce@mosoy.org

Director of Licensing  
Bryan Stobaugh  
bstobaugh@mosoy.org

Director of Compliance &  
Research Administration  
Ebby Neuner  
eneuner@mosoy.org

Office Manager  
Mary Kever  
mkever@mosoy.org

Accounting Manager  
Jeff Bruemmer  
jbruemmer@mosoy.org

Grower & Industry Relations  
Manager  
Ryan Gill  
rgill@mosoy.org

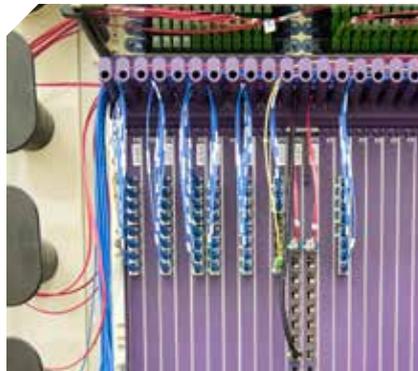
Executive Assistant  
Amber Meyer  
ameyer@mosoy.org

## Missouri Soybean Programs

3337 Emerald Lane  
Jefferson City, MO 65109  
Phone: (573) 635-3819 <http://www.mosoy.org>

Missouri Soybean Farmer is published five times annually by the Missouri Soybean Association and is an excellent opportunity to reach row crop farmers. Contact [ctew@mosoy.org](mailto:ctew@mosoy.org) for advertising information and with story ideas.

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**10** High-speed internet access is becoming ever more important to the success of rural businesses - including farms.



**24** Missouri's first Leopold Conservation Award honored two young farmers who have prioritized sustainability from the start.

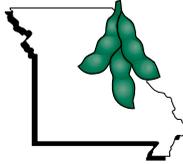
**28** Neal Bredehoeft helped build the Missouri Soybean Association into the organization it is today.



## « Cover Shot

Jason Jenkins of Mill Creek Communications captured this shot of high-speed internet installation while researching the article on page 6.





# From The Field

*Notes from Missouri Soybeans' leadership team*

## MSA Board Members:

Neal Bredehoeft, Alma  
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 Renee Fordyce, Bethany  
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 Meagan Kaiser, Bowling Green  
 Lewis Rone, Portageville

## ASA Board Members:

C. Brooks Hurst, Tarkio  
 Ronnie Russell, Richmond



A few weeks ago, the Missouri Soybean Association kicked off its winter policy outreach efforts, specifically by asking soybean farmers to support our work in Jefferson City and Washington, D.C. I sent letters to many of you, asking for your contributions to SOYPAC – which is one of the resources we use to help elect leaders who understand and support agriculture.

Your response has been outstanding. I greatly appreciate your contributions, and your help in putting SOYPAC in a strong position heading into 2018. I haven't been able to thank each of you personally, yet, but I want to say it here – thank you for making the policy work of your Missouri Soybean Association possible. I'd also like to extend thanks to all our Association members who support policy and advocacy work with their membership dollars.



One of the most common misconceptions I hear about our Association is tied to the soybean checkoff. While your checkoff makes Missouri's incredible research and education programs possible, none of those dollars may be used to support candidates running for office or to lobby for legislation in Jefferson City or Washington, D.C. If you haven't yet contributed to SOYPAC for 2017, I hope you'll include that in your year-end plans.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your Association president, and I look forward to introducing you to your newly elected farmer president in 2018. Thank you!

**Matt McCrate** - Missouri Soybean Association President

At the end of October, the University of Missouri released its final report on Dicamba-injured Soybean Acres. The report's estimate for Missouri was 325,000 acres damaged. As of October 15, the Missouri Department of Agriculture had 310 dicamba-related investigations.

In addition to the situation many growers have found themselves in this season with herbicide damage, many are finding a second unwelcome surprise when looking to recoup losses. There's been a lot of talk that crop insurance doesn't cover herbicide damage (it usually doesn't), and that many other common risk management policies wouldn't cover losses related to herbicide drift, volatilization, and so on.

Insurance may not be top of mind right now. In fact, it may only be something you think deeply on when you're about to make a claim. I encourage you to look into it – know what coverage you have, and what your needs are for the coming year.



Let's save the surprises for more enjoyable times.

**John Kelley** - Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council Chairman

# Letter from the Executive Director

In the spirit of the holidays and being so blessed by our God given and worldly possessions, I am reminded of what it takes to get to where we are today.

Looking around, at my family, my team here at Missouri Soybean, at you – our farmer leaders, our soybean growers, I feel so incredibly thankful. I can't tell you how proud of the team we have become here at Missouri Soybean, delivering on those important issues.

We're seeing change at an incredible rate in every area, from technology to policy to agronomy, and this team has stayed focused on providing the best possible service to farmers across Missouri and to our industry partners.



*The Missouri Soybean Association and Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council team, during a harvest visit to our Bay Farm Research Facility.*

Reflecting on where we are now, one simple word comes to mind - perseverance. One of my favorite quotes about hard work and perseverance comes from a former Speaker of the House:

“Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did.”  
- Newt Gingrich

The definition of the word perseverance, a noun, (pur-suh-veer-uh ns) in Webster's dictionary is a steady persistence in a course of action, a purpose, a state, etc., especially when faced with difficulties, obstacles, or discouragement. A few of my favorite synonyms for perseverance - dedication, spunk, grit, determination, endurance, moxie, tenacity. The word perseverance, its definition and its synonyms, is a perfect depiction of how I would define and how I feel about your team – my staff – at Missouri Soybean. This team works day in and day out on issues that are so important to what we do to meet our mission.

My letter in this month's magazine is short and simple, it's to share with you how lucky each and every soybean farmer in Missouri is to have such a dedicated, intelligent, family of staff here in Jefferson City. I know I am lucky and so very blessed.

From my family to yours,  
Have a wonderful holiday and a blessed New Year.



**Gary Wheeler**  
Executive Director / CEO  
Missouri Soybean Association  
Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council  
Mid-America Research and Development Foundation





# Soybean Policy Update

*from Casey Wasser*

**F**all is without a doubt my favorite time of year. Missouri's legislative session is just around the corner, and we're coming up on key decision times at the federal level.

## State Policy

The work of the Missouri General Assembly is about to ramp up as the pre-filing date for legislation hits December 1. Legislators often pre-file legislation to allow other lawmakers and interested parties additional time to review legislation and provide necessary feedback prior to session. Session will officially reconvene January 3, 2018.

During the summer and fall break, legislators on the 21st Century Missouri Transportation System Task Force

have been hosting meetings across Missouri seeking input from interested stakeholders and the public regarding our transportation system. The Task Force is responsible for compiling the input and presenting a legislative solution to the lack of funding and decaying transportation system in Missouri by January 1, 2018.

In April, Governor Greitens created the Boards and Commissions Task Force. The Task

Force has many goals, but primarily the tasks include eliminating boards and commissions that were not



**Greitens**



*Casey Wasser serves as the Director of Policy for the Missouri Soybean Association and Merchandising Council. He represents Missouri soybean farmers on policy issues at the state and federal levels.*

meeting as scheduled, eliminating and consolidating advisory committees and boards that were redundant, and creating overarching boards in departments where applicable. We are analyzing the proposal to ensure

Missouri's Capitol building,  
as seen from the intersection  
of E. Capitol Avenue and  
Jefferson Street.

successful boards created by statute and not negatively impacted, and will be working closely with the General Assembly as session nears.

A key piece of legislation that we will be watching very closely this session will be a tax reform measure released by Senator Bill Eigel. The actual legislation has not been released yet but the Senator states he will prefile it on December 1. The highlights include reducing the income tax rate for small business from 5.9 percent to 4.8 percent, increasing Missouri's low motor fuel tax from 17.5 cents to 23.5 cents per gallon, and capping a provision that allows businesses to retain 2 percent of the sales taxes they collect and remit timely.

On November 7, many important local elections and petitions were decided. Specifically, for the General Assembly, Herman Morse, Republican, won the House District 151 seat for Stoddard County. Barbara Anne Washington, Democrat, won the House District 23 seat for part of Kansas City. And lastly, Representative Mike Cierpiot, Republican, won the Senate District 8 seat for Jackson County.

#### **Federal Policy**

Earlier this fall, the renewable fuels industry was threatened by an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Notice of Data Availability (NODA) published October 5. The NODA requested comments on reducing Renewable Volume Obligations (RVOs) beyond the low levels established by the EPA in June. The actions by the EPA did not reflect the strong biodiesel industry

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# Setting Priorities

from Congresswoman Hartzler

**H**arvest is nearing an end in Missouri, but my work is just beginning on the 2018 Farm Bill. Only about 5 percent of Congressmen have a background in the ag industry, and I'm proud to be one of few who still live on a working farm. I understand the challenges farmers face every day and am working with Chairman Conaway to update farm safety net and trade promotion programs for American farmers.

A robust crop insurance program is the cornerstone of the Farm Bill. Net farm incomes have fallen for four years straight, and Congress must maintain this vital public-private partnership. Crop insurance is a prime target from fringe groups seeking to cut funding to farm programs, and I'll fight against efforts to means test crop insurance, which would increase premiums for farmers and weaken the insurance risk pool. This program works because producers have skin in the game, and it's a win-win for both farmers and taxpayers.

The last Farm Bill made sweeping changes to commodity programs by eliminating direct payments and replacing them with a low-level safety net that assists only during the hard times. The Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are designed to provide producers with protection against the risks of falling prices and significant crop losses. Congress will consider tweaks to ARC and PLC to make them more equitable for all commodities across the country while ensuring producers make production decisions based on market forces—not government programs.

Increasing trade opportunities for U.S. producers is a main priority of mine, and I'm working to ensure robust funding for trade promotion programs in the 2018 Farm Bill. These programs allow commodity groups to expand

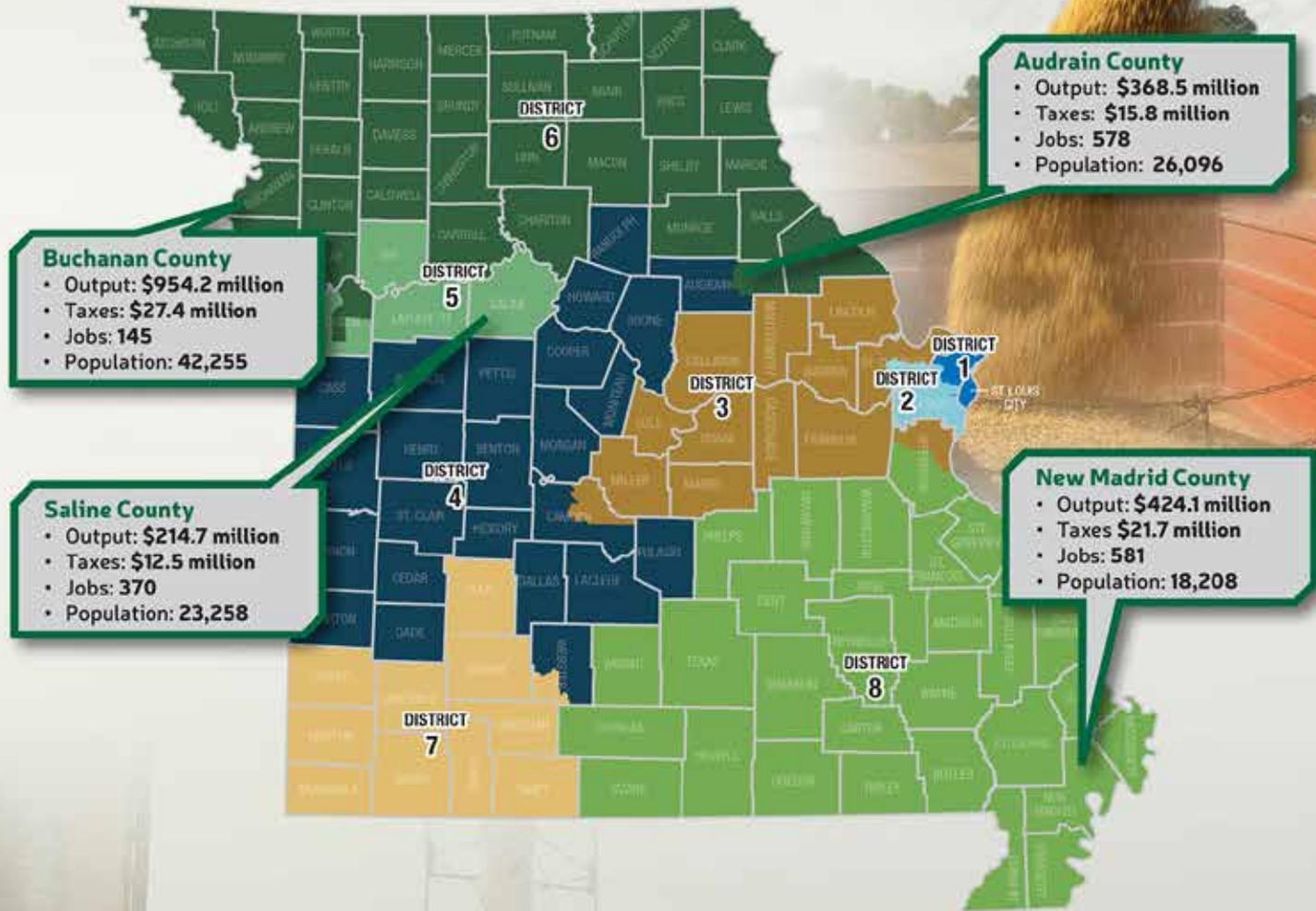


**Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler represents Missouri's 4th Congressional District in West-Central Missouri. She serves on both the House Armed Services and Agriculture committees. Hartzler grew up on a Cass County, Missouri farm, and continues to farm with her family near Harrisonville.**

global markets for the U.S. farmers they represent. While some have proposed eliminating funding, these important public-private partnerships have broad support from agriculture industry groups, which leverage private funds to public funding at up to a 7-to-1 ratio. Ninety-five percent of all consumers live outside of the U.S., and American farmers play an important role in feeding the hungry around the world. We must work together to remove trade barriers to keep food available and affordable for all.

As a lifelong farmer, I look forward to bringing the concerns of the Farm Belt to DC during Farm Bill negotiations and driving Farm Bill policies that will help grow our agricultural economy and rural America. ■

# Soybean: Missouri's Economic Engine



## Soybean Production by Congressional District:

<p><b>District 1</b></p> <p>Farms: 60</p> <p>Output: \$906,000</p>	<p><b>District 3</b></p> <p>Farms: 11,580</p> <p>Output: \$419.0 million</p>	<p><b>District 5</b></p> <p>Farms: 3,727</p> <p>Output: \$510.0 million</p>	<p><b>District 7</b></p> <p>Farms: 12,894</p> <p>Output: \$54.2 million</p>
<p><b>District 2</b></p> <p>Farms: 209</p> <p>Output: \$14.8 million</p>	<p><b>District 4</b></p> <p>Farms: 23,699</p> <p>Output: \$1.0 billion</p>	<p><b>District 6</b></p> <p>Farms: 27,780</p> <p>Output: \$4.0 billion</p>	<p><b>District 8</b></p> <p>Farms: 19,222</p> <p>Output: \$1.1 billion</p>



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in the U.S. and Missouri, specifically. Missouri's political leaders stepped up on behalf of the biodiesel industry in a big way.

Senator Blunt went on the offensive circulating a congressional letter urging EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to support higher RVOs rather than additional reductions. The letter received strong bipartisan support with 34 senators signing onto the letter, including Senator McCaskill.

In addition, Governor Eric Greitens joined several other Midwestern governors by signing onto a letter urging the President to keep his promise to fight for rural America and not waiver on his publicly expressed support for renewable fuels. The open comment period also saw strong response, having received more than 40,000 comments. The Missouri Soybean Association (MSA) submitted comments requesting higher RVOs and addressed the issues presented by the EPA's NODA.

The only message that could've been stronger would've been including the biodiesel producer's tax credit legislation in the House of Representative's tax reform measure, The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The tax reform measure was released by the House Ways and Means Committee on November 2. MSA has educated Congress on the importance of cash accounting, interest deductions, repealing the death tax and other important issues to Missouri farmers leading up to its introduction.



**Blunt**

An unfortunate but real fact is farming is very debt reliant which is why the interest deduction is extremely important and we're fighting to protect it. Businesses with average gross receipts of \$25 million or less will be exempt from the limitation on interest deductions established under this



**The Capitol Building, in Washington, D.C., as seen from across the reflecting pool on the Washington Mall.**

proposal, and the current threshold for cash accounting is increased to \$25 million.

With regard to what needs to be changed, we have heard many voices call for the repeal of the death tax. According to the summary released by the House Ways and Means Committee the basic exclusion amount is doubled from \$5 million (as of 2011) to \$10 million, which is indexed for inflation. This provision would apply to tax years beginning after 2017.

Furthermore, after 2023, the estate and generation-skipping taxes are repealed while maintaining a beneficiary's stepped-up basis in estate property. The gift tax is lowered to a top rate of 35 percent and retains a basic exclusion amount of \$10 million and an annual exclusion of \$14,000 (as of 2017), also indexed for inflation.

The Senate is scheduled to release their tax reform measure soon as well as Congress' proposed deadline for final passage is year's end. It's important to note that Congress included a reconciliation provision in their budget resolution allowing the Senate to pass tax reform with 50 votes (instead of the

typical 60), assuming the Vice President will vote yes giving the measure a simple majority of 51 votes.

As we continue to focus on how tax reform will impact the bottom line of soybean producers, we are also working closely with Congress on the 2018 Farm Bill. As a member of the House Agriculture Committee Vicky Hartzler has been working with commodity organizations to improve the Bill's programs for the next five years.

MSA has suggested Congress consider changing the benchmark within the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program from 86 percent to 90 or 92 percent. Under the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program Congress strongly



**Smith**

needs to consider a higher reference price for soybeans as well. More than 90 percent of soybean producers in Missouri chose ARC over PLC because the reference price was unrealistic and didn't provide an adequate safety net. ■



# Banding Together for

*New efforts seek to close the 'Digital Divide' in rural Missouri for good.*

**By Jason Jenkins, Mill Creek Communications**

Photos by Jason Jenkins, and courtesy of USDA

**I**ndependent. Hardworking. Resourceful. Tough. Missouri's farmers and ranchers — whose livelihoods often are dependent on forces beyond their control and whose pride in feeding a growing world is immeasurable — embody all of these characteristics. Agriculture is a lifestyle worthy of Sam Elliott's steely baritone narration, a testament to a pioneer spirit that continues generation after generation on the farm.

While such rural resilience has allowed farmers to overcome many adversities, a new challenge has developed in the past decade. It often begins where concrete and asphalt give way to gravel, and its

impact can be felt from the classroom to the medical clinic to the cab of the combine. Lack of access to high-speed broadband internet service is a growing concern in rural Missouri and an issue that impacts quality of life at every level.

“We're in a technological age where everything from business to education to healthcare is dependent on high-speed internet,” says Janie Dunning, former state director of USDA Rural Development who is now working with Missouri Farm Bureau and others to lead a new initiative on rural broadband. “Yet today, 61 percent of rural Missouri lacks access to broadband. It's just unacceptable.”



*A contract utility crew installs fiber-optic cable along a gravel road in northern Callaway County. The new service, offered by Callabyte Technology, brings broadband internet to rural residents with speeds up to 1 gigabit per second, allowing them the capacity to use the latest technologies to their fullest. Efforts like this are taking place across the Show-Me State as many attempt to close the “Digital Divide.”*

# Broadband

From Atchison to Pemiscot, McDonald to Clark and every rural county in between, anecdotal stories abound about how the “Digital Divide” impacts everyday life.

There’s the rural student, home from college for the weekend, who can’t complete a research paper because she can’t get online. There’s the small business owner who misses out on sales because the internet is too slow to respond when opportunities arise. There’s the fixed-income senior, reliant on friends to drive him to a faraway doctor’s appointment because telemedicine and dial-up internet aren’t compatible.

And then, there’s the farmer. During the past decade, technological advancements in agricultural equipment have outpaced the deployment of broadband on which many of these high-tech tools rely. Without a network to connect them to the internet, onboard diagnostics, yield mapping and other data-driven systems found on tractors and combines are like pearls without a string, expensive gems with their potential not fully realized.

Those employing precision agriculture and variable-rate technologies for fertility continue to create more and more data used to guide agronomic decisions. As

use of graphics, maps, photography and video increases, so too will broadband needs. And, as innovative farmers build new markets for value-added agricultural products, it’s not feasible to go in town and sit in the fast-food restaurant parking lot to access social media.

“Realtors tell us that the first question they get asked these days about a home is still what school district is it located in,” Dunning says. “The second question? Is there high-speed internet? It even affects the value of homes, anywhere from 3 to 10 percent.”

Nationally, Missouri falls near the bottom of state broadband rankings. The Show-Me State ranks 42nd in connectivity and 49th in average “peak”

**“Nationally, Missouri falls near the bottom of state broadband rankings.”**

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speed. According to today's standards, set by the Federal Communications Commission in 2015, broadband is defined as an internet connection with a minimum download speed of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) and a minimum upload speed to 3 Mbps. Currently, 1.2 million Missourians, mostly rural, don't have access to a wired connection capable of such speeds.

The issue of inadequate rural broadband service has become a national one. Missouri Sen. Roy Blunt spoke to the situation from the floor of the U.S. Senate in August during "Rural Broadband Month," noting the importance of expanded high-speed internet in rural communities.

"High-speed internet access can't be overlooked as we look at what our infrastructure should look like going forward," Blunt said during his comments, noting that a digital divide does exist between rural and urban communities. "It matters when you're not connected. It matters when opportunities that you'd otherwise have just simply aren't there because somehow a service that is essential in our society today isn't available to you in the same way that it's available to others."

Dunning compares the lag in broadband



**Janie Dunning, shown during a USDA event, is now serving in a leadership role for the Missouri Broadband Workgroup Initiative.**



**Bringing broadband to rural Missouri has engaged new players, including the state's rural electric cooperatives that have existing infrastructure on which fiber-optic cables can be installed.**

availability in rural areas to similar service disparities in the past, such as telephone service a century ago and electric service 75 years ago. Private, for-profit companies focused their business in more populated areas where return on investment could be recouped more quickly.

"In Missouri, we have roughly 70 percent of our population living in urban areas and 30 percent in rural areas, but when you look at the geographic area, those numbers reverse," she explains. "We have 30 percent of the people living on 70 percent of the land. Urban areas can reach 5,000 people per square mile, while rural areas can be as low as one or two people per square mile. That makes it more costly for broadband service to be deployed in the rural area."

Several localized efforts to expand broadband deployment have taken place during the past decade. As a state, Missouri established MoBroadbandNow in 2009 as a public-private initiative to expand and enhance broadband accessibility and adoption. More than \$71

million in federal grants was awarded to broadband infrastructure projects across the state from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, which was signed into law in 2009 in response to the Great Recession. These dollars allowed several rural areas to receive high-speed broadband from not only traditional telecommunications and internet providers but also new players, including rural electric cooperatives, who used the non-profit cooperative model to build out new broadband infrastructure along existing power line rights of way.

"But in 2013, the money ran out, and things came to a screeching halt," Dunning says. "Nothing else happened after that. With the dissolution of MoBroadbandNow, no state leadership was coordinating all the individual efforts."

While some progress in broadband deployment has been made in rural Missouri since 2013, a lack of a unified effort was apparent. Dunning left USDA Rural Development this past January, and Missouri Farm Bureau hired her as a consultant to address the issue.

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The Missouri Broadband Initiative Workgroup was soon formed.

“Our workgroup identified two characteristics of successful broadband programs,” Dunning says. “The first is public-private partnerships, and the second is stakeholder engagement. They go hand in hand.”

So in July, stakeholders were invited to Jefferson City to discuss recommendations for next steps in broadband deployment in Missouri. The meeting attracted more than 100 industry leaders, including those from agriculture, education, economic development, libraries, healthcare, public safety, local government and broadband providers. Following the meeting, a list of eight recommendations was created and sent to Gov. Eric Greitens, who also attended.

“What it boiled down to is we really need a central hub,” Dunning says. “We’ve got a lot of good things going on in the state. We’ve got a municipality here doing something, a co-op there doing something, but nobody is coordinating an effort. We need a central location under government where we can start gathering our own data analysis and mapping so that we can really see where the gaps are.”

The group had other recommendations as well. Topping the list was the establishment of a state broadband policy and legislative framework that includes goals for a uniform standard speed and affordability that is equal for all Missourians. A plan with short- and long-term strategies for deploying high-speed broadband also made the list, as did establishing a statewide digital portal to provide broadband information to the public.



**A cable lasher is used to secure a fiber-optic cable to a steel messenger cable using small-diameter wires. Aerial installation helps lower the cost of bringing high-speed broadband to rural areas. Miles of cable can be installed in a day, much quicker than underground installation**

“If you go out to a rural community, you have people who are comfortable with what they have because they’ve never had an opportunity to use high-speed broadband,” Dunning says. “You don’t know what you don’t know. You can’t miss what you’ve never had.”

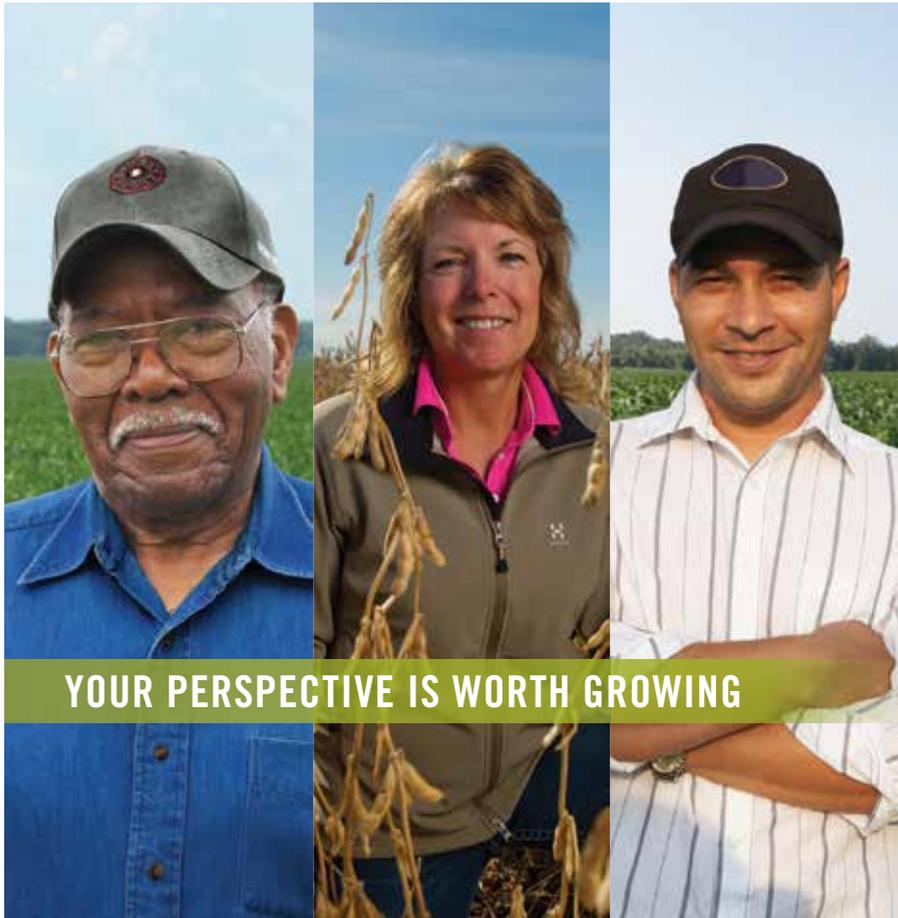
In addition to the Missouri Broadband Initiative Workgroup, other efforts are providing new momentum. In April, Gov. Greitens announced \$45 million in state funding for a program to enable every Missouri public school to build the infrastructure necessary for high-quality internet access for students. The Missouri Department of Agriculture also is placing emphasis on connecting rural communities through its MORE campaign.

At the federal level, Missouri’s Congressional Delegation also is prioritizing broadband. In January, Sen. Blunt joined 47 other senators and Reps. Cleaver, Graves, Hartzler, Luetkemeyer, Long and Smith joined 65 other representatives on two bipartisan letters to President Trump regarding the importance of broadband and expanding access nationwide. Both letters urged the president to consider broadband in future infrastructure plans.

“In the 21st century, high-speed internet access is no longer a luxury amenity, but rather an essential service for homes and businesses in this interconnected world,” the House members wrote. “Unfortunately, rural Americans in

**“If you go out to a rural community, you have people who are comfortable with what they have because they’ve never had an opportunity to use high-speed broadband.”**

-Janie Dunning



**The soy checkoff is looking for farmers** from diverse backgrounds to get involved in the United Soybean Board or Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council. There are a variety of opportunities to serve, and your talent and input can make a difference.

**Help to lead the U.S. soybean industry into the future. Contact the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council at [www.MOsoy.org](http://www.MOsoy.org) and get involved today, or visit [www.UnitedSoybean.org/GetInvolved](http://www.UnitedSoybean.org/GetInvolved).**



our districts lack sufficient broadband infrastructure to take advantage of this explosion of technology and economic possibility.”

In referencing the letter while speaking on the Senate floor in August, Sen. Blunt said “the administration needs to consider policies that think about infrastructure not just solely in terms of roads and bridges and ports.”

Sen. Blunt says the federal government can ensure that FCC rules make it easier for rural areas to have access to affordable broadband.

“Expanding access to rural broadband in all areas of Missouri is a top priority of mine as a member of the Senate Commerce Committee,” he says. “I’ve been encouraged by FCC Chairman Ajit Pai’s focus on expanding rural broadband, most recently by making available \$2 billion in funds for rural broadband, and opening this money up to auction so new entrants in this field

could competitively bid. I’m hopeful that the focus on this issue from both Congress and the administration will speed access to broadband in rural areas.”

The \$2 billion will be the first dollars from the Connect America Fund to be allocated by the FCC to support fixed broadband and voice services in rural areas using a “reverse auction,” which will commence in 2018. Approximately \$650 million of the \$2 billion will be distributed in Missouri during the next 10 years.

“Missouri is receiving the largest portion nationwide,” Dunning says. “It’s a huge pot of money, and hopefully we’re able to take advantage of that.”

While such funding will certainly move the needle toward greater expansion of broadband across rural Missouri, other efforts continue independently, such as Callabyte Technology. A subsidiary of Callaway Electric

Cooperative, the broadband service launched with a successful pilot project in the fall of 2015. Now, more than 1,000 households in central Missouri receive high-speed internet with speeds starting at 100 Mbps and reaching up to 1 gigabit per second service.

“People are begging for internet,” says Chris Meloy, construction maintenance supervisor for Callabyte. “They’re banging on our door asking when we’re going to come to their area.”

Meloy says they’ve ramped up installs since February, adding more territory than was initially promised. He says he’s already seen new growth in rural homes being built where Callabyte’s broadband service is offered.

“People just aren’t going to move out where they don’t have good internet,” he says. “It’s really become the backbone supporting these areas.”



# Reap What You Sow: Succession Planning for Farm Owners

*It may seem as if there's no good time to begin developing the succession plan for your farm. However, there's no bad time to begin. The legal team at Thompson Coburn LLP shares some things to think about as we head into the winter planning season.*

**By Jason P. Thein and Lacey R. Searfoss, Thompson Coburn LLP**

Photos courtesy of the United Soybean Board and the Missouri Soybean Association

**A**t the time of the writing of this article (November, 2017), the possibility for fundamental changes in federal tax laws is significant, but the predictability of what those changes may be seems virtually impossible. Given that federal taxes are a major component of succession planning, you might think this is not the time to begin planning. Nothing could be further from the truth.

While there are countless definitions of “succession planning”, for purposes of this article it is:

A process for the planned, structured,

and harmonious transfer of the ownership, control, and economic rights with respect to a farm in a tax efficient manner.

## **Governance of the Family Farm**

The first step in the planning is due diligence and an in-depth discussion between you, your family and your advisors about your goals. Be prepared to provide information on and discuss a wide variety of topics, including the following:

- A list of your assets with values (including the farmland and related property)



- How you acquired your farm
- Ownership structure of the farm
- Leases, if any
- Cash flow (from farm and otherwise)
- Liabilities (on the farm and otherwise)
- Family dynamics
- Involvement of children or other family members in the operation of the farm

All of that information, and more, will be necessary for an understanding needed to begin the planning process. Every family has different goals and issues that must be considered in designing a succession plan. However, most goals and issues will be best accomplished and resolved by focusing on the current and desired future ownership structure of the farm.

The use of a limited liability company (“LLC”) likely is the best entity as it allows for easy transfer (as opposed to undivided interests in real estate), can be set up to bifurcate control and economics, and is flexible enough to accommodate future changes and challenges.

The LLC operating agreement (an

LLC’s governing document) could have the following governance features to accomplish non-tax goals of your family (which may not become effective until you and your spouse pass and the farm passes to the next generation):

- The LLC could be “manager managed.” That means the members (owners) name someone to manage the farm and that person could be an owner but need not be an owner. The operating agreement could provide that a super-majority vote of the members is required to remove the manager (the percentage could be set to give a veto right to the child(ren) who are (and will be) actively involved with the farm). The manager could have the ability to name his or her own successor, but if he or she doesn’t, then a majority of members could name a successor. The operating agreement could provide that the manager would receive a reasonable salary.

- The operating agreement could require distributions to enable members to pay their income tax on the farm income. This prevents children who are not actively involved in the operation of the farm from having to use their other

resources to pay farm-derived income. In addition, the manager could make additional distributions to the members after considering the needs of the farm. All distributions must be made pro-rata among the members. A balance must be struck between providing reasonable compensation for the manager, the on-going needs of the farm, and the cash-flow desires of the non-manager members.

- The operating agreement could prohibit transfers to anyone other than your descendants (and could include trusts for spouse allowing for income to support the surviving spouse).

- To reduce potential conflict among the members, the operating agreement could provide for put rights, call rights and/or rights of refusal so that a disgruntled member can have his or her ownership interest purchased. But, to protect the buyer, the buyer could pay, in whole or in part, with a promissory note.

- Selling the farm or amending or terminating the operating agreement (and the LLC) would require a super-majority vote (again, set a percentage to protect the child(ren) operating the farm).

The LLC structure allows for the family members involved in the day to day operations of the farm to remain in control of the farm, but allows other non-active members to share in the income of the farm. This bifurcation of control and economic interest can be an important issue for families

wanting to continue the operation of the farm under the control of a few family members, but still wanting to provide financially for all family members. An LLC can also be structured so that the farm would stay in the family unless, essentially, the entire family agrees to sell it.

#### Federal Tax Considerations

Over the last 17 years, the federal gift/estate tax exemption has increased dramatically (from \$675,000 to the current \$5,490,000 (married couples using “portability” have a combined gift/estate tax exemption of \$10,980,000)). Thus, you may transfer assets, at your death and/or during your life, with a value equal to the federal exemption

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**“Given that federal taxes are a major component of succession planning, you might think this is not the time to begin planning. Nothing could be further from the truth.”**

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without the imposition of estate/gift taxes (currently at a 40 percent rate). Married couples generally may transfer assets between each other without using their federal gift/estate tax exemption and imposition of estate/gift tax. In such a case, and because of “portability”, the survivor could then transfer, under current law, up to \$10,980,000.

All of this means that many more people will not be subject to federal estate tax and may transfer the family farm for generations without the imposition of federal estate tax.

To the extent you have a taxable estate,

### “The most important step in the planning process is starting.”

you should consider taking action during life to remove value and/or future growth. For example, you could make gifts or sales of LLC interests. Such gifts may remove value (because of discounts) and future growth from your estate thereby either reducing estate tax or limiting the increase in the amount of estate tax.

Another possible way to reduce estate tax is by making a special election at death to value the farmland as farmland

and not based on its highest and best use (the usual standard). This is particularly important for farmland that may be on the outskirts of town that may otherwise be sold for development. Finally, if estate tax is unavoidable, it may be possible to pay the tax over a ten (or fourteen) year period.

The increasing gift/estate tax exemption (and even the possibility for repeal) has put a focus on reducing or eliminating income taxes, particularly capital gains tax, if the farm is sold in the future. As an example, assume the basis (generally the purchase price or inherited value) of a farm is \$3,000,000 and the current fair

market value of the farm is \$6,000,000. The basis is used to calculate the gain if the property were to be sold. Here, the “built-in” gain is

\$3,000,000 (the current value less the basis). If the farm is sold, the federal capital gains tax would be \$600,000 (20% of \$3,000,000).

Under current law, if assets are included in your estate, the basis of the assets included in your estate is adjusted to the fair market value of the property at your death. This often is referred to as the “step up in basis” if values have appreciated. (Note that the adjustment can decrease the basis if basis exceeds

fair market value. In such case, you should consider taking action to preserve the potential loss.)

The new focus on income tax planning has diminished the advisability of lifetime gift/estate tax planning. Techniques for transferring LLC interests during life while useful for avoiding or reducing estate tax may prevent a full step-up in basis at death causing otherwise avoidable income tax.

Thus, succession planning may be best done at death. Reviewing your current estate plan is critical. Many estate plans done in the past may be designed primarily for estate tax planning. However, because of the increase in the estate/gift exemption, estate taxes may no longer be the primary concern. Instead, income tax planning should be the primary focus and, in particular, maximizing the opportunities to increase the basis to reduce capital gains in the future.

For most families, an LLC with governance provisions specifically tailored to fulfill the family goals may be the planning vehicle of choice. When coupled with an up-to-date estate plan, estate tax may be minimized or avoided and built-in capital gains tax eliminated. However, the most important step in the planning process is starting.

If you do not sow, you will not reap. ■

*This article does not consider the impact of agricultural subsidies in the use of a limited liability company and other estate planning documents.*

# U.S. Soy in China

*This fall marked 35 years of partnership between soybean farmers and industry in the United States, and their counterparts in China. In celebration of that milestone, the U.S. Soybean Export Council coordinated a special visit to highlight the areas of partnership in soy between the U.S. and China.*

*Courtesy of USSEC*

**U**.S. Soy grower leaders visited China this fall, taking part in a celebration of 35 years of partnership between the U.S. Soy industry and China.

USSEC chairman and American Soybean Association (ASA) director Jim Miller, ASA director Dean Coleman, ASA president Ron Moore, USB vice president Lewis Bainbridge, and USSEC director Sharon Covert led the group, which represented the more than 300,000 U.S. Soy farmers.

The visit included tours of port, processing and aquaculture facilities. Participants also visited retail centers to see U.S. soy products available to consumers. In addition to tours, the delegation met with China's Ministry of Agriculture.

Farmers and state soybean staff, including Tony Stafford and Casey Wasser from the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, comprised the delegation.

Other participants included directors Tom Griffiths, Elaine Gillis, and Andy Tauer from the Indiana Soybean Alliance. Iowa Soybean Association director Bill Shipley was joined by ISA CEO Kirk Leeds and International Marketing Manager Grant Kimberley. Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council director Mark Brown was joined by MSR&PC staff member Joseph Smentek. Director Austin Langley, of the North Dakota Soybean Promotion Council represented his state. The Ohio Soybean Council was represented by director Bill Bayliss.

Tennessee Soybean Promotion Board director David Womack was supported by Parks Wells, Tennessee staff.

To learn more about the U.S. Soybean Export Council and international markets for soybean, visit [ussec.org](http://ussec.org).



*The delegation touring a soybean processing facility while in China.*

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# MISSOURI SOYBEANS

*The mission of the Missouri Soybean Association is 'Leading Missouri soybean producers into the future through legislative advocacy, communication and outreach.' Soybean farmers' membership in the Missouri Soybean Association makes it possible to fulfill that mission, coming together as one voice in policy and advocacy, and by funding efforts to elected candidates supportive of agriculture.*

*We thank our members for their dedication, and for their service to their fellow farmers as advocates and supporters of all Missouri soybean growers.*

*Below, we recognize three-year members of the Missouri Soybean Association.*

Stan Alexander  
Glenn Allmeyer  
Robert Alpers  
Daniel Armstrong  
Michael Arnold  
Mike Arth  
Fred Atkinson  
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James & Raymond Zerr

MISSOURI SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

# HONOR WALL

*Good news from those working on behalf of Missouri soybean farmers*

## Missouri ALOT Program Awards

**V**alerie Mertz, a lifetime member of MSA, received the Workhorse Award during the Missouri ALOT Annual Meeting in November. She was recognized for her outstanding service in hosting events, supporting fundraising for the leadership program, capturing meetings with her photography skills, and mentoring young people.

Other honorees during the ALOT Annual Meeting included Forrest Lucas, who received the Ag Leader of the Year award, and Brett Matthews, who was named ALOT Outstanding Alumni for 2017.

Scott Hays, a farmer from Monroe City, Missouri, was elected president of the ALOT board of directors during the annual meeting, replacing Karisha Devlin of Edina. A scholarship program for ALOT participants, named in honor of Bill Jackson, a former ALOT board member, was announced as well.



*Valerie Mertz with Sami Jo Freeman  
(ALOT Class XVII)*

Learn more about the Missouri ALOT program online at [missourialot.org](http://missourialot.org).

## Gastler is National FFA Finalist in Grain Production

**M**atthew Gastler of Martinsburg, Missouri, won the Missouri FFA Grain Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency Award at the 89th Missouri FFA Convention this spring. In October, at the National FFA Convention, he stood onstage as a finalist. As a finalist, he was recognized as being one of the top four contestants in the nation for grain production.



*Matthew Gastler with his  
advisor, Stacy French*

Gastler farms with his family, raising soybean and corn, as well as beef cattle.

He has previously placed in Beef Production and Oil & Fiber Crop Production categories at the state level.

As an FFA member, Gastler attended both state and national FFA conventions along with area and state FFA trap shoot events. In addition to FFA, Gastler is a varsity player for the baseball and basketball team. He is also a member of the Callaway County Beef Cattlemen's Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Grace Lutheran Church.

Gastler is a senior at Community R-VI High School. He is a member of the Audrain County FFA Chapter. His advisor is Stacy French. After graduating high school, Gastler plans to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia to major in agriculture.

Proficiency awards recognize FFA members who excel as agricultural entrepreneurs, employees or volunteers while gaining hands-on career experience.

# Farm Broadcaster of the Year

**T**om Steever, the voice of Missouri's Spotlight on Soybean radio broadcasts, was named NAFB Farm Broadcaster of the Year during the National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) Convention in November. The award honors individuals who have proven their abilities in broadcasting, shown true commitment to the industry through their actions and their promotional efforts, and demonstrated leadership in the industry and within their communities.

In addition to that prestigious honor, the Missouri-based Brownfield Ag News team received several other awards:

- Newscast First Place: Tom Steever
- Feature Award First Place: Tom Steever
- Feature Award Third Place: Julie Harker
- Video Feature Award Second Place: Shannon Yokley

Learn more online at [brownfieldagnews.com](http://brownfieldagnews.com).

*Courtesy of Brownfield Ag News.*



*Tom Steever*

# Fordyce Named Missouri Director for FSA

**C**ongratulations are in order for lifetime MSA member Richard Fordyce of Bethany, Missouri. Fordyce, who previously served as director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture and chair for Missouri's State Soil & Water Districts Commission, has been appointed to serve as Missouri's state executive director of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

FSA State Directors help implement U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policies in planning, organizing, and administering FSA programs in their respective states. They are also responsible for running the day-to-day activities of the state FSA office. Directors serve as appointees of President Donald J. Trump

"These state directors will help ensure that USDA is offering the best customer service to our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural producers across the country," Secretary Perdue said. "FSA and RD both play a critical role in helping the people of agriculture, and are able to connect with people in their home states. They are the initial points of contact for millions of our USDA customers. Our goal is to help rural America prosper, and these state leaders will be of great assistance in that task."

Missouri's new State Director for USDA Rural Development (RD) has also been named. Jeff Case, as RD State Director, will work to help improve the economy and quality of life in rural America.

Case previously served as Vice President and Senior Relationship Manager at Rabo AgriFinance, LLC and has spent his career working in the agriculture industry in the areas of production, finance and education.

*Photo courtesy of the Missouri Department of Agriculture.*



*Richard Fordyce*



# Starting with Sustainability

*Missouri's first recipients of the Leopold Conservation Award are young farmers from Laclede who have kept sustainability at the forefront as they build their farm. Missouri's soybean farmers helped make the award possible through their checkoff and Association contributions, and we're proud to feature the family in the following pages.*

**By Jason Jenkins**

Photos by Jason Jenkins and courtesy of Missouri Farmers Care

**A**s Matt Lambert harvests corn on an overcast early November afternoon, the clamorous combine kicks up more than dust and husks as it churns through the field. A white-tailed buck bounds through the buffer at the field's edge. A pair of rabbits bounces between stalks into the safety of the next row. A startled covey of quail bursts into the silvery sky.

"We have some conservation strips around the outside of this field, and it's nice to shell corn and watch the deer and quail," Matt says. "I've been able to do that the past few days in this bottom."

These sightings demonstrate that decades of dedicated land stewardship have paid off in more than just bumper crops for Matt and his wife, Kate, on their operation, Uptown Farms, near Brookfield, Mo. The farm yields

an abundance of wildlife as well as grain, proving that modern-day agricultural production can coexist with conservation successfully.

"It used to be an accepted school of thought that agriculture, by nature, stole from the environment to be productive," Kate says. "Today, we recognize that farming doesn't have to take anything away. It can actually work alongside the natural systems for a mutually beneficial relationship."

By putting that philosophy in action, the Lamberts have achieved a first for Missouri agriculture. They are the state's inaugural winners of the prestigious Leopold Conservation Award, which recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. The award, which comes with a \$10,000 prize, was announced Nov. 8 at the National

**Beyond crops and livestock, Kate and Matt Lambert are also raising a family on Uptown Farms, instilling the same “land ethic” for which Aldo Leopold is best known. Their boys, 3-year-old Meyer and 6-year-old Mace, enjoy visits to the field and a chance to ride in the combine.**

Association of Farm Broadcasting annual convention in Kansas City, Mo.

“I thought maybe it would be something we could win down the road, but I never expected to win the first year we applied for it,” Matt says. “We’re honored to receive the award for the first time in Missouri.”

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award provides a forum where farmers, ranchers and other private landowners are recognized as conservation leaders. Considered by many to be the father of wildlife management, Leopold was a forester, philosopher, educator, writer and outdoor enthusiast. His collection of essays, “A Sand County Almanac,” was published in 1949 and is one of the most respected and influential books about the environment ever written.

His namesake award has been presented annually since 2003 by the Sand County Foundation, which was established by a group of private landowners in 1965 to preserve the property north of Baraboo, Wis., where Leopold did his writing and research. The organization has since expanded to support and promote voluntary conservation on working lands across the U.S., presenting the Leopold award in 12 states.

Missouri Farmers Care (MFC), a coalition of agricultural organizations that represents the state’s farmers and ranchers, partnered with the Sand County Foundation to bring the Leopold



**Missouri Farmers Care Chairman Dr. Alan Wessler (left) and Sand County Foundation National Director for the Leopold Conservation Award Program Lance Irving (right) announced Matt and Kate Lambert of Uptown Farms as the first winners of the Missouri Leopold Conservation Award.**

award to the Show-Me State this year.

“Missouri is a challenging state to farm in,” Kate says. “Our weather patterns are different; our soil profiles are different. I think that’s made a different breed of farmer here. We’ve had to be a little more innovative, a little more adaptive. That’s why I feel like this award is something that belongs here in Missouri. It’s a way to recognize farm families who are implementing conservation practices. A lot of good will come from simply highlighting the things Missouri farmers are doing already.”

Among Leopold’s best-known ideas is

the “land ethic,” which calls for an ethical, caring relationship between people and nature. The Lamberts are true examples of farmers who embrace that ethic, says Ashley McCarty, MFC executive director.

“The Lamberts embody the best values of Missouri agriculture,” McCarty says. “Working alongside multiple generations, their family has prioritized innovative conservation practices to ensure productivity for years to come. Their goal is a more productive farm in 15 years than they have today, and their skilled management and implementation of stewardship practices such as no-till, cover crops and grazing will make that possible.”

Matt, 31, and Kate, 30, farm about 2,000 acres. They grow corn, soybean and wheat and raise beef cattle, sheep and Great Pyrenees guard dogs.

**“ We recognize that farming doesn’t have to take anything away. It can actually work alongside the natural systems for a mutually beneficial relationship. ”**

-Kate Lambert

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Different paths led them to agriculture. Matt grew up in it, farming with his father, Steve, and grandfather, Paul, on their Linn County land. Kate, on the other hand, was raised in the outer suburbs of Chicago. But she found FFA in high school, raising and showing Suffolk sheep for her Supervised Agricultural Experience project, which is how she and Matt met.

The couple attended Northwest Missouri State University and married in 2009, settling down near Matt's family farm. They now have two sons, 6-year-old Mace and 3-year-old Meyer.

"When I graduated from high school, I still had a very romantic idea of what modern agriculture looked like," Kate says. "I thought I was relatively knowledgeable on the industry, but I really didn't have much of an idea at all."

**“As farmers, we always try to be innovative. You can't be afraid to try something new.”**

-Matt Lambert

As a young, newly married couple returning to the farm, it quickly became apparent that the best farms weren't within reach, the Lamberts say. That's when an innovative, conservation mindset served them well, as they described in their nomination narrative:

"The farms that were available to us were often located in challenging spots, smaller acreage and poorer-quality soils. But we grabbed on to everything we could, and year after year, we found ways to farm responsibly and profitably."

Cover crops, no-till and precision farming are among the practices that have allowed the Lamberts to adapt to those challenges as well as shrinking margins in today's farm economy.

"Dad was one of the first to no-till in Linn County, and he's always had a good mind about conservation," says Matt, who harvested his 10th crop this fall. "I guess it's carried down into my generation. We started the cover

cropping after I got out of college. At first, it was mainly to help increase our grazing acres, but after a couple of years, we were seeing some of the benefits in the actual crop itself — weed suppression, less soil erosion, moisture retention and better yields. So we've started incorporating cover crops into all our acres now.

"As farmers, we always try to be innovative," he adds. "You can't be afraid to try something new that might work and give you an edge."

With the volatility of grain

markets, the Lamberts say that diversifying their operation helps provide income sources at different times of year and makes better use of certain areas on the farm. They've expanded their herd of commercial red Angus cattle and flock of Hampshire and Dorper sheep, and they raise alfalfa hay and sell lamb, eggs, sweet corn and sheep manure direct to consumers.

"We're utilizing our land 365 days a year, or close to it," Kate says. "We're always growing something or grazing something. Because we're not just row-crop farmers, we have the option to use



**In addition to her full-time position with FCS Financial, Kate also maintains a blog, *Uptown Girl*, where she shares her thoughts as a mother, farm wife and advocate for agriculture.**



**Mace and Meyer Lambert help their parents with chores, including feeding their sheep.**

our ground in the way that works best.”

Conservation is a key consideration in the livestock side of the business, too. The Lamberts fence off ponds, restrict access to creeks and implement rotational grazing strategies. To encourage wildlife, they also plant food plots, native grasses and buffer strips around fields as well as enroll acres in the Conservation Reserve Program to make the most out of their farmland, 85 percent of which is rented.

“Most of our rented ground is crop-shared, so the landlords have a stake in what we do, and they’re very supportive of the conservation practices we have,” Matt says. “Many of the landowners don’t live around here, but they like to come back and hunt, so we try to give them an opportunity to enjoy nature in a way that helps take care of their farm at the same time.”

Beyond their commitment to conservation, the Lamberts have made a conscious effort to be active in the agricultural industry. For example, their operation was one of the first farms to be certified by the Agricultural Stewardship Assurance Program, sponsored by the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Matt is in his second term on the board of the Missouri Corn Growers Association, and Kate, who is assistant vice president for FCS Financial in Chillicothe, volunteers with Missouri CommonGround, a group of farm women who interact with consumers through conversations in person and online.

Kate also represented Missouri in



*While their farm on the dining room floor may be make-believe, Mace and Meyer both enjoy farm life. Through conservation, their parents are working to leave them an operation that’s in better shape than when they started it.*

the American Soybean Association’s communications and advocacy training program this fall, and she tells the real-life story of agriculture through her popular farm blog, [www.UptownGirlBlog.com](http://www.UptownGirlBlog.com). Its success has led to speaking opportunities both within and outside the agricultural industry.

“Matt and I are both dedicated to serving as a voice for agriculture whenever we can,” Kate says. “The opportunity

to share our story is a blessing that also helps keep us accountable for the decisions we make each day on the farm. We have to practice what we preach, and we both take that responsibility extremely seriously.”

More important than their ag industry involvement or management practices, the Lamberts say, is how their actions today will impact the future of their farm.

“I hope some day, my dad will hand me his farm, and I plan on doing the same thing with our boys,” Matt says. “Our goal is to leave the farm in better shape than when we purchased it. That’s the one common denominator among farmers. You’ve got to have ground. It’s not like a piece of machinery. You can’t just go out and buy a new one. You’ve got to take care of the land your whole life and for the next generation.”

**“Sustainability is a top priority for the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council and key to our mission of supporting a bright future for soybean farmers. We’re proud to recognize the Lamberts for setting a strong example of stewardship through their work on and off their farm.”**

-John Kelley, Chairman of the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council

# A Lifetime of Service

*Neal Bredehoeft has given decades of service to his community, his state and to his fellow soybean producers. As he nears retirement from the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors, Bredehoeft shares how both he and the Association have grown.*

By Lindsey Robinson

In the agriculture production industry, dedication is a required trait to be successful. Through his work on the farm and for the soybean industry, Neal Bredehoeft has proven his dedication to improving the future of agriculture.

A third generation corn and soybean farmer in Lafayette and Saline counties, he first joined the Missouri Soybean Association board in 1988. As a representative of District Four, he has also served on the American Soybean Association board of directors, including a term as president of the organization and was recently appointed to a three-year term on the United Soybean Board. He also serves as a director for the National Biodiesel Board.

Sitting in his dining room after completing this year's harvest, Neal Bredehoeft remembers when he first learned about the Missouri Soybean Association - not long after it was started in 1966. He gives the credit to his dad for starting him down the path of service on the association board.

"It really started with my dad and his belief that as soybean producers we need to be active in the association and at the very least become members," said Bredehoeft.

A high school student at the time, he remembers then executive director, Tony Ballman, approaching his dad about joining the association. Back then, Bredehoeft noted, Ballman was just starting to build a program and a membership base.

After joining the program, Ballman and Neal's dad went farm to farm in



*Neal Bredehoeft, on his Alma, Missouri farm, reflects on thirty years of service to the soybean industry.*

Lafayette and Saline counties talking to farmers and selling memberships. Bredehoeft says watching them work together to build a program over the course of several years was what really initiated his interest in serving on the soybean board.

"So when Tony called me and asked if I'd run for the association board as a director for District 4, I said, 'Sure,'" laughed Bredehoeft. "As they say, the rest is history."

## Coming Home

Since his freshman year of college, Bredehoeft knew he wanted to come back to work on the family farm. Following his graduation from MU in 1974 with a bachelors in animal husbandry, now known as animal science, he came back to work with his dad. A few years later his brothers, Gene and Clark, joined him on the family's century farm outside Alma, Missouri. He and his wife, Kathy, raised

two daughters and now have four grandchildren.

Bredehoeft says he and his brothers were blessed to have a family operation where all three brothers could fit in when they came home.

"When you first get started coming out of college it's always an adjustment not only for the older generation, but also for the younger generation," said Bredehoeft. "We had to find our niche, so to speak, when we came back to the farm."

In their operation, Neal is responsible for the financial and record keeping details as well as helping run the combine and planter. One brother takes care of the spraying and the other runs the planter and combine with him. Three years ago, one of his nephews, Jordan, came back to join them on their row crop production farm. While helping wherever needed, he is also

in charge of selecting and planting the cover crops. When he came back he also took over the management of a few hog finishing barns they rent out.

“Moving forward, it’s important to get the next generation involved and help set them up for the future,” said Bredehoeft. “Eventually he’ll be in charge by himself and we want him to be able to invest into the operation.”

Bredehoeft noted that it has always been a challenge for young people coming back to production agriculture, but now the investment is on an even bigger scale compared to when he started out.

### **An Industry Leader**

This coming February will mark his thirtieth year of service on the Missouri Soybean Association board, and likely, his retirement from representing the soybean farmers of District 4. During his tenure, he has seen the association grow from a small group to a statewide program.

“When I first got on the board we had an office in a strip mall in the southeast part of Jefferson City,” said Bredehoeft. “Over time we’ve expanded and added staff, and we’ve also grown and developed new programs.”

During his time on the board, the association built an office and now as he leaves, they are beginning to look into more development. He says that much of their success has come from program expansion. Looking back through all the soybean programs they’ve created, he says many of the priorities they have today are programs he couldn’t have envisioned when he first started as a director on the board.

“Thirty years ago nobody talked about biodiesel or high oleic or so many other innovations,” said Bredehoeft. “Back in the late 90s, we were talking about if we could attain a 3 billion bushel crop in this country. Now we’ve surpassed that and are passing 4 billion bushels.”

While many things have changed, the board’s biggest priority remains the continued development of new demand for an ever-increasing crop.



*Bredehoeft, sharing an update on biodiesel with KMMO radio listeners during the industry’s early years in Missouri.*

In 2005, while serving as president for the American Soybean Association, he witnessed President George W. Bush sign the Energy Policy Act into law.

“We’d been working on that piece of legislation for a number of years when it was passed and of course biodiesel was a part of that,” said Bredehoeft.

During the course of his thirty-year tenure, one of the program areas he has spent the most time working on is biodiesel. And today he is still working to promote it.

Not only a farmer-leader in the soybean industry, Bredehoeft takes time to invest in his community. He dedicated 15 years to the Santa Fe School Board and currently serves on the Santa-Fe AgriLeaders board. He also served on the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Alumni Association board of directors and the Lafayette County Farm Bureau board. Bredehoeft was also a founding board member of the U.S. Soybean Export Council and was the first chairman of that board.

From all of his years of dedication and service on MSA and in his community, Bredehoeft has learned to have patience enough to consider both sides of an idea. “You have to look at both sides and also consider that someone else has a better idea than yours,” he said. “You have to

be able to make decisions and don’t look back.”

Since he first joined the organization, he has seen the association grow into a stronger voice on behalf of agriculture. He encourages all producers to stay informed and be involved in their association in whatever capacity they can.

“My motto has always been that whatever you’re raising - crops or livestock - you need to be a member of that association,” said Bredehoeft. “They are the ones lobbying on your behalf in Jefferson City, Washington, D.C., and around the world.”

He encourages all producers to stay involved in their association in whatever capacity they can.

During the three decades he has served on the board, some were years he would be gone 100 days out of the year working on behalf of the soybean industry. Without the support of his family, he says it would not have been possible for him to serve his fellow soybean farmers as he has.

For all that he has accomplished, the most valuable thing he’s gained has been the friends across the soybean industry.

“You’ll get more out of it than you can ever put in it,” he said. ■



## Upcoming Events & Activities

- December 4** Biodiesel Meeting - Alma
- December 12** Delta Soil Health Workshop - Sikeston
- January 17** Soybean Extension Meeting - Sikeston
- January 29** Missouri Soybean Association Annual Meeting - Jefferson City
- February 6** District Soybean Meeting - St. Joseph
- February 7** District Soybean Meeting - Chillicothe

## Want More?

Visit us at [mosoy.org](http://mosoy.org)!

"Like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

- February 8** District Soybean Meeting - Canton
- District Soybean Meeting - St. Louis
- February 12** District Soybean Meeting - Higginsville
- February 13** District Soybean Meeting - Columbia
- February 14** District Soybean Meeting - Portageville
- February 27 - March 1** Commodity Classic - Anaheim, CA

## Legal Notice to Missouri Soybean Producers

An election will be held to elect four (4) soybean producers to the 13 member Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, which manages funds collected through the soybean checkoff program. The terms of office will be for three (3) years and the election will be as follows: four (4) members are to be elected; one (1) each from Districts 1, 2, 3, and 7. Ballots will be mailed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture March 2, 2018, to each registered producer in the four (4) Districts. Ballots must be returned to the Missouri Department of Agriculture in Jefferson City, by mail, postmarked no later than April 6, 2018.

Any duly registered commercial producer of soybean is eligible to vote for the Council candidates from his/her District. Producers must be registered to vote. Current registered producers whose address has changed in the last five (5) years should re-register or contact the Missouri Department of Agriculture at (573) 751-5633 or PO Box 630, Jefferson City, MO 65102 by January 31, 2018, to receive a ballot. Non-registered producers must register prior to January 31, 2018, at the USDA County FSA Office or online at: [www.agriculture.mo.gov/councils/](http://www.agriculture.mo.gov/councils/) to receive a ballot for this election.

Any qualified producer may be nominated and have his/her name placed on the ballot, provided he/she presents the Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture a nominating petition signed by at least 100 soybean producers prior to January 31, 2018. Such petitions are available at the Missouri Department of Agriculture in Jefferson City, Mo. Please direct any questions to Missouri Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 630, Jefferson City, MO 65102, or (573) 751-5633.



To learn more about the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council and checkoff investments, visit [mosoy.org](http://mosoy.org).

Made possible by Missouri soybean farmers and their checkoff

# WINTER MEETINGS

Join your Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council for a district meeting to hear from yield champion Randy Dowdy and for the latest on your soybean checkoff investments - including research and education programs.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

*Pre-registration is free* and available until three days prior to each event.  
*Registration at the door is \$25.*

**RSVP Online at**  
***mosoy.org/DistrictMeetings***  
**or by calling (573) 635-3819.**

### February 6

Location: Stoney Creek Inn  
Time: 11am  
Address: 1201 N. Woodbine Rd  
St. Joseph, MO 64506

### February 7

Location: Litton Agri-Science Learning Center  
Time: 11am  
Address: 10780 Liv 235  
Chillicothe, MO 64601

### February 8

Location: Ursa Farmers Co-op  
Time: 11am  
Address: 307 Oak St  
Canton, MO 63435

Location: Warren Stemme Farms  
Time: 6pm  
Address: 165 River Valley Dr.  
St. Louis, MO 63146

### February 12

Location: Higginsville American Legion  
Time: 11am  
Address: 1001 W 22nd  
Higginsville, MO 64037

### February 13

Location: Bradford Research Farm  
Time: 11am  
Address: 4968 S. Rangeline  
Columbia, MO 65203

### February 14

Location: Fisher Delta Research Center  
(Rone Hall)  
Time: 11am  
Address: CR 308  
Portageville, MO 63873

The 2018 district soybean meetings will feature yield champion Randy Dowdy. Dowdy, a first-generation farmer in Georgia, holds the soybean yield record with 171.7 bushels per acre in 2016, passing Missouri's Kip Cullers' previous record of 160.6 bu/ac. Prior to breaking the soybean yield record, Dowdy broke the 500-mark with 503 bushels per acre on his corn.



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