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Soybean Farmer

APRIL
2018



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M O S O Y . O R G



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10 Transportation infrastructure and trade relationships play huge roles in the global soybean market, and the underlying policy driving those is key for farmers.



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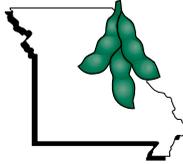


« Cover Shot

Soybean research goes way beyond yields. This issue includes a special report on Missouri's soybean research investments and partnerships.

Photo courtesy of the soybean checkoff and United Soybean Board.





From The Field

Notes from Missouri Soybeans' leadership team

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When I was first elected to represent District 1 on the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors, I came into the role thinking about our family traditions of service and the responsibility to give back. Over the years, and especially now, as people I've looked up to elected me to lead our Association, the responsibility to give back pales in comparison to the responsibility to leave things better for the next generation.



As farmers, and especially when we look at soybean, we're an economic engine for Missouri. Our crop supports thousands of jobs and generates incredible economic impact. We advocate for ensuring Missouri's position in the global marketplace, investing in transportation networks, supporting our rural communities, sustainability and so much more.

Top of mind in that for me is biodiesel. Missouri has always been right up front with biodiesel, from developing the fuel and quality standards to identifying the environmental and economic benefits. We're a leader in production, and I'm really looking forward to continuing our work to make sure we have that market long term. Missouri farmers invested in developing biodiesel and bringing it to market, and it's my goal to ensure we make them whole by ensuring the Governor pays the state's outstanding debt to the Missouri Qualified Biodiesel Producer Incentive Fund – in full.

I'm honored to serve as president of our Missouri Soybean Association, and look forward to working with our members, industry partners and elected leaders to set us up for success for many years to come.

C. Brooks Hurst - Missouri Soybean Association President

Talking about the soybean checkoff, we often discuss it as an investment in our future. We highlight higher market demand and prices, adding value and long-term profitability, as well as opportunities for the next generation of farmers. We point to that \$5.20 return on every dollar paid into the checkoff as proof that it works to improve farmer profitability. Those are all good points, and successes I'm glad to have.

There's a great deal of value to be gained through your checkoff investments, specifically through checkoff-supported research, as well. This issue includes the Annual Research Report, detailing some of the work happening in Missouri to develop traits tailored for our needs and growing conditions and to put management practices to work with our soils, waterways and weather. It's a roadmap to taking your checkoff investing from passive to active - put those checkoff research investments to work for your farm by visiting with the researchers, reviewing the project results and seeing the implementation for yourself firsthand. It'll be time well spent.



John Kelley - Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council Chairman

Letter from the Executive Director

Writing for this issue, the switch to Daylight Saving Time is top of mind. This year, not unlike years past, having the clock move forward an hour triggered an urge to literally “Spring Forward.” It has me thinking about what we can do now to improve our situation for the year, and for the years to come.

Exports. Technology. Trade. Research. Policy – the smart kind. There’s so much opportunity ahead, it’s mind boggling.

Historically, this time change helped make use of the available daylight. Now, it’s the unofficial lead in to spring, to planting season and a solid sign that Missouri’s legislative session is about to really pick up steam.

In some ways, it’s a bit ironic that in the same time we were moving our clocks ahead and I was losing sleep contemplating big opportunities, we were also up against a policy proposal that could become a major roadblock.

Earlier this month, President Trump floated a proposal to cap the price of Renewable Identification Numbers (RINs) – the ‘currency’ EPA uses to operationalize fuel blending through the RFS.

As the second-largest biodiesel producer in the U.S., Missouri generates about 200 million gallons of biodiesel each year. That production supports more than 2,500 Missouri jobs directly. Including indirectly related jobs grows that number to 6,400. Capping RINs could lead to a loss of as much as 300 million gallons of biodiesel volume. That’s lost demand, lost market for soybean oil and lost value for farmers. That’s a loss to the tune of 16 cents a bushel to soybean farmers... and because we’d see a drop in demand for soybean oil for biodiesel production, livestock farmers could expect to pay roughly \$5 more per short ton of soybean meal – meaning an extra \$185 million in feed costs per year.

While we’re still fighting that battle in Washington D.C., it has a doubling-down effect on our team – driving that desire to use the springboard of this time of the year to capture even more value for soybean farmers, to push that much harder on fulfilling our mission of innovation and protecting farmers’ freedom to operate and profitability.

This issue highlights so many of the opportunities ahead, through trade and infrastructure, research, partnerships and education, and I hope something in here gets your mind turning. If it does, let us know! We’d love to hear from you.

Good luck to all for a safe, productive planting season!



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





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.

Soybean Policy Update

from Casey Wasser

First, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to read this update and Missouri Soybean Farmer magazine. I've had the pleasure of hearing feedback from members about the policy information we provide, and it humbles me to know both that our policy updates are being heard and that you appreciate the work we do in Jefferson City and in Washington, D.C.

State Policy

Your team at the Missouri Soybean Association (MSA) cares very deeply about the members we serve and the work on your shoulders every day. I grew up in and live in rural Missouri, and always figured people respected and understood the vital role farmers play in putting food on Americans'

dinner plates. Unfortunately, I've seen firsthand that many folks no longer really understand agriculture, nor do they understand the efforts farmers take to care for their land. In some cases, they don't show any interest in learning about it either.

That knowledge gap presents challenges on its own. Complicating that ever-growing knowledge gap are activist groups based right here in Missouri who exist almost exclusively to attack production agriculture and hard-working Missouri farmers.

These anti-farming activist groups are frequently well funded and focused on provoking reactions from others, especially government officials and

politicians, with emotional and radical views. Their mission and goals are abundantly clear: to paint a picture of production agriculture as evil, and to increase the regulatory burden on farmers until agriculture as we know it ceases to exist.



Missouri's Capitol building, as a major renovation project to restore and preserve the building begins. The project will include scaffolding and sheeting over the dome and isn't expected to be completed until late 2020.

This is exactly why maintaining a strong policy and legislative presence is such a critical function MSA provides for its members.

We're fortunate to have lawmakers who see through activist's propaganda and mistruths, and who understand and seek out plain, old fashioned, common sense. We're proud to be your voice working with those lawmakers, and in those conversations where common sense might not be so common.

Looking forward, MSA members repeatedly tell us that environmental regulation and government overreach is one of their top concerns, and we believe rightfully so. An increasing number of environmental regulations, policies and activist lawsuits in other states present serious threats and challenges to the future of agriculture nationwide, and specifically in Missouri.

It's not only the activist challenges that can cut into your freedom to operate - poorly conceived local or state regulations, as well as regulatory overreach by government agencies, stands to cut into your ability to farm. It also threatens to chip away or entirely eliminate your opportunities for profitability.

We take very seriously MSA's objective of preventing - and when necessary, eliminating -unnecessary regulation.

With that in mind, we rolled up our sleeves this session, addressing head-on on a major concern we identified within state law regarding water.

Thanks to the support of Senator Dave Schatz and Representative John Wiemann, both SB823 and HB1973 were introduced to clarify and solidify

“ We're fortunate to have lawmakers who see through activist's propaganda and mistruths. ”

a highly significant and extremely important environmental exemption that farmers depend on each and every day. The exemption ensures that ordinary storm water leaving your farm field will not subject to Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permits or otherwise considered unlawful under the state's very broad water pollution laws.

The fact is, storm water leaving your fields is both a natural and regular occurrence after it rains and snows. As is tailwater flows from irrigated lands. While farmers work hard to keep soil in place and nutrients in the field, water

runoff from fields is inevitable.

This may seem like basic common sense, but these two bills are both significant and critical to the future of farming in Missouri, and we've seen firsthand the need for this definitive clarification. Unfortunately common sense in government is something in short supply these days.

We're working hard to bring this legislation through the legislative process, and in doing so have seen anti-farming activist groups get extremely frustrated when unsuccessful in their efforts to provoke a majority of politicians to be as emotional and radical as they are... Rest assured, your Missouri Soybean Association intends to keep it that way.

In addition to that work, many other pieces of legislation are on our priority list and moving this session. Senator Brian Munzlinger was

able to pass an omnibus agriculture bill through the Senate that includes legislation MSA supported during the committee process in SB627. The bill includes a provision that will prohibit political subdivisions from adopting or enforcing ordinances, rules, or regulations relating to the labeling, cultivation, or other use of seeds or fertilizers. This legislation aims to prevent a local patchwork of different



Munzlinger

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restrictions and regulations, and will now be considered by the House of Representatives.

Representative Don Rone recently introduced HB2573 increasing the pesticide registration fee from \$150 annually to \$450. The fee is deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the Agriculture Protection Fund and to be used solely to administer the pest and pesticide programs of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Representative Rone's legislation allows for up to seven percent of the fee to be set aside in a newly created Pesticide Education Fund, to be used solely to provide monetary help with pesticide applicator certification programs, pesticide education programs, and pesticide waste and container disposal programs. MSA is supportive of the pesticide program and understands the programs needs additional funding to be effective, especially given changes over the past several years. New herbicides are critical to combating resistant weeds across our state, and our members have expressed concerns on the Department's ability to respond

“ Missouri’s rural communities have been ignored for too long... I believe Missourians in rural towns across the state need us to invest in and fight for them. ”

to herbicide drift complaints and fully follow up on complaints. MSA supports Representative Rone's effort to address the Department's needs and we look forward to working with the legislature and industry partners on a solution as the proposal moves forward.

Funding for infrastructure, including broadband, across rural Missouri has also been an important topic.

On March 1, the Governor announced his plan to use newly available funds for rural Missouri. The Governor's statement says:

“Missouri’s rural communities have been ignored for too long. I’m proud to put forward this rural growth plan, because I believe Missourians in rural towns across the state need us to invest in and fight for them.”

It's nice to see the Governor's office focusing attention to rural Missouri. Within the release, the Governor proposes paying off the current \$4.6 million debt the state owes under the Missouri Qualified Biodiesel Producer Incentive Fund, making a \$45 million investment in rural broadband, and putting about \$18 million toward ports. This proposal will be considered by the General Assembly as they work the budget through the process. Typically, the legislature would return the budget to the Governor in early May.

We're heading into the second half of the legislative session, and anticipate the pace picking up a good deal between now and the May 18 end of session.

Federal Update

As we continue to be impacted by stagnant commodity prices and increased input costs, it's important to recognize the value-added industries that help farmers make it through tough times. Biodiesel is an industry that your checkoff dollars helped establish in the early 1990s, and it's continued to supplement low commodity prices in recent years. Congress passed a tax extenders package in early 2018 that retroactively applied the biodiesel blender's tax credit for 2017. At this point, there's still nothing set for 2018. MSA has urged Congressman Jason Smith to support the soybean producers in his district. Congressman Jason Smith is a member of the Ways and Means Committee, which is currently considering legislation that would apply the biodiesel blender's tax credit for 2018. Congressman Smith was a strong supporter of the tax relief package Congress passed at the end of 2017, and

we look forward to working with him on the biodiesel tax credit.

While MSA, along with our partners, is always looking for opportunities to add value to soybean, we are also continually monitoring and fighting hard to prevent unnecessary costs that would otherwise strip value away from soybean growers. More often than not, protecting that value has your team focused on preventing and reducing burdensome state and federal regulations and policy.

Over the past two years, MSA has worked diligently with the Missouri DNR and U.S. Environment Protection Agency (EPA) to ensure a workable solution is found to on Court-ordered nutrient regulation. This regulation is being forced upon Missouri as a result of a lawsuit between EPA and an anti-farming environmental activist group. Two separate draft regulations have

been proposed; one by the EPA and one by the our DNR. Both proposals place statewide numeric nutrient water quality criteria on all Missouri's lakes and reservoirs. The EPA's proposed rule is extremely over-protective and extraordinarily costly. MSA has put its support behind the state's proposal, one we feel more appropriately balances water quality protection with the interests of farmers, businesses and other stakeholders. The EPA's proposal is unacceptable and we have made that point explicitly clear in Jefferson City and to EPA staff and leadership.

MSA has fought hard and continues to fight to ensure the final nutrient regulation will both minimize unnecessary impact and cost to Missouri farmers - as well as to our rural communities. A final decision from EPA is expected later this year. ■



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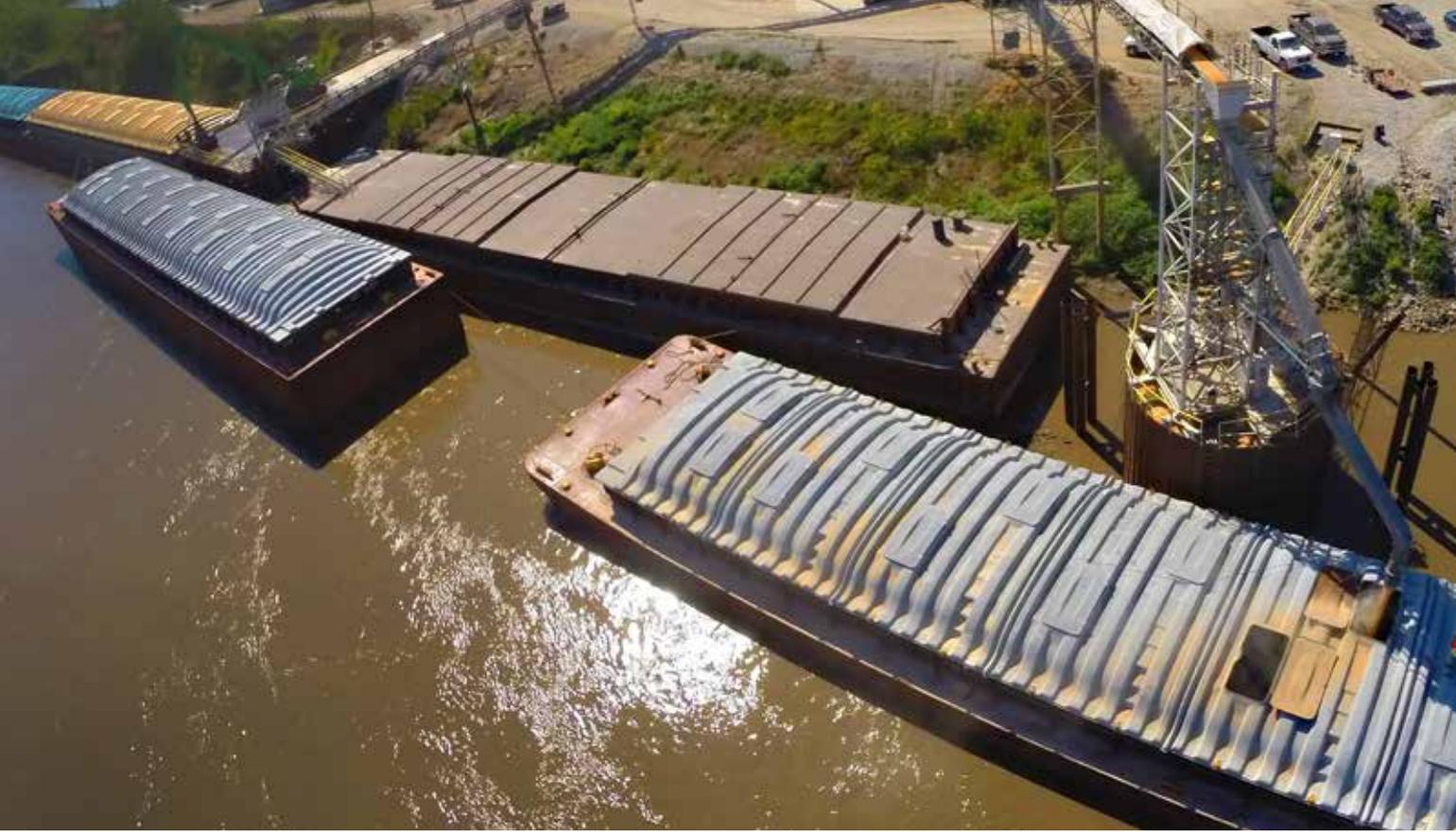


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Navigating the Value of a Soybean

A global soybean marketplace means many factors influence what farmers receive for their soybean. This article explores transportation infrastructure, soy demand and international relationships, as well as policy and regulatory efforts.

By Jamie Johansen and Kelly Marshall, Honey Creek Media

Photos by Jason Jenkins, Mill Creek Communications

Ask a Missouri soybean grower what's on their mind this spring and you'll get many answers. Infrastructure probably won't be top of the list.

That's a pattern Todd Gibson sees a lot. As a soybean grower from Norborne, Missouri and member of the United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) board of directors, Gibson says many of his fellow farmers have other things top of mind until it's time to take grain to the elevator.

For Gibson, it's a complex topic that affects more than hauling.

"Not... just getting to the elevator, but where does it go and how does it go somewhere else?" he asks.

That getting and going is, of course, exports. Growers might look to improve farm receipts by shaving costs, but it is the export market that most impacts the value of every soybean grown in the state and infrastructure that most impacts the effectiveness of exports.

Missourians may be proud of many things in their state, but a series of six public hearings over the course of last summer and fall revealed residents have serious concerns with the highway system. More than 10,000 of Missouri's bridges are rated either "impassable" or have weight restrictions based on their condition.

The Missouri Department of Transportation is responsible for the 7th largest highway system in the U.S., but is



Barge loading at AgriServices of Brunswick along the Missouri River



Todd Gibson

46th in terms of funding.

Weight-limited or closed bridges create challenges for farmers getting their crops to market, including lighter loads and longer routes, greater fuel costs and lost opportunities due to delays.

Taking a soybean harvest from the Midwest to Shanghai, China costs about \$60 per metric ton. In South America

costs rise to about \$90 for a similar trip, Gibson explains.

The difference in transportation costs means U.S. farmers have a competitive advantage over growers from other countries, like Brazil and Argentina.

“We are blessed, even though we complain sometimes about our roads and bridges and our locks and dams, but it is still better than some of the other countries,” Gibson says. “We have that to our advantage, but we have to continue to improve.”

Farmers along the Ohio River have already experienced what Gibson says he hopes Missouri growers never have to.

The Ohio River, as it runs through southern Illinois and Kentucky, is one of the busiest – and most bottlenecked – waterways, and is often pointed to as an example of crumbling infrastructure pushed decades past it’s intended lifespan.

“In short, the challenge is we have a 21st century industry relying on early 20th century infrastructure,” Mike Steenhoek, Soy Transportation Coalition executive director, told Missouri Soybean Farmer magazine last year.

“...If that grain isn’t going by barge it has to go by rail or by highway. So let’s use our natural resources with the Missouri and Ohio and Mississippi rivers and get all our grain down to the Gulf that way,” says Gibson.

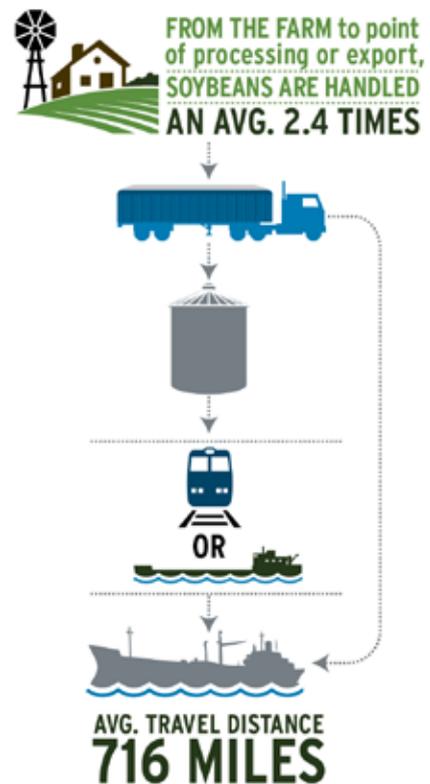
It isn’t an option to brush the issue aside, Gibson stresses.

Investing in locks and dams is a plan the American Soybean Association strongly supports. The Association is working with policy makers on direct funding to build new and larger locks and dams to the tune of

about \$8.7 billion, plus more long-term funding to handle the maintenance of the nation’s navigation channels and ports.

Among the discussion points on funding for the future is the revenue generated by the 75 hydropower plants operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Those plants generate \$5.5 billion per year, \$1.5 billion of which goes into the General Treasury.

Directly 10 percent of that revenue into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund would support the \$400 million per year construction portfolio that provided for work on some of the nations oldest locks and dams over the past few years, directly supporting commercial navigation.



Sources: USDA, USACOE, USITC, Informa

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As chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, Missouri Congressman Sam Graves is one of the leaders engaged in those discussions.

“We are a country that is on the move,” explains Graves. “Whether it’s people, goods, services, everything, it’s on the move and our infrastructure has suffered for that. So the biggest focus is on improving the economy and getting the infrastructure back into the shape it needs to be in.”

Currently, Graves and members of the committee are looking at a package that would include a broad range of national needs: highways and bridges, but also rural broadband, water and sewer systems, pipelines, aviation transportation, and rail. The focus, Graves says, will be to improve trade corridors.

Soybean farmers could expect to see gains from such a plan.

“Getting the soybeans to the marketplace, to the elevator and then right on down [...] to the export facilities, and then obviously being able to load ships and move them overseas, it’s all

“When a farmer gets up it seems their eyes just perk up a little bit... They have all kinds of questions, just about our family and operation. They want to know personally where it [soybean] comes from.”

-Todd Gibson

part of it,” Graves says.

With roughly half of Missouri’s soybean crop destined for export markets, improving transportation infrastructure stands to make an impact along the entire value chain, affecting farmers, processors, retailers and others across Missouri and the U.S. – in both rural



Infrastructure challenges can leave farmers inefficiently hauling lighter loads and making longer trips to sell their crops.

communities and more developed areas.

Graves says he feels his conversations on the Hill indicate there is support for rural communities.

Transportation infrastructure is one piece of capturing the value of soybean. Ensuring markets are available to Missouri and U.S. soybean is another.

If the soybean value chain could be compared to raising a crop, transportation

might be compared to the field prep. Highways and waterways could be a good burn-down and pre-application of fertilizer. The seed is trade agreements, and from there the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) would be our highest producing variety.

That highest producing variety is

currently the subject of a great deal of scrutiny.

With negotiations open on NAFTA, the impact on soybean markets is top of mind for many. Mexico is the second largest buyer of U.S. soybeans, behind only China, and Canada has been the U.S.’s strongest trading partner until this year.

The 23-year-old NAFTA agreement could

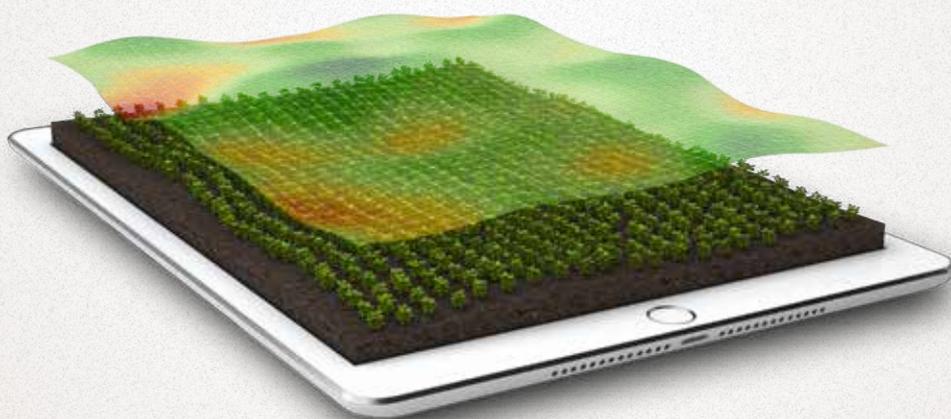


Congressman Sam Graves

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use some updating, says Senator Roy Blunt. Likewise, he urges caution.

“I think we need to be very careful here that we don’t take our very best trading partners and our neighbors in North America and create any kind of unnecessary obstacle to trade, particularly in the commodities,” Blunt says. “Trade is strong going both ways and a lot of those commodities go to Mexico and Canada. We need to be sure we continue to have that market.”

The March round of NAFTA talks in Mexico City were expected to be critical and were watched closely.



Senator Roy Blunt

“[It’s] hard to be launching a tariff against a country that is our neighbor [...] and even beyond that, saying we’re doing that because of National Defense,” Blunt says. “If we are in a situation where steel from Canada is a national defense problem, we’ve got lots of problems, way beyond steel from Canada.”

Placing a tariff on steel and aluminum coming in from Canada wasn’t what Senator Blunt expected.

One of those problems is that commodities are likely to top the list

“We are a country that is on the move. Whether it’s people, goods, services, everything, it’s on the move and our infrastructure has suffered for that.”

-Congressman Sam Graves

should the U.S. get into a trade war, explains Blunt. A case can be made that U.S. grain is of higher quality and more competitive than anywhere in the world, but given the global competition in the commodity markets, a trade war could have a negative impact pretty quickly.

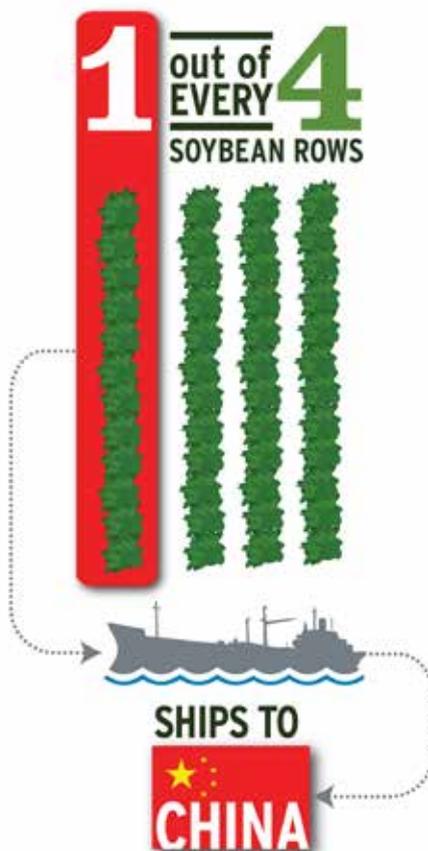
Nationally, NAFTA accounts for \$3 billion in soy, and exports to Mexico have quadrupled.

“We’re looking at lots of money, lots of opportunity,” says Blunt. “And we always want to remember around production agriculture all the things that go with that-- the transportation part of that, the barge traffic [...], the railroad traffic, the insurance-- all the things that go with a growing economy.”

Missouri exported \$3.5 billion worth of agriculture products in 2016, and \$1.2 billion of that was soybeans. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce says the Show Me State is the fifth most impacted state in terms of NAFTA, with an impact rating of “Severe” in the event of losing the agreement.

States that depend on the farm economy have already seen what low commodity prices can do to farmers and industries that support agriculture. The hit Missouri stands to take if NAFTA falls would directly affect the more than 250,000 Missouri jobs are directly linked to trade with Canada and Mexico.

Beyond the weight of NAFTA, other trade agreements and regulatory efforts – including phytosanitary requirements – help to shape the global soybean market.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau/USDA-NASS

The USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has worked to secure the relationship with China by taking new phytosanitary measures. Past concerns about foreign material in soybean shipments have led to the creation of a certification for soybean shipments headed to China when more than 1 percent is foreign material.

The measure, considered by some to be a patch, allows the U.S. to send soy already in the marketplace to China. New, science-based measures will be implemented from farm to export terminal for the 2018 crop year to further address foreign material concerns, according to the U.S. Soybean Export Council.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is another trade market Senator Blunt wishes the United States could have taken part in.

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"[When] you open those markets to us the first benefits are going to be agricultural products, but lots of beneficiaries that come after that that go across our whole economy. We make lots of cars in our state, we make lots of other products in our state that I think continue to benefit from opening markets rather than closing markets," Blunt says.

“ If that grain isn't going by barge it has to go by rail or highway. ”

-Todd Gibson

The importance of trade opportunities to a world expecting a massive population growth is on Senator Blunt's mind as well.

Food demands are expanding every year, especially in developing nations that are enjoying more protein than ever before, according to the U.S. Soybean Export Council. Through soybean checkoff investments, they and their partners are safeguarding the trade relationships already in play with countries like India and Taiwan. They're also cultivating new partnerships.

"With some of the money we're using to invest in these projects-when we go over to talk to some of our consumers, we get a chance to talk to them about the meal quality, the protein, and kind of brag about that, but we also ask what they want and then try to give them what they want as well," says Todd Gibson of his role with the U.S. Soybean Export Council and as a Missouri soybean farmer.

The importance of the work being done by Gibson and other farmers is key to the success of relationships around the world. During trade missions abroad and while hosting delegations in the Midwest, buyers are consistently excited to meet American farmers and get to know the people behind the commodities.

"When a farmer gets up it seems their eyes just perk up a little bit and they do have an interest in knowing where those beans are coming from," Gibson says. "They have all kinds of questions, just about our family and operation. They want to know personally just exactly where it comes from, so I guess that's part of being a sustainable farmer."

The global soybean marketplace continues to be driven by the readiness to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. The value of soybean isn't set solely by any one segment of the value chain, but by a network built upon transportation, regulation and relationships. ■



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Want More?

Check out the online edition at mosoy.org to hear from Gibson, Blunt and Graves firsthand.

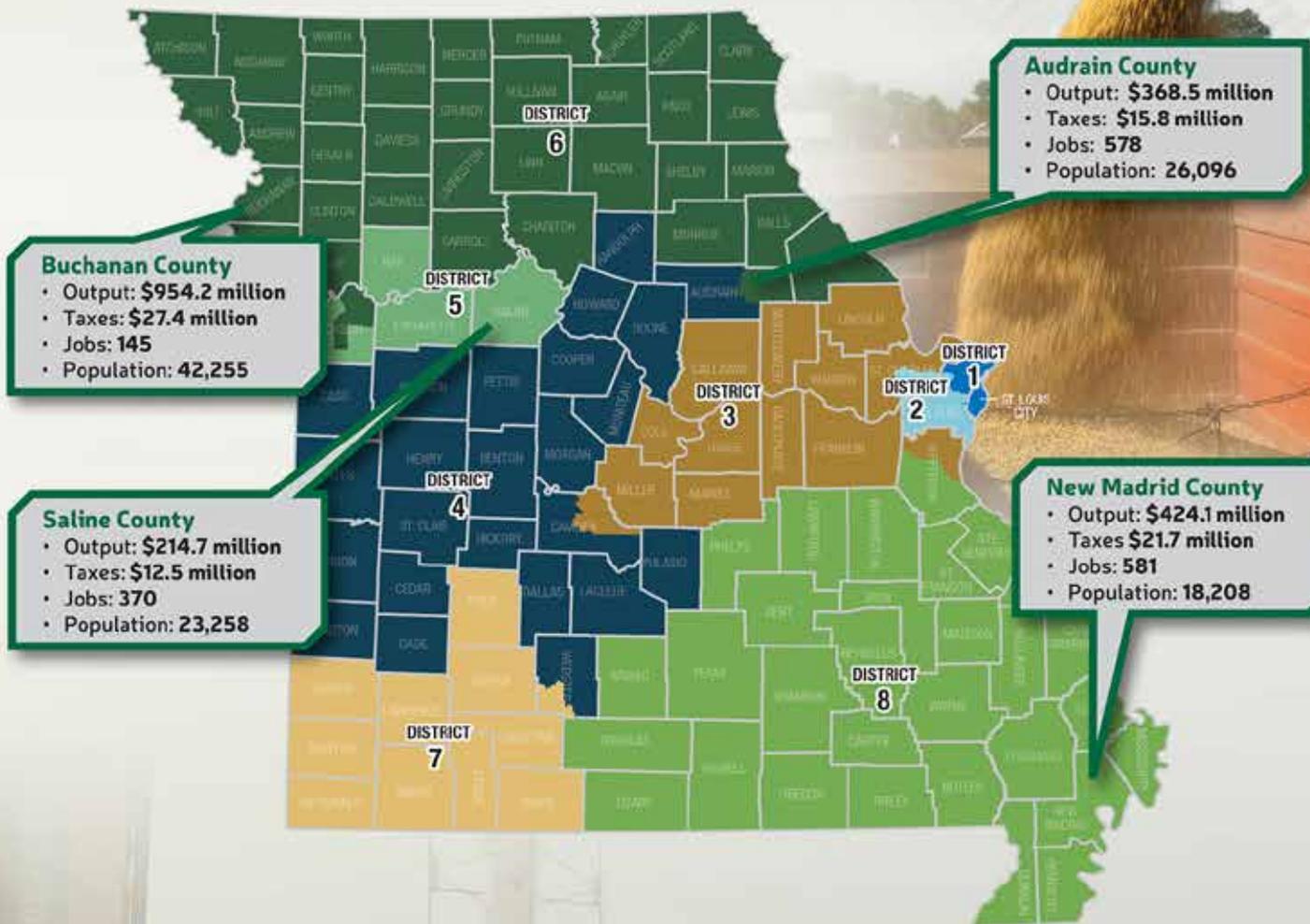
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Soybean: Missouri's Economic Engine



Buchanan County
 • Output: \$954.2 million
 • Taxes: \$27.4 million
 • Jobs: 145
 • Population: 42,255

Saline County
 • Output: \$214.7 million
 • Taxes: \$12.5 million
 • Jobs: 370
 • Population: 23,258

Audrain County
 • Output: \$368.5 million
 • Taxes: \$15.8 million
 • Jobs: 578
 • Population: 26,096

New Madrid County
 • Output: \$424.1 million
 • Taxes: \$21.7 million
 • Jobs: 581
 • Population: 18,208

Soybean Production by Congressional District:

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



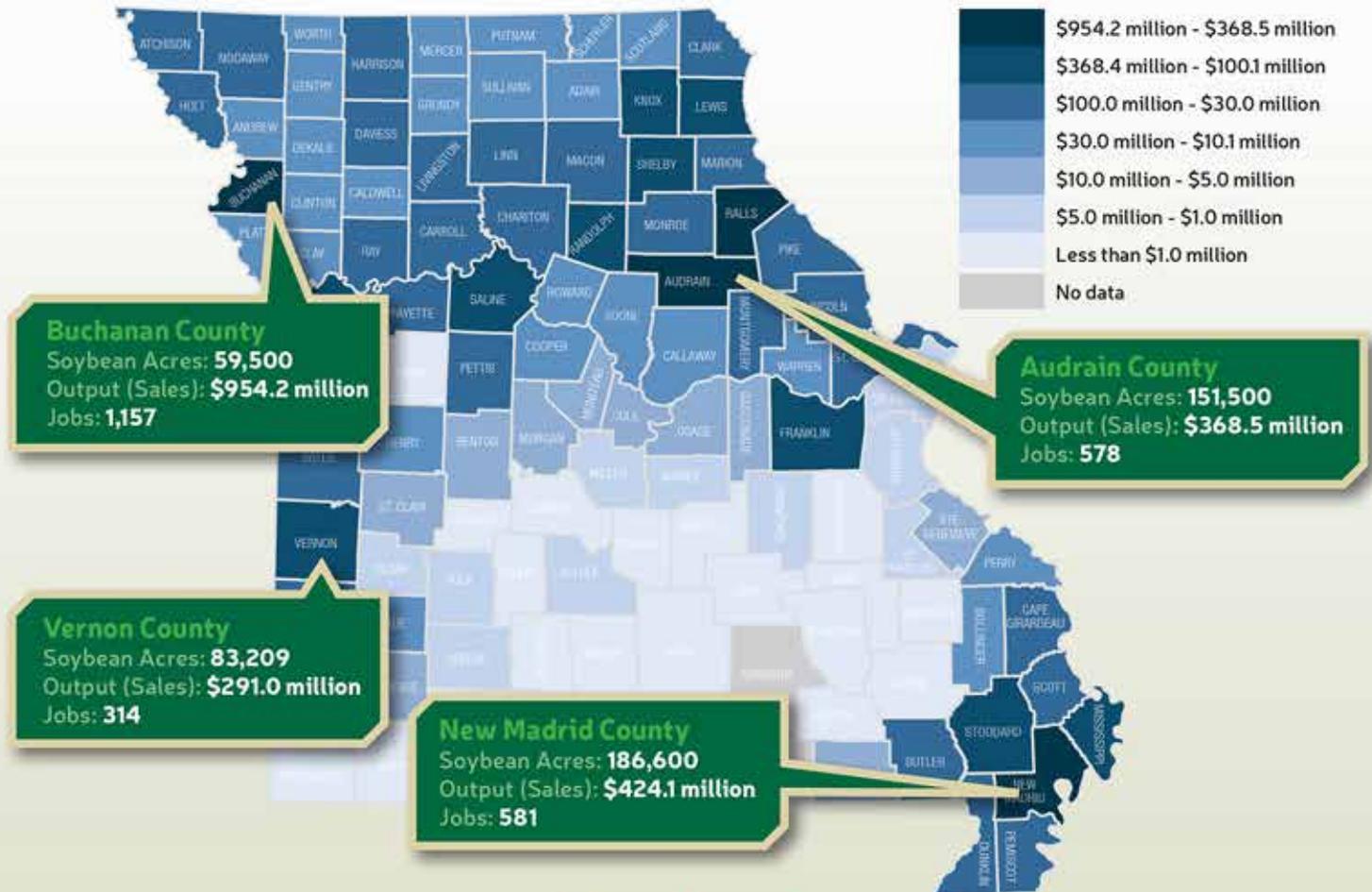
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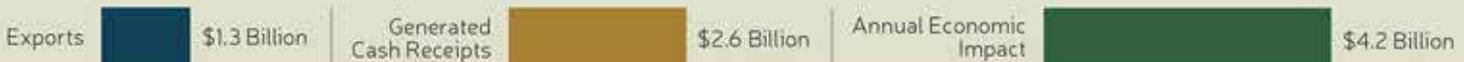
The Economic Impact of Soybean in Missouri

Soybean is the state's top cash crop and a key economic driver for Missouri.

Missouri's soybean value chain contributes **\$7.7 billion** in total output, **\$3.2 billion** in added value, **\$1.4 billion** in labor income, and more than **20,700 jobs** to the state's economy.



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Data provided by Decision Innovation Solutions, 2017

2018 Soybean Yield Contest



Soybean farmers have until September 1 to get their entry forms in for the annual yield contest. Planting season is a great time to identify contest fields in preparation for the competition.

By Christine Tew

The Missouri Soybean Association's yield contest is back for 2018 with several changes in response to grower feedback. The tradition of great prizes is continuing, with even more cash awards and automatic honors for growers with triple-digit yields.

For the 2018 contest, the Missouri Soybean Association is dropping the entry fee. The contest is open to Association members, and growers are welcome to combine their membership renewal with their entry forms.

For 2018, the requirement for crop

rotation on contest fields has also been dropped based on grower feedback. Previously, farmers had to have grown soybean in the contest field within the previous three years.

The annual competition recognizes those producers across the state who truly excel in soybean production based on their crop yields. Growers have until September 1 to complete their entry forms.

The 2018 contest will again include regional competitions in addition to the statewide contest. Growers in each of



the Association's seven districts will be competing against one another on yields – giving farmers the opportunity to show their skills against others' growing in similar soils and under similar weather conditions.

All contest entries must use soybean varieties available in the marketplace for Missouri. No experimental line(s) are eligible for Missouri's soybean yield contest.

Winners in the district-level competitions will then go on to compete for statewide recognition and additional

prizes.

Thanks to the partnership of the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, including the soybean checkoff, and industry, top growers can receive

a trip to the 2019 Commodity Classic in Orlando, gift cards to Cabela's and for biodiesel, as well as cash prizes.

Growers with yields of 100 bushels per acre or more receive additional prizes of \$250 in biodiesel Cabela's gift cards. If multiple entries hit the triple-digit mark, the highest of those yields will receive \$1,000 in biodiesel or a \$1,000 gift card to Cabela's.

The contest will continue to recognize winners in separate categories for irrigated and no-till growing methods. Entries must be from fields 10 acres or larger in size and located within the State of Missouri, and all participants must be at least 18 years of age. Each entry must be submitted on a separate entry form.

The overall winner of the irrigated contest will be selected from all entrants who used irrigation on their crop, regardless of tillage practice. The overall winner of the non-irrigated contest will be selected from among district winner(s) of the No-tillage and Tilled categories combined.

Prizes will be awarded during the Missouri Soybean Association's district meetings and annual meeting in early 2019. Winners will also be recognized online and in Missouri Soybean Farmer magazine.

Entry forms, rules and prize details are available online at mosoy.org, or growers can request copies by calling the Missouri Soybean office at (573) 635-3819. ■

“ For the 2018 contest, the Missouri Soybean Association is dropping the entry fee. The contest is open to Association members, and growers are welcome to combine their membership renewal with their entry forms. ”



Soybean Association

The Missouri Soybean Association is a farmer-led, grassroots organization representing Missouri's soybean growers through legislative advocacy, communication and outreach.

By Christine Tew

Atchison County soybean farmer C. Brooks Hurst is the new president of the Missouri Soybean Association. Following his installation at the Commodity Classic conference, Hurst now leads the statewide advocacy organization for soybean growers.

“I look forward to bringing farmers together to strengthen the soybean industry in our state,” Hurst said. “We’re an economic engine for Missouri and it’s vital that we protect farmers’ freedom to operate and competitive advantage in the global marketplace.”

Hurst will serve a one-year term as the Association’s president, leading Missouri’s soybean policy, regulatory and outreach efforts on behalf of farmers statewide. He was elected during the Missouri Soybean Association’s recent meeting, held at the end of January in Jefferson City.

“Missouri has always been right up front in biodiesel, and I’m really looking forward to continuing our work to make sure we have that market long-term,” Hurst said. “Our farmers invested in developing biodiesel and bringing it to market, and one of my goals is to ensure we make them whole by ensuring the



C. Brooks Hurst



Ronnie Russell



Matt Wright



Leadership Update

Governor pays – in full – the state’s outstanding debt to the Missouri Qualified Biodiesel Producer Incentive Fund.”

Prior to becoming president, Hurst served as the Association’s vice-president. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri and currently farms with his family near Tarkio. Hurst and his wife, Amy, live on the farm and have four children. Hurst also represents Missouri on the board of directors for the American Soybean

Association. He was elected to that role in 2014.

In addition to Hurst, the Missouri Soybean Association leadership team includes newly elected vice-president Ronnie Russell, a soybean farmer from Richmond, Mo., secretary Matt Wright of Emden, Mo. and treasurer Renee Fordyce of Bethany, Mo.

The past-president, Matt McCrate of Cape Girardeau, Mo., will continue to serve on the board of directors representing District 7.

Elections for those seats representing districts 4 and 6 on the board of directors were held during their district meetings. During the District 4 meeting, Garrett Riekhof, a farmer from Higginsville, was elected to a three-year term. At the District 6 meeting, Dan Brunjes, a farmer from Labadi, was elected, also to a three-year term.

Director elections were also held at the soybean meetings for districts 1, 2, 3 and 7. During those meetings, incumbents C. Brooks Hurst of Tarkio, Cody Brock of Norborne, Matt Wright of Emden



Renee Fordyce



Matt McCrate

“We’re an economic engine for Missouri and it’s vital that we protect farmers’ freedom to operate and competitive advantage in the global marketplace.”

–C. Brooks Hurst

Two long-time members of the Missouri Soybean Association leaders retired from the board of directors in early 2018. Neal Bredehoeft, of Alma, and Warren Stemme, of Chesterfield, were elected to represent districts 4 and 6, respectively, in 1988.

Both Bredehoeft and Stemme served on the Association’s executive board, as well as many committees. They were honored during the Missouri Soybean Association annual meeting in Jefferson City and during their respective district soybean meetings earlier this year.

and Peter Rost Jr. of New Madrid were reelected to the board of directors on behalf of their respective districts. Each was elected to a three-year term.

Training for newly-elected directors will be held in the spring of 2018.

To learn more about how the Missouri Soybean Association works to increase the profitability of Missouri soybean farmers through advocacy and education programs, and to join the Association, visit its home online at mosoy.org. ■

HONOR WALL

Good news from those working on behalf of Missouri soybean farmers

Missouri's DuPont Young Leaders

Congratulations to Dane Diehl and Erica Wagenknecht, Missouri's DuPont Young Leader program farmers for 2017-2018. Diehl and Wagenknecht completed Phase II of the leadership training and development program last month in conjunction with Commodity Classic.

Diehl and Wagenknecht farm together in Bates County.

The DuPont Young Leader Program is designed to identify new and aspiring leaders within the agriculture community and provide them with opportunities to enhance their skills and network with other growers. Representatives from 19 states and Canada participated in the program.

As part of their training, Diehl and Wagenknecht met with directors from the American Soybean Association, as well as former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Krysta Harden. This was the second session of the DuPont Young Leader program. During the first session, the group met in Johnston, Iowa for a session on leadership and networking. In addition to the training program, participants participated in the Commodity Classic, hearing from industry and farmer leaders, as well as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.

To learn more, visit soygrowers.com.

The American Soybean Association contributed to this piece.



Erica Wagenknecht and Dane Diehl

Ecker Confirmed to Highways and Transportation Commission

Terry Ecker, a farmer from Elmo, began 2018 with his confirmation to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission by the Missouri Senate. He raises soybean, corn and cattle with his wife, Susan, as Ecker Farms in Nodaway County.

Ecker was appointed to the commission in September by Missouri Governor Eric Greitens.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission is the six-member board that governs the Missouri Department of Transportation. MoDOT's director and secretary to the commission are appointed by the commission.

Commission members are appointed for a six-year term by the governor and are confirmed by the Missouri Senate. Ecker's term expires March 1, 2023.

In addition to Ecker Farms, Terry Ecker previously represented Missouri on the United Soybean Board and the U.S. Soybean Export Council. Ecker is also a member of the Missouri Soybean Association. Ecker also previously served as Agriculture Liaison for Congressman Sam Graves' Office.

Ecker holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture economics from the University of Missouri.



Terry Ecker

ASA Names Warren Stemme Outstanding State Volunteer

The American Soybean Association (ASA) recognized Warren Stemme, from Chesterfield, Mo., with its Outstanding State Volunteer Award at its annual awards banquet during the 2018 Commodity Classic in Anaheim, Calif.

The Outstanding Volunteer Award recognizes the dedication and exemplary contributions of volunteers with at least three years of volunteer service in any area of their state association operation.

Stemme is recognized by his state association as being a “standout” volunteer who is always willing to take on challenging tasks to help the association. He’s worked on policy development, advocacy activity, grower engagement, membership recruiting and fundraising.

Stemme has served in all the top farmerleadership positions with the Missouri Soybean Association, he is also recognized for mentoring young growers and helping guide them toward leadership positions.

“Warren Stemme is the association leader we all hope to grow up to be,” wrote Missouri Soybean Association’s Matt McCrate in his nomination letter. “He seeks to find the best in others and to be that rising tide that lifts all boats, rather than to raise his personal profile.”

Stemme’s many years of volunteer work at the state level has helped create financial stability for the Missouri Soybean Association and solid positioning for the organization’s future. He’s been a champion for biodiesel, research and education over more than three decades of volunteering with the Missouri Soybean Association and Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, as well as other state and national groups.

“Warren understands the need to engage non-farmers from the U.S. - both politicians and influential individuals,” said Jim Sutter, CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council, as part of Stemme’s nomination. “Warren is a great asset to the U.S. Soy Family and truly exemplifies what it is to be a U.S. Soy farmer to our international customers.”

Stemme regularly opens his farm for farmer-focused events as well. He is committed to relationship building and strategic initiatives that help further the mission of the Missouri Soybean Association, as well as other agriculture groups.

“Warren’s farm has been a traditional tour stop during the St. Louis Agribusiness Club’s Congressional Ag Tour,” wrote Denny Mertz, a Chesterfield farmer and lifetime member of the Missouri Soybean Association in his letter of recommendation for Stemme.

“Warren’s commitment to telling agriculture’s message goes beyond just sharing his time and farm,” Mertz continued, sharing the story of Stemme’s investment in making an old machine shed into an insulated meeting venue complete with restrooms, heat and air conditioning, and a kitchen.

Elected to the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors in 1997, he served the maximum two year-long terms in each executive committee role (Treasurer 1999-2001, Secretary 2001-2003, Vice-President 2003-2005, and President 2005-2006). Warren retired from the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors earlier this year.

Warren was nominated for the award by McCrate and Gary Wheeler, CEO/executive director for the Missouri Soybean Association and Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, in late 2017. ■



ASA President John Heisdorffer (left) presents Warren Stemme (right) with Outstanding State Volunteer Award during the annual ASA Banquet at Commodity Classic.



Urban Understanding

St. Louis area farmer Warren Stemme has given decades to serving his fellow soybean farmers. He shares his take on opening his farm to his urban neighbors.

**By Allison Jenkins,
Mill Creek Communications**

Photos by Allison Jenkins, and
courtesy of Valerie Mertz and
Missouri Farmers Care

Farming among nearly 3 million people in the 19th largest metropolitan district in the U.S. may seem like a nearly impossible challenge. Development is encroaching. Land values are increasing. Traffic is intensifying.

Fourth-generation farmer Warren Stemme of St. Louis, Mo., faces these obstacles and more on his 1,200-acre row-crop operation, where he raises soybeans, corn and wheat. He works much of the same land that his great-



Warren Stemme

With his farm conveniently located in Chesterfield, Warren Stemme often hosts groups of urban and suburban Missourians looking to learn more about farming.

grandfather farmed in 1869, but the landscape bears little resemblance to that farm of yesteryear.

Today, Stemme's crops surround a casino, and he transports equipment up and down a bustling four-lane thoroughfare. His hillside homeplace, where cattle once grazed, is now a subdivision. At any moment, landlords could decide that the acreage he rents is much more valuable for its development potential.

Still, this locale just outside Chesterfield has its advantages, says Stemme, who has farmed full time since he returned from the University of Missouri 1984 with degrees in agricultural economics and agronomy. Nestled along the Missouri River, the family farm is rich for crop production and close to river terminal markets.

"This is good river-bottom soil, so we typically beat the state average yields," Stemme says. "Plus, I have access to at least four different grain companies — big elevators — within 20 miles. There's enough competition here that they are bidding for your business."

The 56-year-old farmer also finds this region ripe with opportunity when it comes to educating others about farming. Highly regarded as a longtime leader and staunch supporter of Missouri agriculture, Stemme regularly opens his operation to everyone from international trade delegations and congressional staffers to agribusiness leaders and students of all ages. As consumer concerns about farming and food production grow, allowing access to a working farm helps foster urban understanding about modern-day

agriculture, Stemme says.

"You know what they say: It's all about location, location, location," he says.

"We're only about 20 minutes from the large agribusinesses in St. Louis, so we're easy to visit for groups that want to get a full picture of agriculture. They can come here and kick the tires, so to speak. Farming becomes real."

The award recognizes the dedication and exemplary contributions of volunteers in any area of their state association operation.

"It's nice to be recognized for what we've done here, but I didn't get into these things with awards in mind," Stemme says. "Hopefully, it encourages other people to step up and do the same."



Stemme's farm guests have included local leaders and international delegations, as well as St. Louis Cardinals' mascot Fredbird. During Fredbird's visit, he learned about sustainability planting no-till soybean through a partnership with Missouri Farmers Care.

For these educational efforts and other notable contributions to Missouri agriculture, Stemme was honored Feb. 28 with the American Soybean Association's Outstanding State Volunteer Award during the 2018 Commodity Classic in Anaheim, Calif.

Stemme spent 21 years on the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors, serving the maximum two year-long terms in each executive committee position — treasurer, secretary, vice president and president. Instead of retiring from the board after his first 10 years, he chose instead to give more than another decade of service to the association, its members, staff and stakeholders.

"Warren Stemme is the association leader we all hope to grow up to be,"

“We go to the same grocery store as everyone else. We eat in the same restaurants. We're not going to do anything that's going to harm them, because it's going to harm us, too.”

-Warren Stemme

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wrote Matt McCrate, MSA district seven director and immediate past president, in his nomination letter for the ASA award. “He seeks to find the best in others and to be that rising tide that lifts all boats, rather than to raise his personal profile. He consistently looks for ways to make a difference that will outlast his service.”

During his time on the MSA board, Stemme worked on policy development, advocacy activity, grower engagement, membership recruiting and fundraising. He said he served the association for so long because “there’s a lot of work to be done.”

“We have so many issues we need to address, and there’s something new coming up all the time,” Stemme says. “It doesn’t get any more grassroots than a farmer voluntarily walking into an elected official’s office and saying, ‘This is what’s happening to me. This legislation is helping me or hurting me.’ They appreciate that.”

With his high profile in Missouri’s ag industry, Stemme has also become the “go-to” farmer spokesperson in the St. Louis area and is frequently featured in local, state and national news stories. He says participating in the Agricultural Leadership of Tomorrow (ALOT) program in the early 1990s helped him understand the importance of knowing your audience and targeting your message, whether it’s in a one-on-one conversation, in front of a group or with the media.

“Less than 2 percent of people in the U.S. are producing food for the whole country, which means 98 percent aren’t. And a good portion of those are three or four generations removed from the farm,” Stemme says. “That’s how they can get swayed pretty easily by anti-ag groups. It’s important that people learn

“We’re easy to visit for groups that want to get a full picture of agriculture. They can come here and kick the tires, so to speak. Farming becomes real.”

-Warren Stemme



Warren Stemme invests in sustainability on his farm for many reasons, including his hope to see his son, the fifth generation of their family farming the land, become more involved.

what we’re doing. We go to the same grocery store as everyone else. We eat in the same restaurants. We’re not going to do anything that’s going to harm them, because it’s going to harm us, too.”

Stemme and his wife, Nancy, have two sons: Ryan, a mechanical engineer in Florida; and Kyle, who is now farming with his father. With another generation joining the family business, Stemme says he hopes to offer more outreach opportunities in the future. In 2014, the family even invested in facilities to better host groups, insulating and finishing the interior of the farm’s machine shed, adding heat and air, restrooms and kitchen facilities.

“If I can get my son more involved with the day-to-day operation, I’d like to host more farm tours for the general

public because I believe it’s important,” Stemme says. “If people understand how legislation and regulations affect us, hopefully we’ll have better support and a more positive outcome.”

In their award nominations, Stemme’s peers recognized him as a mentor who guides young farmers toward volunteerism and helps them understand the importance of building their professional networks. Developing the next crop of leaders is crucial, Stemme says, because the work never ends.

“We have to be ever vigilant,” he says. “As the population moves more away from rural to urban, it’s going to be a constant battle. What I’ve learned the most is that building relationships and educating people yields positive results. But we’ve got to reach more than just legislators. We have to reach the general public because they vote, they eat and they’re consumers. They deserve to be listened to and brought into the conversation.”

Some invest in acreage, he's investing in heritage.



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Rural Radio Renown

Tom Steever keeps agriculture in the know in Missouri and beyond.

**By Jason Jenkins,
Mill Creek Communications**

Photos by Jason Jenkins and
Jancey Hall

If you've never met Tom Steever in person, his face might be just another in the crowd. But his voice? Well, that's a different story.

Tom has been riding along with you in your pickup, tractor and combine for years. During a career that spans more than four decades, he has become a trusted authority in farm broadcasting, reporting on stories of local, regional, national and international importance to agriculture. Since 2003, Tom has been heard across 10 Corn Belt states on the more than 450 radio stations that comprise the Jefferson City-based Brownfield Ag News Network, one of the nation's largest and oldest ag radio networks.

Tom's journey to the radio waves began on his family's

farm in Lennox, S.D., just outside Sioux Falls. Like many in the upper Midwest at the time, the Steevers ran a diversified farming operation, growing corn, soybeans, oats and alfalfa while raising cattle and hogs.

"We milked cows until 1965 and also had chickens," Tom says. "Strangely, the chickens disappeared not long after my sister and I graduated high school."

Tom attended South Dakota State University, the state's land-grant college. He admits that despite pursuing a journalism degree, he didn't really care for writing then. Photography was his

“ I don't have to be in a studio to do a radio broadcast... ”

-Tom Steever

Tom Steever, in Brownfield Ag News' Jefferson City studio.

first interest, but that would soon take a backseat to broadcasting.

"Since I was a kid, I had always had this fascination for people on the radio," he says. "When I took 'Introduction to Radio and Television,' I was absolutely smitten. I just loved broadcasting."

After earning his degree, Tom landed not far from home, accepting a position as a general news reporter for KSOO Radio in Sioux Falls. Agricultural news also was in demand at the station, and Tom naturally gravitated toward those stories.

"I knew the language, so I took my understanding for agriculture as a farm kid and used that," he says. "Just a few months after I started, they offered me the position of farm director, and I stayed there for 19 years."

Tom left KSOO to become executive director of the Sioux Falls Stockyards, a position that included twice-daily livestock reports on the CBS affiliate, KELO-TV, as well as on dozens of Upper Midwest radio stations. In 1997, farm broadcasting legend Orion Samuelson asked Tom to move to Chicago and anchor Channel Earth, a new satellite television channel devoted to country life.

"The channel was on the air for 10 months," says Tom of the venture.



Steever interviews the University of Missouri's Mandy Bish during a field day at the Missouri Soybean Association's Bay Farm Research Facility, capturing audio for radio, as well as photos and video for use online.

"After that, I joined the American Farm Bureau Federation and did broadcast public relations. I was there for five years. When they moved their headquarters from the Chicago suburb of Park Ridge to Washington, D.C., in 2003, [Brownfield Ag News Director] Cyndi Young invited me to join the team, and I've been here ever since."

Of course, the profession of farm broadcasting has changed greatly since Tom first hit the airwaves. He describes the advent of digital technology as a "revolution" that has allowed him as a reporter to share stories in the blink of an eye from anywhere.

"I don't have to be in a studio to do a radio broadcast anymore," says Tom, who has served as president of the National Association of Farm

Broadcasting. "We essentially can take the studio with us, wherever we may be."

Tools such as the internet and social media also have expanded the reach of farm broadcasters. As a result, Tom and his colleagues aren't solely interested in sound anymore. Shooting photos and writing copy for a daily newsletter have turned broadcasting into a truly multimedia profession.

"When I started in this business, I just needed to know how someone said their name," Tom explains. "I didn't need to know how to spell it, and I usually didn't concern myself with such things. Today, both are equally important."

When you may have as little as 10 seconds of airtime to tell a story, Tom says you can't take the scenic route to get to the point. "You get right to the heart of it," he says. "You tell the story in as few seconds as you can and then add to it after that. It takes practice to make those stories succinct and say something."

For the past two years, the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council has teamed with Brownfield to produce a weekly 60-second radio program called "Spotlight on Soybeans." Tom produces



...continued on page 31.



Upcoming Events & Activities

- April 7** *The Farmers' Table Wine Trail - Hermann*
- May 19** *Pesticide Collection - Palmyra*
- June 23** *Pesticide Collection - Perryville*
- July 13** *Missouri Soybean Association Golf Tournament - Richmond*
- July 21** *Pesticide Collection - Nevada*
- August 3** *Missouri Soybean Association Golf Tournament - Dexter*
- August 9-19** *Missouri State Fair - Sedalia*
- September 8** *Pesticide Collection - Jefferson City*



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...continued from page 29.

the segments, which highlight how soybean checkoff dollars are being invested in the Show-Me State.

“It seems to be going strong,” Tom says. “People comment on it and it gets repeated on social media. It has a wide audience.”

According to Tom, the biggest issue on the minds of farmers today seems to be foreign trade. “They have a sense that the price for their product is going to be dictated by its demand beyond our shores,” he says. “Beyond that, people talk about the price of commodities, which is a function of the market, and the upcoming farm bill, especially the crop insurance provisions.”

When not working, Tom enjoys traveling with Lori, his wife of 35 years, as well as singing in choral groups and playing guitar at his church in Jefferson City.

They often visit their son and daughter-in-law in Kansas City.

During the course of his career, Tom has reported farm stories from 13 foreign countries on four continents, including France, Germany, Denmark, Panama, Cuba, Colombia, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, China, Taiwan and Vietnam. He says that no matter where he goes, farm people are farm people.

“There are tremendous similarities. They all are people close to the earth,” Tom says. “The differences are in what they grow, but what’s interesting is the world needs all of it. If someone is raising sheep in England or New Zealand, it has a demand in all parts of the world. If someone is raising wheat in France or Germany, that has demand all over the world. And thank goodness what the U.S. farmer raises has demand all over the world.”



Tom Steever interviews Missouri soybean farmer Tim Gottman of Monroe City during a tour of the Port of Long Beach.

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