

SOY NOTES

for Kansas soybean farmers

News from the Kansas Soybean Commission — the soybean checkoff | August 2026

SoyFoam™ Coming to Firefighters Near You

Soy-based firefighting foam developed to replace PFAS makes its way to Kansas

"What did you know, and when did you know it?"

John Paul Jones, retired Kansas City fire chief, quoted this line as he discussed health and environmental issues surrounding firefighting foam containing PFAS – or "forever chemicals" – which are known carcinogens that do not break down in the environment.

"Well, we know it now," he says. "Today, we understand far more about the long-term environmental and health impacts of these products. The good news is that we no longer have to choose between effectiveness and responsibility."

Jones has long been active in the effort to eliminate PFAS-containing foam, disposing of his department's entire supply when he became fire chief. At the time, it meant settling for less effective foams. For Jones, though, the issue is personal: he's attended too many funerals of firefighters who died from cancer that could almost certainly be traced back to PFAS exposure. Now, as president of Mission Capable Solutions, he's pushing out a high-performing replacement that's grown in your fields: SoyFoam.

Made with soybean meal, SoyFoam was developed by CrossPlains Solutions in



Firefighters test BigFoot Firefighting Foam during a regional demonstrations hosted in Kansas city. The PFAS-free, soybean based foam demonstrated rapid knowckdown and superior cooling.

partnership with the soybean checkoff to safely replace PFAS and create new markets for farmers. Not only is it biodegradable, non-toxic and 100% free of PFAS, it's also highly effective.

"This stuff is superior," Jones says. "We can talk about its Thermo-Stop Technology™ – that's a trade phrase for us that means it's so effective at dropping that temperature that they're not even sure exactly the mechanism of how it works that well."

To demonstrate, Jones hosted a demo in Kansas City, allowing local fire departments to test SoyFoam for themselves. They observed various classes of fires, comparing its effectiveness to other fire suppression agents.

Firefighters learned about its competitive lifecycle cost. They learned how SoyFoam, unlike other alternatives to PFAS-containing foam, is not corrosive to tanks or equipment and does not cause damage to buildings or yards.

"We tested this out one night and had shin-deep foam running down the street, right? Didn't harm anything," Jones says. "Neighbors came out and we said, 'Hey, that'll fertilize your yard a little bit.'"

Mission Capable Solutions nodded to this by naming their SoyFoam product BigFoot Firefighting Foam™, inspired by a line Jones couldn't get out of his head: "Leave only footprints."

SoyFoam represents a breakthrough for firefighters and farmers alike. So far, it's been adopted by more than 50 fire departments, most of which are in the Midwest. It hits closer to home in the heartland, where many farmers volunteer as firefighters. Rural fire departments note the importance of a safe foam product that makes water more effective, helping them conserve water in dry areas.

"It's kind of a cool American story," Jones says. "It's using soybean meal, and it helps an American farmer."

SoyFoam is now moving through certification for entities like the Department of Defense and U.S. Forest Service. These will expand SoyFoam's use beyond local fire departments, opening the door to military aviation, federal land wildfirefighting, and other purchasers whose decisions these influence.

"We want to test the holy heck out of it, because that's how much confidence we have in this, that this stuff really works," Jones says.

More Bigfoot Firefighting Foam demos have been scheduled in Kansas City, looking to bring this technology closer to home. To ask about BigFoot Firefighting Foam for your local department, contact John Paul Jones at (816) 590-3984 or visit BigFootFireFightingFoam.com.



KANSAS SOYBEAN COMMISSION

Soy Notes is a service of the Kansas Soybean Commission - the soybean checkoff.

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Export Logistics: Complex and Crucial

Story by Carissa Dalquest, Kansas Soybean Summer Intern

It's easy to underestimate the complexity and scale of commodity production, trade and transportation in our global supply chain. Even as an agricultural economics graduate with plenty of exposure to the industry, the first few weeks of my internship with Kansas Soybean were spent learning and breaking down the logistics of soybean production. Attending the U.S. Soybean Export Council intern retreat in St. Louis, Missouri strengthened my understanding by demonstrating the path of our commodity in real time.

Before it ever reaches an end customer, a soybean may move by truck, rail, barge and ocean vessel. It may be stored in a small elevator, processed at a crush plant, loaded at a river terminal or blended into a shipment designed to meet the needs of a buyer halfway around the world. Part of the complexity is that soybeans can go down many different paths starting at harvest. Some are stored on farm. Others are hauled directly to a local elevator or cooperative. In the right location, some may go straight to a processor or buyer such as Cargill, ADM or Bartlett. Almost all of that first movement happens by truck.

From there, the path becomes even more complex. A soybean may be stored, blended, sold, resold, crushed into meal and oil, moved by rail, loaded onto a barge or eventually shipped across the ocean. It may stay in the domestic market as livestock feed, food ingredients, biodiesel or industrial products. It may also become part of an export shipment headed to a customer in another country.

Visiting the ADM grain facility on the river helped put that system into perspective. Before grain is loaded onto a barge on the Mississippi River, it has already gone through several steps. Logistics there depend on conditions outside anyone's control, including river depth and recent weather patterns. Rainfall across the Mississippi River Basin affects water levels, which determine how heavily each barge can be loaded. When water levels are lower, barges may have to carry lighter loads, making transportation less efficient and more expensive.

The Melvin Price Locks and Dam also demonstrated how important infrastructure is to agriculture. Locks and dams help barges move safely on the Mississippi River, even when water levels change. Since so much U.S. soybean export movement depends on the river system, reliable infrastructure is a major part of keeping soybeans moving efficiently.

For a landlocked state like Kansas, transportation matters at every step. Soybeans have to move from farms to elevators, processors, river terminals or ports before they can reach customers around the world. If transportation slows down or becomes more expensive, it affects the whole supply chain, including the prices farmers receive.

The retreat also helped me better understand why international relationships matter. Countries like Colombia value U.S. soybean meal because of its consistent quality, reliability and efficient delivery. That demand creates markets for U.S. soybeans and connects Kansas farmers to customers far beyond the state. While many Kansas soybeans are now processed in-state, exports still play a major role. Mexico remains our largest export market, with additional demand coming from countries across Southeast Asia, including Taiwan, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Seeing some of these steps play out in person helped me understand the industry at scale. Each bushel moves through a system shaped by marketing decisions, transportation networks, infrastructure, processing capacity and global demand. For Kansas farmers, that means the value of soybeans is tied not only to what happens in the field, but also to how efficiently those soybeans can move to the next customer. The retreat illustrated the scale of that system and showed how Kansas soybeans remain connected to markets far beyond the farm.







Left: The Melvin Price Locks and Dam.

Center: Kansas Soybean interns Carissa Dalquest (left) and Madelyn Lueck (right) toured various logistics facilities to better understand the soybean export supply chain.

Right: grain is loaded onto a barge on the Mississipi River at the ADM facility there.

Join Emerging Leaders Academy

Class 10 applications are open! ELA is an immersive leadership development program for Kansas ag professionals. Emerging Leaders experience Kansas and national agriculture and meet with global leaders, building their skills and involvement opportunities.

Visit kssoy.org/ela to apply by November 1, 2026.



"The Emerging Leaders Academy was probably one of the greatest experiences of my life revolving around agriculture. It was a great opportunity to improve my communication and leadership skills, and it inspired me to do more for our industry."

– *Brett Neibling, Class I*

Soybean Summer Science Institute

Teachers train to bring ag and investigation to the classroom.

In June, 15 teachers took part in a 3-week-long immersive professional development that trained them to use inquiry-based learning in their classrooms. This August, they'll head back to school with new skills and fresh lesson plans — and soybeans.

The Soybean Summer Science Institute trains teachers in inquiry-based learning, which teaches students to ask questions and discover the answers themselves. Using soybeans as a model, teachers practiced asking questions and finding evidence-based solutions.

This training model has the added benefit of bringing agriculture into classrooms across the state. Many participants reflected that, because of their own ag background or urban setting, they were surprised at the unfamiliarity of their students with agriculture. Being generations removed from the farm, many students don't know what questions to ask.

"Agriculture education can feel overwhelming at first, like one more thing to add to an already full schedule," reflected one participating teacher. "But what I realized is that agriculture connects naturally to what we're already doing in the classroom. It fits into existing lessons and provides meaningful opportunities for students to learn."

The program is led by Brian McCornack, Kansas State University professor, researcher and department head of Entomology. Fifteen years ago, McCornack was approached with the opportunity; since then, he says, he's realized this program is much bigger than himself, the participants or Kansas Soybean.

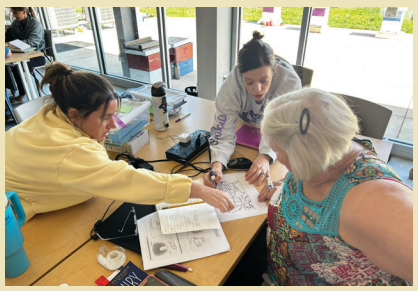
"It's truly transformational. I don't know how else to describe it," McCornack said at the farewell dinner. "I can't believe what an honor it is to be in this position, to be supported by Kansas soybean farmers and to help bring a program like this to life for all of you. Knowing what this experience means for your students this fall, next fall, and for years to come makes it incredibly rewarding."

The result of this program is teachers on fire for a new way of learning, and for opening students' eyes to the food system they depend on. They went home with lesson plans developed around inquiry-based learning and soybeans, giving them actionable tools to implement in the classroom.

"My hope is that you leave here realizing you're never that far away from a farmer," McCornack finished. "Invite one into your classroom. Continue building those connections. As we work together, the road ahead may be long and challenging, but we'll be better prepared because we're walking it together."







Top: participants examine soil in an experiment.

Center: participants hitch a ride on soybean planting equipment specialized for research.

Bottom: back in the classroom, participants collaborate over lessons and activities.

Farmers for Soil Health Offers Updated Payments

Enrollment scheduled to close August 31 for new and improved conservation program

Cover crops are a known way to improve soil health and long-term profitability, but the potential for yield drag keeps many farmers from trying them out. Farmers for Soil Health seeks to accelerate the adoption of cover crops by offering an incentive – and this year, that incentive grew.

FSH, supported by the soybean checkoff, is a farmer-led, 20-state program with a newly updated payment structure. Farmers can now receive $35 per acre each year for up to 2,000 cover cropped acres, regardless of cover crop history. Previously, participants signed three-year contracts that started at $25 per acre and decreased each year, and the process was complicated by past cover-cropping.

"The goal of these changes was to create consistency with other programs and reduce gray area for farmers," says Jennifer Simmelink, Kansas FSH program administrator. "It's really opened it up for more farmers to participate."

This program offers farmers a way to offset expenses in order to build soil health. Cover crops can improve water infiltration, reduce herbicide and pesticide use, prevent soil erosion, and reduce nutrient leaching. This is crucial in years like this one where rain seems to come all at once or not at all. Building a soil structure that can capture and hold moisture, reducing evaporation and soil erosion, creates a more resilient farm.

"We've been cover cropping about 15 years," says Charles Atkinson, Great Bend farmer who represents Kansas on the United Soybean Board. "Even in an intense rotation where each field only has a cover crop on it every four years, we've still seen a noticeable difference in soil structure and its ability to take in water."

In addition to financial assistance, FSH provides technical assistance to farmers who are unfamiliar with cover cropping. Participants gain access to local technical advisors who provide boots-on-the-ground guidance for successful implementation.

Enrollment is open for cover crops that will be seeded in 2026, and closes on August 31. To enroll, visit farmersforsoilhealth.com.





It's back-to-school season! Fuel minds young and old with this protein-powered breakfast.

Did you know? Pork is the top consumer of soybean meal in the United States. You can support soybean farmers by eating animal protein, too!

From the kitchen of Charlene Patton

Italian Breakfast Casserole

Ingredients

- 8 oz mild Italian sausage
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 4 cups shredded hash browns
- 2 cups shredded Italian cheese
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1/2 cup smoked sun-dried tomatoes, julienne-cut
- 4 eggs
- 3/4 cup soy milk
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 Tablespoons shredded Parmesan

Directions

1. Brown sausage and onion in large skillet.
2. In large bowl, mix hash browns and half of the shredded cheese.
3. In greased 8x8 baking dish, spread half of the potato mixture. Top with a layer of cooked sausage, fresh spinach and sun-dried tomatoes. Cover with remaining potato mixture.
4. In medium bowl, combine eggs, soy milk and salt. Pour mixture evenly over casserole.
5. Grease foil before covering casserole. Bake at 350°F for 60 minutes. Uncover, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake 5 more minutes or until knife inserted into center comes out clean.