

MISSOURI

Soybean Farmer

DECEMBER
2021

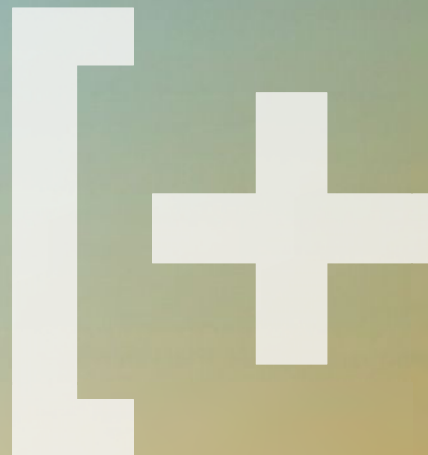
Soybeans, Sunflowers & Service

For outgoing MSA president
Ronnie Russell, advocating for
agriculture comes naturally.

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Biodiesel maintains the top spot
among alternative fuels in the 2021
Fleet Purchasing Outlook survey.





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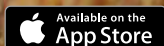
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MISSOURI Soybean Farmer

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14 For outgoing MSA president Ronnie Russell, starting conversations about agriculture is a skill which he has become well-versed.



20 For the fourth year in a row, fleet respondents in the 2021 Fleet Purchasing Outlook Survey ranked biodiesel as their No. 1 choice for alternative fuels.



28 There is a soy-based solution that extends the life of new and existing asphalt surfaces. Farmers and many others are now turning to RePlay.



« **Cover Shot**
Jason Jenkins of Mill Creek Communications captured this image of Ronnie Russell as the Ray County producer completed harvest of his 41st soybean crop.

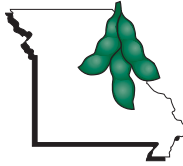


Missouri Soybean Association

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From The Field

Notes from Missouri Soybeans' leadership team

MSA Board Members:

Cody Brock, Norborne
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Renee Fordyce, Bethany
Jason Mayer, Dexter
C. Brooks Hurst, Tarkio
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Tom Raffety, Wyatt
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Ronnie Russell, Richmond
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Pat Hobbs, Dudley
Meagan Kaiser, Bowling Green
Lewis Rone, Portageville

ASA Board Members:

C. Brooks Hurst, Tarkio
Matt McCrate, Cape Girardeau
Ronnie Russell, Richmond

I hope everyone had a safe, successful harvest. It feels good to have another year and another harvest under our belts. Fortunately this year, much of the state was blessed with good weather and a good crop, and so far, the soybean yields have reflected that sentiment.

However, after every harvest, we begin thinking of the new year and the planning decisions ahead. In thinking forward to next season, we are already up against a few obstacles that will hinder our forecasting for 2022. Right now, farmers are looking at increased input costs, an unstable infrastructure and a possible low supply of herbicides. All that — compiled with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) making changes to approved products we have used in the past — makes it difficult to select technology for the coming year.

That is why I am thankful for the Missouri Soybean Association (MSA). When we are busy doing our day-to-day jobs on our respective farms, you can rest assured that MSA is doing all it can to deliver and provide solutions to those challenges we are facing as farmers. It is promising to know we have an active, engaged team in Jefferson City working hard to help not only our farmers' bottom lines, but also the overall legacy of our soybean growers' operations. Serving alongside this group of expert staff gives me the confidence to share that we will get things done in this next year.

On behalf of MSA, I wish you and your loved ones a happy, healthy holiday season!

Ronnie Russell - Missouri Soybean Association President



As another growing season draws to a close, my hope is that your farm met or exceeded the expectations you had when those first seeds went in the ground. Soon, calendars will change, and the focus will be on the new year.

This time of year is one of evaluation and preparation. We evaluate our management decisions and the in-season challenges 2021 threw at us, while the promise of 2022 is met with preparing fields and booking inputs. The work of your soy checkoff is no different.

Your Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council representatives meet during this season to evaluate research projects and examine your investments in education and promotion. This is the mid-point of the fiscal year, and just as a coach evaluates his team at halftime, so, too, does the MSCM board reflect and adjust. At the same time, board members receive proposed work for the next fiscal year. For the next several months, these projects will be scrutinized for their adherence to MSMC's mission, prudent use of farmers' dollars and impact to your bottom line. As always, we welcome your input in this process so we can represent you and your farm well.



May this holiday season remind us all of the humility that comes with stewarding the land. A blessed Christmas from my family to yours, and best wishes for the new year!

Kyle Durham - Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council Chairman



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Letter from the Executive Director

We are nearing the end of another awesome, productive and innovative year full of engagement at the Center for Soy Innovation. It was year of advancement in technology, new uses and policy. As many of you are wrapping up harvest and shutting off those combines, I hope you, as our soybean farmers, are equally proud of the seeds we have sown this year.

To increase the positive news coming out of Missouri Soybean, we decided to grow and expand our team to continue to serve you. Our hope for this new year, with our new team, is to enhance our grower services; cultivate a positive narrative and communications strategy behind our strong brand;

build an interactive educational program for all ages; move the needle with key legislation at the state and federal level; overflow the marketplace with soy-based products; and remain Missouri's industry-leading innovation center for agriculture.

But, to look ahead, we must first value our roots and what brought us here. In this issue of the magazine, we tip our hat to longtime Missouri Soybean Association board member and president, Ronnie Russell. Ronnie has been a friend to agriculture and Missouri Soybean for decades, and we applaud his efforts while making strides for our industry.

Ronnie has been pivotal in policy development and implementation, as well as bridging the gap between producer and consumer. He has made the Bay Farm Research Facility a priority, delivering for our farmers and key industry partners. He has built a strong relationship with the Missouri Soybean Association and Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, strengthening collaboration amongst boards to deliver for our growers. We sincerely thank Ronnie for dedicating his time and leadership to our organization. We also send a heartfelt thanks to Ronnie's wife, Robin, for giving him the ability to serve Missouri farmers for so many years. We hope you join us in thanking Ronnie and reach out to him with warm well wishes as he enters new leadership opportunities.

We at Missouri Soybean have a lot of great things headed your way in the coming months, so be on the lookout in 2022. Engage with our staff and follow our communications to learn more about where we are putting your dollars to work. We want you informed, and we want you active in what we are doing as an organization. Be a part of this new year with us. We would love to hear from you.

Here at Missouri Soybean, we wish you, and your families, a happy, healthy Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God Bless.



Gary Wheeler
Executive Director / CEO
Missouri Soybean Association
Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council
Foundation for Soy Innovation




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SOY

RESEARCHING A BETTER BEAN

Whether you're dealing with drought, flood, heat or other climate-related stress, the soy checkoff is working behind the scenes to diversify U.S. soybean genetics and increase stress tolerance. We're looking inside the bean, beyond the bushel and around the world to keep preference for U.S. soy strong. And it's helping make a valuable impact for soybean farmers like you.

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

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Casey Wasser serves as the Chief Operating Officer and Senior Policy Director 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

It's hard to believe that we're already reviewing legislation filed for the upcoming session. Pre-filing of bills started Dec. 1, 2021, and Sen. Denny Hoskins has filed a biodiesel bill again this year. The thoughts of cleaner-burning fuel continue to grow in interest across the country. And while that's not the senator's main objective with this legislation, it's nice to know we are achieving a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions while sustaining and growing jobs and increasing demand for Missouri soybeans.

Standing with Missouri soybean farmers is our mindset heading into this new year as we face challenges and adversity. At the forefront is redistricting. This overhaul can change the makeup of sitting house or senate members, and it certainly complicates the process for new candidates who are running for districts that have yet to be solidified.

If this shake-up wasn't enough, longtime agriculture champion, Sen. Roy Blunt, announced he was not running for re-election. This sent Missouri politicians into a tizzy as announcement after announcement came out from potential candidates fighting for his seat. Simply put, the upcoming election is going to be very impactful for soybean producers and the agriculture industry.

There was also a major overhaul of staff within Gov. Parson's office. The governor made

...continued on page 10.

“Simply put, the upcoming election is going to be very impactful for soybean producers and the agriculture industry.”

-Casey Wasser

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...continued from page 8.

several personnel changes across five state agencies, including the departure of the official in charge of the state's procurement agency. This sudden shift gives Missouri Soybean another reason to be on our toes this session, making sure the cabinet aligns with our soybean growers.

In early November, the House of Representatives passed the bipartisan infrastructure bill, which was already passed by the Senate earlier in the summer. The roughly \$1.2 trillion bill contains an estimated \$550 billion in new spending above baseline levels. This spending touches every sector of infrastructure, from transportation and water to energy, broadband and the rehabilitation of our nation's natural resources.

President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law on Nov. 15, 2021. This was accomplished through a negotiation with more progressive Democrats. As of press time, the House

Democratic leadership is assuring its more progressive members that the \$1.75 trillion social safety net and climate package, formally referred to as the Build Back Better bill, will come up for a vote soon. However, the more moderate Democrats are awaiting a report from the Congressional Budget Office for a detailed report on the budgetary impacts of the Build Back Better initiative.

Currently, there continues to be a delay with this administration in proposing vital Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS)

volumes. Renewable fuels groups, as well as our Missouri farmers, are frustrated with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) continued delay in releasing Renewable Volume Obligations (RVOs). Under law, these volumes were

supposed to be set last year, leaving a lot of producers with their hands tied.

To touch on the importance of America's soy oil supply, American Soybean Association CEO Steve Censky published

“In short, there is no need to fret over soybean oil supply. Our farmers are meeting the current demands and then some.”

-Casey Wasser

an op-ed addressing claims that there is a potential shortage of soy oil. This fall, it was projected that more than 86 million acres of soybeans would be harvested, with U.S. farmers estimated to produce a record soybean crop of more than 4.4 billion bushels this fall. There is a record amount of soybean oil coming from that crop that is expected to meet both food and fuel needs. At least seven new oilseed processing plants are under development, and soybean oil production by our domestic processing industry is projected by USDA to reach a record level this year — on top of a 26% growth in supply during the past 10 years. In short, there is no need to fret over soybean oil supply. Our farmers are meeting the current demands and then some.

Additionally, there is a new agriculture advisor in office. EPA named Rod Snyder the agriculture advisor to EPA administrator Michael Regan in early October. Snyder's goal is to lead outreach and engagement efforts with all agricultural commodities. Snyder was previously employed by the National Corn Growers Association and is a welcomed addition to the current administration. A total of 14 groups submitted a support letter for Snyder to the EPA, and the American Soybean Association was one of them.

In this new year, Missouri Soybean is setting plans to educate our membership and PAC contributors on pertinent policy information and be diligent in providing valuable resources to help navigate this convoluted landscape in 2022. Our job is to help you. You have put in the hours, completed your windshield time and, we hope, reaped the benefits of a plentiful harvest. Now it is our opportunity to serve you and ensure your operations remain sustainable for generations to come. ■

Want to know more?

MSA members receive regular email updates on policy and regulatory movement. Visit mosoy.org for more.



Missouri Soybean will be back in the state Capitol for another successful legislative session soon.

Missouri Soybean CEO Presented with Honorary American FFA Degree

Gary Wheeler honored during the 2021 National FFA Convention.

Missouri Soybean CEO Gary Wheeler has received the Honorary American FFA Degree – the highest honor bestowed by the National FFA Organization.

This award is given to those who advance agricultural education and FFA through outstanding personal commitment. FFA works to enhance the lives of youth through agricultural education. Without the efforts of highly dedicated individuals, thousands of young people would not be able to achieve the success that, in turn, contributes directly to the overall well-being of the nation.

The Honorary American FFA Degree is an opportunity to recognize those who have gone beyond valuable daily contributions to make an extraordinary long-term difference in the lives of students, inspiring confidence in a new generation of agriculturists. Members of the National FFA Organization's board of directors approved the nomination.



Gary Wheeler



Local FFA chapter shares Missouri Soybeans activity books with grade school students through Ag in the Classroom.

"Gary Wheeler was instrumental in pivoting the Ag Education on the Move program from a soybean checkoff program to a coalition of Missouri's agriculture organizations, allowing the program to connect with thousands of youth," said Keith Dietzschold, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) agricultural education director and Missouri FFA Association state advisor. "His model for Ag Education on the Move helped incorporate FFA members as educators, developing opportunities for students to develop skills in agricultural education and communication, as well as creating Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program options. The implementation of this program has been greatly beneficial for Missouri FFA, as well as rewarding, seeing the model being carried into other states."

Through the Center for Soy Innovation, Wheeler also spearheaded a collaboration across states to build an educational gathering place to connect others to agriculture. The center is built with soy-based materials and incorporates soy-related educational pieces for all ages, creating talking points at each location in the building. Partners included industry leaders, state partners from Nebraska to Indiana, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and others.

"I am humbled to receive the Honorary America FFA Degree from such an educational, engaging leadership organization 'living to serve' youth in agriculture and STEM-related fields," Wheeler said. "Missouri Soybean has made it a priority to partner with the Missouri FFA Association so students across the state can have opportunities grow, learn and succeed."

Wheeler was announced as an award winner during the 94th National FFA Convention & Expo, held Oct. 27-30 in Indianapolis. All recipients received a plaque and medal, and their names are permanently recorded as recipients of the highest FFA honor. ■



Columbia FFA Chapter attends the Center for Soy Innovation grand opening celebration in March 2020.

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Soybeans, Sunflowers & Service

For outgoing MSA president Ronnie Russell, advocating for agriculture comes naturally.

by Jason Jenkins

Mill Creek Communications

If a group of accountants were to analyze Ronnie Russell's year-end balance sheet, they'd likely categorize the proceeds from his sunflower patch as "budget dust," a seemingly insignificant addition to the bottom line of his farming operation. And in terms of dollars and cents, they'd be correct. For Ronnie, however, the value of those 40 acres goes beyond any profit he might realize.

"People love to drive out into the country and see the sunflowers," says Ronnie, who lives in Richmond, Missouri, and farms in Ray County. "When the flowers bloom, people come from all over — driving hundreds of miles in some cases — just to stand in the field and take pictures. When they get here, they also get to see what we're really doing as farmers. I've been doing it for five years now, and it's really

become a tool to talk to them about modern agriculture."

Starting conversations about agriculture is a skill in which Ronnie has become well-versed. For more than a decade, he served on the Missouri Soybean Association board of directors, representing District One. He spent the past two years as the board's president, working to ensure that soybean growers have a voice at the table when issues arise.

"Less than 2% of the population in the United States is directly involved in production agriculture, so it's important that we farmers be proactive in addressing matters critical to our industry," says Ronnie. "If we sit around and don't speak up, someone else will, and it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease."

“We had reporters from every level – local, state, national and even international – seeking comment. Ronnie was ready and willing to go on camera to talk about the issue and how it was affecting things at the local level. What really stands out to me about Ronnie is his eagerness to always pitch in and be there as needed.”

–Wendy Brannen, ASA senior director of marketing & communications

Passion for Production Ag

Born and raised in Ray County, Ronnie grew up on land that he still farms. His father, Rowland, ran a fertilizer business and farmed on the side.

“At one time, my dad was the largest independent fertilizer dealer in the state of Missouri,” Ronnie says. “He was one of the first to get into applying anhydrous ammonia back in about 1950.”

Involved with his family’s farming operation from an early age, Ronnie never really considered another profession. He did attend the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, earning a bachelor’s degree in agricultural education in 1981.

“I was heavily involved in FFA in high school, and I was always impressed with my vo-ag teachers,” he recalls. “It was the early ‘80s, and those were pretty tough years for farmers. Farming has always been in my blood, but I thought if things didn’t work out, I could be a teacher and still stay within agriculture.”

Fortunately, things did work out. While Ronnie worked in partnership with his father for the first few years, by the end of the 1980s, he was farming his own operation independently and slowing adding acreage. Today, he and his wife, Robin, manage roughly 1,700 acres, raising corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and, of course, sunflowers. The Russells also run a cow/calf operation and a retail commercial fertilizer business.

Lessons in Leadership

Ronnie attributes his foray into industry advocacy to his participation in the Missouri Agricultural Leadership of Tomorrow (ALOT) program when he was in his late 20s. The two-year leadership training program is intended for rural

leaders and agricultural producers who have a passion to promote Missouri agriculture and strengthen their rural communities.

“I was part of the second ALOT class, and it was an eye-opening experience to see the political side of agriculture and the policies that directly affect what we do here on the farm on a day-to-day basis,” says Ronnie, who traveled to China as part of the program. “The entire experience really showed me that there’s so much more to agriculture than just production. When I was asked to fill an unexpired term on the MSA board some years later, I knew it was time to give back.”

In addition to volunteering with MSA, Ronnie is a member of the Missouri Corn Growers Association and Missouri Farm Bureau. He also serves on the Missouri Fertilizer Control Board, the Ray County Hospital Board of Trustees and American Soybean Association (ASA) Board of Directors.

“When farmers get up in the morning, we have a mental list of all we need to accomplish that day, but there are a lot of other issues that need taken care of beyond the farm,” Ronnie says. “We rely on these organizations and volunteers to take care of those things. There’s just so much that goes on to support what the production guys do every day.”

One of those individuals working on behalf of producers is Wendy Brannen, ASA’s senior director of marketing and communications. When she joined the group as policy director in 2018, the nation’s soybean producers had been caught in the proverbial crossfire as a trade war erupted between China and the United States. Chinese-imposed tariffs on imported American soybeans had been increased from 3% to 25%

overnight, causing soybean prices to plummet. She says grower-leaders like Ronnie were invaluable to ASA’s efforts to communicate how U.S. farmers were being impacted.

“We had reporters from every level – local, state, national and even international – seeking comment. Ronnie was ready and willing to go on camera to talk about the issue and how it was affecting things at the farm level,” Wendy says. “What really stands out to me about Ronnie is his eagerness to always pitch in and be there as needed.”

Wendy adds that Ronnie has participated in ASA’s “Leadership At Its Best” program, which shows his commitment and dedication to the industry and his role as a representative for his fellow soybean producers.

“Ronnie is great to work with because he has that keen sense of both the policy side as well as the communications side of what we do,” she says. “It’s truly a joy for us to have individuals like Ronnie who understand the importance of both.”

Stephen Censky, CEO of the American Soybean Association, agrees.

“Ronnie is a leader in the soy community not only at the state level but also nationally,” he says. “We have relied upon him in his capacity both as a board member of the American Soybean Association and also as a member of its Governing Committee and leader on our Farm Policy Advocacy Team. Ronnie is a great advocate on soy policy issues and understands how they affect the prosperity of soybean growers. He always is willing to participate in any exercise for the greater good of the soy industry and agriculture.”

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Accelerating Advocacy

During his service to the soybean producers of Missouri, Ronnie has witnessed a number of significant victories for the industry. Foremost among them, he says, is market expansion and development for soybeans.

“We’ve really worked hard to expand worldwide markets for soybeans in conjunction with the USDA’s Foreign Market Development and Market Access programs,” Ronnie says. “In Southeast Asia, we’re building demand for high-quality protein for feeding fish in a growing aquaculture industry. Here at home, we’re working to develop new uses and new products that use soybean oil to replace petroleum.”

“President Eisenhower once said, ‘Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you’re a thousand miles from the corn field’. That’s still true today. We have to talk to our elected officials and agency administrators and educate them about how policies, rules and laws affect the day to day on the farm.”

-Ronnie Russell

Recent issues that could impact a producer’s freedom to operate have been successfully thwarted on both the state and national levels. In 2019, for example, MSA’s efforts were key in the passage of legislation in Missouri that limits unnecessary regulations on livestock operations imposed by county governments. That same year, MSA helped secure final approval of Missouri’s



Ronnie Russell harvests soybeans on his family’s 1,700 acre farm.

Lake Numeric Nutrient Criteria Rule from the Environmental Protection Agency. This important state/federal policy win helped keep Missouri, and not EPA, in the lead role for developing and administering water-quality standards in the state.

“President Eisenhower once said, ‘Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you’re a thousand miles from the corn field,’” Ronnie says. “That’s still true today. We have to talk to our elected officials and agency administrators and educate them about how policies, rules and laws affect the day to day on the farm.”

Organizations like MSA and ASA also advocate for issues that aren’t exclusively agricultural. For instance, the organizations are in support of improvements to the nation’s transportation infrastructure — a key investment necessary for maintaining U.S. soy’s competitiveness in the world export market. These groups also testify about the impact of proposed changes to provisions in the Farm Bill and other legislation.

Ronnie notes that expansion of biodiesel production and consumption in Missouri is a key issue.

“Soybeans are the state’s top cash crop, and biodiesel is a renewable fuel that is clean-burning, sustainable and

environmentally friendly,” he says. “We’re working very hard to develop a standard for the state to promote increased use of biodiesel.”

Consumer education is equally important, adds the 64-year-old. He says the creation of the Center for Soy Innovation in Jefferson City, which opened in 2020, was a significant step toward showcasing the many uses for soybeans beyond food and fuel.

“We have a beautiful building where schoolchildren, legislators, industry leaders and others can come learn about everything that’s possible with soy,” Ronnie adds. “It’s exciting to think about how new developments such as Soyleic, our non-GMO high-oleic soybean variety, can be put in the spotlight thanks to this facility.”

While his term as MSA board president is ending, Ronnie will continue as a director representing the soybean growers of District One. He also will continue to represent the Show-Me State on the ASA board of directors.

“I’m so proud to be a part of MSA and work on behalf of Missouri’s soybean producers,” Ronnie says. “You know, they say you don’t need a doctor every day or a lawyer every day or a dentist every day. But everybody needs a farmer at least three times a day, and to be part of that gives me a lot of pride.”




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HONOR WALL

Good news from those working on behalf of Missouri soybean farmers

Missouri Soybean Grows Communications Team

Missouri Soybean hires new communications coordinators to increase outreach efforts

Missouri Soybean is eager to announce the recent expansion of its staff with two new communications coordinators, Madelyn Warren and Ryan Siegel. In these newly designed roles, the communications coordinators will assist Missouri Soybean in developing communications strategies to enhance the soybean narrative.

“Madelyn and Ryan will help Missouri Soybean build out a communications department, working to deliver key messages to our soybean stakeholders,” said Gary Wheeler, Missouri Soybean CEO. “We need a team of expert staff sharing our mission and vision every day, amplifying our communications efforts and diligently spreading the soybean message to the entire soybean value chain. We are excited to have them on board and can’t wait to share the great communications pieces coming out of Missouri Soybean in the months to come.”


Madelyn and Ryan both have deep and varied work experience in the agricultural industry, bringing a unique skill set to Missouri Soybean.

Madelyn is originally from Dawn, Missouri, where she grew up on her family’s livestock and row-crop operation. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia where she majored in agricultural education, communications and leadership. During her time in college, she had the opportunity to intern with the Missouri Department of Agriculture in the Agribusiness Development division where she continued to grow her passion for serving farmers and rural communities.

“There is room at the table for all facets of agriculture,” Madelyn said. “I want to help Missouri Soybean position its seat at the table by effectively sharing the stories of our soybean growers.”

Raised in Otterville, Missouri, Ryan also grew up in production agriculture. Ryan earned his bachelor’s degree in agricultural education, communications and leadership from the University of Missouri-Columbia. During his time on campus, Ryan worked in education, project management and marketing for several agricultural organizations.

“It is important that we inform others about agriculture in a way that engages both the farmer and consumer, bridging the gap and creating conversation,” Ryan said. “I am eager to invest my skills, knowledge and passion into representing Missouri Soybean and its farmers.”

Missouri Soybean’s communications program provides coordinated, consistent messaging for the soybean industry and helps defend against misinformation that would otherwise hamper consumer acceptance and growth. Madelyn and Ryan will assist director of communications, Samantha Turner, in communicating with staff, members, media and the public to positively influence the perception of the modern feed, food and fuel systems.. 



Madelyn Warren

Ryan Siegel

Growers Selected for Advocacy and Policy Opportunities

The Policy Leaders Fellowship (PLF) program kicked off in September at the Center for Soy Innovation in Jefferson City, Missouri. In partnership with Iowa’s soybean growers, Missouri soybean farmers invested in the program to provide young professionals involved in production agriculture with experience in policy, government and legislative processes.

One farmer was selected from each of the seven Missouri Soybean districts:

- District 1: Curtis Lewis, Graham
- District 2: Nathan White, Norborne
- District 3: Christopher Taylor, Palmyra
- District 4: Brock Billings, Gladstone
- District 5: Sarah Kliethermes, Bunceton
- District 6: Andrea Kientzy, Silex
- District 7: Ryan Wilson, Portageville

Learning from national-level speakers and mentors, the cohort will continue to network with fellow producers and industry professionals; build a foundational understanding of the legislative and regulatory process; engage policymakers to advocate on behalf of agriculture and the soybean industry; and strengthen their personal leadership skills.



Soybean policy leaders gather at the Bay Farm Research Facility

“From polishing our advocacy and leadership skills to working on networking and branding, the Missouri and Iowa Policy Leaders Fellowship program gives me and others the tools needed to keep agricultural priorities in front of legislators and the public,” said Nathan White during the September event.

Members of this year’s fellowship will join the Missouri Soybean Association Board of Directors at its January board meeting for additional leadership development and legislative visits, attend Commodity Classic in March and visit our nation’s capital next summer. 🍷

Baylee Siegel Promoted to Director of Outreach and Education

With the goal to build and strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, as well as educate consumers on the soybean’s value chain, Missouri Soybean created a new role and promoted Baylee Siegel to the position of director of outreach and education. She previously served as Missouri Soybean’s external relations liaison.

“This new role is a tremendous opportunity for not only Baylee, but for Missouri’s soybean growers,” said Gary Wheeler, CEO. “This promotion is a natural next step, working to develop our field service staff. We have and will continue to be increasing our many services to our members, which strongly meets our mission and vision for the organization.”

This position will be responsible for Missouri Soybean Association membership and grower services, which was consistent with Siegel’s previous role. The goal is to expand this program and build a team working to serve Missouri Soybean members and soybean growers from all corners of the state.

The director of outreach and education will implement a robust program curated for the public to continue growth and awareness at the Center for Soy Innovation. Siegel will implement educational pieces to drive home Missouri Soybean’s key messages in a new, engaging way.

“I am eager to facilitate and cultivate new relationships for Missouri Soybean, while building on the critical education piece that is the Center for Soy Innovation,” Baylee said. “We have a lot of great work to share within our organization, and this is one way to streamline that news for a wide array of audiences.”

Siegel grew up on her family’s generational diversified livestock and row-crop operation in central Missouri. She earned her bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Siegel is also currently working on her master’s degree in business administration from Northwest Missouri State University. 🍷



Do you have good news to share about people working with soybeans and on behalf of soybean farmers across Missouri? Visit mosoy.org and Contact Us to send those stories our way to be considered for the Honor Wall in the future.



To B20 and Beyond!

Fleets turn to biodiesel for a host of reasons — from immediately reducing their carbon footprint to providing much-needed lubricity for today's diesel engines.

By Ron Kotrba

RonKo Media Productions

For the fourth year in a row, fleet respondents in the 2021 Fleet Purchasing Outlook Survey ranked biodiesel as their No. 1 choice for current alternative fuels use. Both biodiesel and renewable diesel were listed as popular options for future use as well. According to Chris Lyon, NTEA director of fleet relations, results of this year's survey indicate 2021 acquisition activity will focus more on replacement than expansion.

"This is consistent with expectations, given the fleet purchasing cycle peaked in 2018-19," Lyon says. "Regarding alternative fuel options planned for the year ahead, biodiesel continues to rank among the most widely accepted, representing a significant area of interest for a growing number of fleets. Nearly 40% of respondents anticipate fuel-type changes for 2021, an escalation that may be partially attributed to increased usage of all biodiesel blends."

The introduction of biodiesel blends to fleets began three decades ago as the then-fledgling National SoyDiesel Development Board, which soon thereafter became the National Biodiesel Board, was demonstrating the new fuel to virtually anyone who would give it a chance. Since NBB was born in Missouri — stemming from an investment by the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council in 1991 — and was housed in the basement of the Missouri

Soybean Association headquarters during its earliest years, beginning in its own backyard seemed as natural as the biofuel it was promoting.

Michael Bernich, fleet manager with St. Louis Lambert International Airport since 2000 and a city of St. Louis employee since 1978, says the airport's early use of biodiesel precedes the biodiesel board's formation by a few years. According to Bernich, the airport began an experimental program in the late 1980s with 20 vehicles using blends of 5% to 40% biodiesel. Through this, it was determined that 20% biodiesel (B20) was the best mix for the geographical area. Today, most original equipment manufacturers approve the use of B20.

In 1989, B20 fueled roughly 175 vehicles in St. Louis, according to Bernich. In 1994, as the NSDDB was established and considering whether to change its name to NBB in order to broaden its feedstock scope beyond just soybean oil, the city of St. Louis became a signatory to an agreement with the U.S. Energy Department to participate in the Clean Cities Program, promoting the use of alternative fuels. One year later, the city formally implemented the use of biodiesel in several departments. That same year, Lambert Airport made the decision to fuel all diesel-powered equipment in its fleet with B20 biodiesel.

Above: Michael Bernich, fleet manager with St. Louis Lambert International Airport.

...continued on page 22.

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WISHH is a program of the American Soybean Association and is funded in part by the United Soybean Board and state soybean board checkoff programs.

...continued from page 20.

More Traditional Benefits

The greatest benefits Lambert Airport reaps from its biodiesel use include the fact that B20 results in exhaust indexes that are well below the federal allowable maximum levels, according to Bernich. Also, biodiesel's lubricity — even in much lower blends than B20 — increases injector pump and fuel injector life.

Scott Fenwick, the technical director with NBB, says even 1% biodiesel can provide the lubricity needed in today's ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) fuel. Sulfur is a lubricating agent but, starting in the mid-2000s when OEMs were faced with meeting federal regulations to reduce on-road heavy-duty vehicle emissions for particulate matter and nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur would foul sensitive catalysts in the emerging aftertreatment systems deployed to accomplish this.

"ULSD fuels are definitely deficient in fuel lubricity," Fenwick says. "For today's high-pressure common rail engines, a little bit of biodiesel goes a long way for fuel pumps, injectors and all moving parts — even the pistons within each cylinder."

Emissions are cumulative. So, anything you can do today to reduce your carbon footprint, whether it's by 5%, 20% or 50%, will provide more benefit in 10 or 20 years than waiting until you can go all electric. —Scott Fenwick

Although just a little biodiesel can provide all the lubricity needed in modern diesel engines, Fenwick says there are plenty of additional benefits from going to higher blends, starting with biodiesel's higher cetane rating for improved combustion.

"Cetane measures the ignition delay in an engine," Fenwick says. "The higher the cetane, the lower the delay, which improves cold-start operability, combustion and emissions."

He adds that fuel specifications are such that biodiesel has a seven-point advantage over diesel fuel in cetane.

"That's not to say all diesel fuel is 40," he says. "The average is higher, just like the average for biodiesel is higher than its spec as well." Even at a B20 level, biodiesel's higher cetane rating has

performance and emissions benefits over straight diesel fuel, Fenwick says.

In addition, as an oxygenated fuel, biodiesel significantly reduces particulate matter emissions and unburnt hydrocarbons. Less black soot plumes pouring out of diesel exhaust pipes is very important, especially in urban areas where air quality is of great concern, and particularly for older-model trucks not outfitted with diesel particulate filters. But this feature of biodiesel is also important in newer vehicles that do have these particle traps.

"Burning higher blends of biodiesel means less soot generated during combustion, and less soot means less plugging of those filters," Fenwick says.

The energy security aspect of homegrown fuels like biodiesel was, at one time, an

ADM tanker truck delivering biodiesel to fleets at Lambert airport.





extremely attractive selling point for the fuel. Remembering what the U.S. energy situation was, even just 15 years ago before the shale revolution that increased domestic oil production capacity, one of the most popular reasons why biodiesel use skyrocketed in popularity early on was its ability to reduce dependence on foreign oil. Although this reason may seem anachronistic to some today, it is still important to others.

But perhaps the most relatable benefit to people rather than to machines, equipment, markets, the economy or even the environment, is that operators complain far less about the harsh smell of diesel exhaust — and what that smell might be doing to their bodies after long-term exposure. This was something Bernich and his staff noticed immediately upon switching to biodiesel.

“We have a big equipment garage, and most of our diesel units are parked in there,” he says. “We start the equipment and then open the garage door. Once we went to biodiesel blends for these vehicles, it smelled like french fries. Right away, the smell was much less offensive.”

Evolving Reasons

As established, there is a variety of reasons fleet managers are drawn to biodiesel. Some may grow or fade in popularity over time as society’s needs change or as the market, equipment and the petroleum fuels into which biodiesel

and reducing their carbon footprint,” Fenwick says. “Historically, the reasons change. Back under the Obama administration, the key buzzwords were ‘green’ and ‘sustainable.’ When the Trump administration took over, they didn’t want to hear those words. They didn’t move the needle for them. So then, the buzzwords became things like ‘domestic jobs’ and ‘energy security,’ which biodiesel is good at as well. Under Biden, it’s all about climate change and GHG emissions. Biodiesel has a great story to tell.” And clearly biodiesel is

“There are other options. Biodiesel is the lowest-cost option. There’s no additional cost to the infrastructure, as there is with electric vehicles, and you don’t need to purchase new vehicles. It’s what the software world would call ‘plug and play.’”

—Scott Fenwick

adaptive, too. Fenwick says some fleet managers may turn to biodiesel because of pressure from outside forces, whether government regulations or customer demands. “I say that because some of the biggest global companies today — Amazon, Google, Microsoft — they have corporate sustainability goals,” he says. “ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) programs are keywords today. They’re trying to reduce their carbon footprint by 20% or 50%. Some even want to be carbon neutral by 2050. Biodiesel is the easiest, lowest-cost option to reduce carbon bar none.”

Today, Donnell Rehagen is the CEO of NBB, but 20 years ago he was responsible

is blended evolve.

“Today, if a fleet manager is considering making the change, it is all about sustainability, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, climate change,

for managing the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) fleet. He says the push to “green” MoDOT’s fleet was strong in 2000, and biodiesel was identified as being one of the best ways to do this. Rehagen was instrumental in switching the MoDOT fleet to biodiesel blends.

Today, MoDOT uses more ethanol and biodiesel fuel a year — 3 million gallons of E85 and B20 — than all other state agencies combined. “That’s enough fuel to drive a car to Mars and back,” the department states on its website.

In the past five years, MoDOT has used more than 10 million gallons of biodiesel fuel. From April through October, the department uses B20 and requires its fuel suppliers to provide fuel blended at that level.

Certain jurisdictions, whether at the local, state or even national level, are banning the sale of new internal combustion engines (ICE) as soon as 2035. The U.K. is one of the nations on this growing list, and California is perhaps the most notable big state to do so.

“If you operate a fleet and the government is planning to ban ICE, then you’ve got to come up with an alternative pretty quickly on why

this may not be the best idea,” Fenwick says. “There are other options. Biodiesel is the lowest-cost option. There’s no additional cost to the infrastructure, as there is with electric vehicles, and you don’t need to purchase new vehicles. It’s what the software world would call ‘plug and play.’”

Some in the fuels industry are embracing electrification while others might be frightened by what it means to them, their business and, not to be hyperbolic, their world view.

“At the NBB, we’re embracing it because when we hear a community, state or jurisdiction announce plans to electrify, to us that means they’re having a

discussion about carbon reduction,” Fenwick says. “Now, we can have an open dialogue. We can ask, ‘Why do you want to electrify?’”

Invariably, the answer will be to reduce carbon emissions. But for the most part, the ability to turn over an entire bus or heavy-duty fleet to electric just doesn’t exist right now. Even if it did, or in those small instances where it does, the exorbitant cost would be and often is prohibitive. This is where biodiesel’s opportunity lies in a future seemingly intent on electrification.

The time value of carbon is a phrase gaining in popularity among biodiesel circles. “Emissions are cumulative,” Fenwick says. “So, anything you can do today to reduce your carbon footprint, whether it’s by 5%, 20% or 50%, will provide more benefit in 10 or 20 years than waiting until you can go all electric.”

In other words, some carbon reduction today is better than more carbon reduction tomorrow. The seamless switch to B20 can immediately cut a fleet’s carbon emissions by 16%, on average, according to NBB.

Nontraditional Markets

As electrification pushes its way into light- and eventually heavy-duty on-road markets, organizations like the NBB are reconsidering what types of fleets

“whole new applications that haven’t traditionally embraced biodiesel.” These include locomotives and ship engines.

In 2020, the International Maritime Organization implemented a drastic

“We found that using B100 biodiesel combined with technology offered by Optimus Technologies gave us the best cost-benefit ratio in reducing our GHG emissions. The beauty of this approach is its simplicity. Equipping our existing Class 7 and 8 diesel dump trucks to run on pure biodiesel was an immediate, economical way to significantly reduce our carbon intensity. Biodiesel offers us an easy, reliable and affordable solution for use in our existing diesel fleet with our existing fueling infrastructure.”

—Rich Iverson, fleet support manager for the city of Ames, Iowa

to target in today’s environment. While the case for biodiesel in cutting carbon emissions from on-road fleets today is a strong one, Fenwick says NBB is having important, fruitful discussions with

sulfur-reduction requirement in marine fuel. The organization has been proactively investigating GHG reductions from marine vessels as well. This past June, the organization adopted key mandatory measures to reduce ships’ carbon intensity.

“They have become increasingly interested and are doing their own studies involving biodiesel and biodiesel blends,” Fenwick says. “And they’re not stopping at B20.” He says some ship fleet operators are performing trials on B50.

“That seems to be the new norm heading forward,” Fenwick says. “Unlike on-road, where we have fuel specifications to blends up to B20, marine use is looking to blow through that and head to B50 right away.” Whereas on-road fuel specs in America and some other global regions are developed through ASTM International, marine fuel standards are governed through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Marine fuels fall under ISO 8217.

Several years ago, Fenwick and NBB approached the group in charge of the marine fuel spec and “had a limited amount of success,” he says. Although



Lambert Airport fleet equipment fueled with B20 biodiesel.

blends up to B7 were eventually approved, there was no interest from the marine sector to go beyond that.

“But in the past year, we have been reengaged — and at their request this time,” Fenwick says. Because the ISO 8217 committee is interested in going to B50 in a couple of the marine fuel grades, this would involve a complete rewrite of their fuel specifications.

“It’s a good feeling,” Fenwick says. “Previously, it was NBB trying to drive the issue. Nowadays, we’ve got engine manufacturers — and these are huge engines onboard these ships — sending us their data wanting help to review it. And we’re seeing no issues.”

On-road B100 Use

B20 has long been the blend target NBB and biodiesel advocates have sought for on-road fleets. “I think that’s the bar, we would say,” Fenwick says. “There are some fleets that haven’t quite migrated to that and then there are others that say, ‘Hey, the bar isn’t high enough, what else can we do?’”

In those cases, progressive fleets have options. They can incorporate blends of biodiesel and renewable diesel like RD80, which is 80% hydrotreated biofuel and 20% methyl ester biodiesel. Other fleets are finding success utilizing 100% biodiesel (B100) in tandem with Optimus Technologies’ Vector System. Although fleets may find complete success utilizing B100 without any changes or adjustments, the Vector System can facilitate and address any issues that may arise, such as fuel gelling and filter plugging in the dead of winter. The cloud point, the point at which the fuel begins to crystalize in cold temperatures, of any given biodiesel is highly dependent on the feedstock used to produce it. Thus, biodiesels with higher cloud points may experience cold-flow issues when used alone during the wintertime. One of the ways the Optimus system addresses this is through heated tanks and starting the vehicle on petroleum diesel. Once the system is warm, it switches to B100.

In Missouri’s neighbor to the north, the city of Ames, Iowa, has been successfully



An Optimus Technologies truck demonstrates their “fuel system that enables diesel engines to operate on 100% biodiesel” - a “quick and easy install” for fleet vehicles.

using B20 for its vehicle fleet, including fire trucks and ambulances, for more than 11 years. But after completing a successful B100 pilot program last year with five of its existing trucks, the city decided to scale up its carbon-reduction efforts by purchasing seven new dump trucks equipped with Optimus’ Vector System to run on B100.

“We found that using B100 biodiesel combined with technology offered by Optimus Technologies gave us the best cost-benefit ratio in reducing our GHG emissions,” says Rich Iverson, fleet support manager for the city of Ames. “The beauty of this approach is its simplicity. Equipping our existing Class 7 and 8 diesel dump trucks to run on pure biodiesel was an immediate, economical way to significantly reduce our carbon intensity. Biodiesel offers us an easy, reliable and affordable solution for use in our existing diesel fleet with our existing fueling infrastructure.”

Several other fleets across the country are also demonstrating use of B100 in the Optimus system. For instance, Archer Daniels Midland Co. has been running a trial in five of its heavy-duty trucks powered by B100 produced at ADM’s Mexico, Missouri, biodiesel refinery. In

a program supported by ADM, Optimus Technologies, the American Lung Association, NBB, the Illinois Soybean Association and the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, each of the trucks is expected to log between 160,000 to 180,000 miles during the trial. By using B100, each truck will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 500,000 pounds.

Even the record-setting cold in February 2021 — the same weather event that shut Texas’ power grid down — presented zero issues for the ADM fleet running on B100.

“This pilot, using ADM trucks and ADM-produced biodiesel, has the potential to validate technology that could dramatically increase the use of environmentally friendly biodiesel across the trucking industry,” says Steve Finn, ADM’s vice president for trucking. “We’re excited to be part of this project, and we’re proud to see the technology proving itself — including in extreme weather.”

While B20 reduces a fleet’s carbon emissions by 16% on average, according to NBB, the switch to B100 can cut carbon emissions by an average of 80% — today.

The CENTER for SOY INNOVATION

SOY TO THE WORLD!

The Center for Soy Innovation showcases soy's impact abroad, and right here at home. Soybeans grown by Missouri farmers not only help feed animals around the world – they also play a major part in products we use every day. Experience the amazing versatility of Missouri's top crop through our

- Hands-On Educational Exhibits for All Ages
- Sustainable & Soy-based Building Materials
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To learn more about The Center visit,
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brought to you by Missouri soybean farmers and their checkoff



Gary Wheeler
Executive Director

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 the 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. (See Map) Ballots will be mailed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture on March 4, 2022, 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 1, 2022.

Any duly registered commercial producer of soybeans 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 573-751-5611 or P.O. Box 630, Jefferson City, MO 65102 by Feb. 2, 2022, to receive a ballot. Non-registered producers must register prior to Feb. 2, 2022, at the USDA County FSA Office or online at: 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 Feb. 2, 2022. 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 573-751-5611.



Winter Soybean Meetings Save the Date

January 20 MSA District 1 Meeting

January 27 MSA District 2 Meeting

February 3 MSA District 3 Meeting

January 13 MSA District 4 Meeting

February 10 MSA District 5 Meeting

February 17 MSA District 6 Meeting

February 24 MSA District 7 Meeting



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An Assist for Asphalt

Soy-based solution extends the life of new and existing asphalt surfaces.

by Jason Jenkins

Mill Creek Communications

As Chris Wilson finished sealing the parking lots at the Center for Soy Innovation in Jefferson City, a surprisingly pleasant scent hung in the air. It's an aroma that always draws positive feedback, says the president of Advanced Pavement Solutions of Tiskilwa, Illinois.

"People just love how RePlay smells," says Wilson, who is a distributor for BioSpan Technologies Inc., the makers of the agricultural oil seal and preservation agent. "When we're working in a parking lot, they always comment how much better it smells than the oil-based sealers."

An appealing odor is just one advantage of RePlay, which was introduced into the U.S. market in 2003 as an environmentally friendly alternative to topical sealants

and rejuvenators made from petroleum. Manufactured in Washington, Missouri, the product — which is 56% soybean oil and 88% bio-based overall — extends the life of asphalt-paved surfaces, protecting the paving investment while also protecting the environment.

According to the National Asphalt Pavement Association, more than 94% of the roughly 2.8 million miles of paved roads in the United States are surfaced with asphalt. The material also covers more than 90% of parking areas and 85% to 90% of all commercial airport runways.

Asphalt appeals for many reasons. It's less expensive than concrete, and it doesn't require curing time or extensive site preparation. Traffic can return to an

asphalt surface as soon as rollers finish compacting it. However, asphalt will deteriorate over time if not properly maintained, Wilson says.

“State highway transportation departments, county public works officials and municipalities can extend their budgets for road maintenance and repair by applying RePlay.” —Matt Amick

“As the asphalt is exposed to ultraviolet radiation from the sun, an oxidation process starts to break down that surface,” he explains. “Exposure to air and water, as well as cycles of freezing and thawing, also contribute to premature deterioration.”

When applied every three to five years, RePlay reverses the oxidation process. Unlike other sealants that simply cover the surface, the soy-based solution penetrates the asphalt up to 1.5 inches deep, adding unique polymers that help strengthen the overall matrix.

Wilson adds that RePlay has other benefits that distinguish it in the market. When applied, the solution is clear, which eliminates the need to restripe roads or parking lots, saving time and money. The solution cures in less than an hour, minimizing disruptions to travel or business. And because it permeates the asphalt and doesn’t sit on top, RePlay maintains the surface’s skid resistance, an important safety consideration.

RePlay’s use of soybean oil and other bio-based ingredients qualifies the product for federal procurement under the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s BioPreferred Program. In fact, every lane mile of asphalt roadway treated with RePlay uses roughly the amount of soybean oil from 100 bushels of the legume.

“State highway transportation departments, county public works officials and municipalities can extend their budgets for road maintenance and repair by applying RePlay,” says Matt Amick, Missouri Soybean director of biofuels and new uses. “The Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council

has partnered with BioSpan and the Missouri Department of Transportation on a pilot project, applying RePlay on a two-mile stretch of northbound U.S.

Highway 63 in Boone County to evaluate this cost-effective alternative.”

While RePlay is not a cure-all — replacement is sometimes the only solution for deteriorated asphalt surfaces — the product can significantly extend the life of asphalt when used

as part of an ongoing preservation program. According to BioSpan, spending \$1 to apply RePlay before deterioration begins can eliminate or postpone the need to spend 6 to 10 times more on rehabilitation or reconstruction.

“As an asphalt preservation agent, RePlay is really in a category of its own,” Wilson concludes. “It’s bio-based, made in the good ol’ USA from soybeans. We’re supporting local farmers and protecting the environment.”

Watch a short video about RePlay agricultural oil seal and preservation agent at www.mosoy.org. To learn more about BioSpan Technology’s line of bio-based products, visit www.biospantech.com.



Chris Wilson seals the pavement with RePlay at the Center for Soy Innovation.

Oetting Homestead Farms Receives 2021 Missouri Leopold Conservation Award

Oetting Homestead Farms of Concordia, Missouri, located in Lafayette County, has been selected as the recipient of the 2021 Missouri Leopold Conservation Award. This award, named after renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, recognizes farmers, ranchers and foresters who inspire others with their dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat management on private land.

In Missouri, this award is presented annually by the Sand County Foundation, American Farmland Trust, Missouri Farmers Care Foundation, the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Steve and Sharon Oetting's farm was announced as the award recipient during the Missouri Governor's Conference

“Sustainability is one of the top priorities for the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, and it's outstanding to see the spotlight on the Oetting family's example of stewardship.” -Kyle Durham

on Agriculture in Osage Beach on Nov. 18. For their recognition, the Oettings received a check for \$10,000 and a crystal award.

“The Oetting family have demonstrated the long-term commitment necessary to constantly build and protect their land, allowing this 5th and 6th generation farm family to continue to make a living producing food for America” said Scott Edwards, NRCS Missouri state conservationist. “Being intentional in implementing conservation practices and investing in the future, make this

farm an excellent example of the many good things happening in Missouri agriculture.”

Steve and Sharon have continually demonstrated the compatibility of conservation and commerce on their family's century farm. With their sons, Sean and Clint, and their families, the Oettings grow corn, soybeans, wheat and custom finish 3,000 hogs annually. Their efforts to reduce soil erosion, enhance wildlife habitat and protect water and air quality led to Oetting Homestead Farms being certified as one of the first farms in the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stewardship Assurance Program.

“In agriculture, our greatest resource is the land, and as farmers, it is our duty to be good stewards of that land for future generations,” said Kyle Durham, chairman of the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council. “Sustainability is one of the top priorities for the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, and it's outstanding to see the spotlight on the Oetting family's example of stewardship.”

In the 1970s, the Oettings transitioned from dairy to pork production. To store swine manure, they constructed a three-lagoon system with an adjoining 2.8-acre lake, which eliminated the need to purchase 1.3 million gallons of fresh water annually. The lake is used for watering livestock and other farm uses, including washing barns. Effluent treated in the lagoons is recycled to provide nutrients for crops at a much lower cost than commercial fertilizer.

To prevent erosion, rotational cropping



Oetting Homestead Farms was announced as the 2021 Missouri Leopold Conservation Award recipient on Nov. 18 during the Missouri Governor's Conference on Agriculture in Osage Beach. In Missouri, the \$10,000 award is presented annually by the Sand County Foundation, American Farmland Trust, Missouri Farmers Care Foundation, the Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). View the Oetting's conservation story film at www.MoFarmersCare.com/lca.


of no-till corn and soybeans is used on all available cropland. Underground tile outlets and terraces are installed and maintained. In consultation with a certified crop advisor, the family utilizes soil sampling and variable-rate fertilizing and seeding practices. The use of precision agriculture enables the Oettinges to apply crop nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium in precise amounts to limit risk of runoff and increase yield potential while cutting input costs.

Earlier this year, Missouri landowners were encouraged to apply, or be nominated, for the award. Applications were reviewed by an independent panel of agricultural and conservation leaders. Among the many outstanding Missouri

farmers nominated for the award were finalists: Britt Farms of Clifton Hill in Randolph County, and Cope Grass Farms of Truxton in Lincoln County.

The Leopold Conservation Award Program in Missouri is made possible thanks to the generous support of American Farmland Trust, Missouri Farmers Care Foundation, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, Sand County Foundation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Missouri Cattlemen's Association, Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, MFA Incorporated, Missouri Fertilizer Control Board, FCS Financial, Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Missouri Soil and

Water Conservation Program, Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, McDonald's and The Nature Conservancy in Missouri.

In his influential 1949 book, "A Sand County Almanac," Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage, which he called "an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity." Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 24 states with a variety of conservation, agricultural and forestry organizations. For more information on the award, visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org. 

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