Eastern Region Soybean Board

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2016

Mission Statement

The Eastern Region Soybean Board will invest soybean checkoff resources for the purpose of advancing soybeans in Connecticut, Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia, enhancing sustainability, and providing opportunities for Eastern Region Soybean Growers.

Eastern Region Soybean Board

2016 - 2017 Directors

William Beam*, *Elverson, PA*
Chairman

Michael Gerhart, *Ephrata, PA*
Vice Chairman

Steve Hykes, *Greencastle, PA*
Secretary/Treasurer

Daryl Alger, *Lebanon, PA*

Andy Fabin*, *Indiana, PA*

John Harrell*, *Lebanon, PA*

Marty Kable*, *Charles Town, WV*

Dustin Kiefer, *Rebuck, PA*

Justin Knoebel, *Elysburg, PA*

Brian Kreider, *Lebanon, PA*

Emily Landis, *Pennsylvania Furnace, PA*

Jennifer Reed-Harry, *Executive Director*
jrharry@pasoybean.org | 717-651-5922

**Also serves on the United Soybean Board*

The Eastern Region Soybean Board is a farmer-controlled Qualified State Soybean Board responsible for managing the West Virginia, Florida, and New England states' share of funds received from the nationwide Soybean Checkoff program. The funding is available under an assessment program, approved by Congress in 1990, under which soybean farmers contribute 50 cents of every $100 they receive for their beans at the first point of sale.

The Board participates in a shared executive arrangement with the Pennsylvania Soybean Board.

www.easternregionsoy.org

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

West Virginia Farmer Appointed to United Soybean Board

Charles Town, West Virginia, soybean grower Marty Kable has been appointed as a Director of the United Soybean Board (USB) and was sworn in at the Board's annual meeting in St. Louis on December 9, 2016. Kable, who also serves on the Eastern Region Soybean Board, is one of 73 directors of the USB. He represents the interests of West Virginia, Florida, and New England soybean producers on a national level.

Kable and his wife, Carol, and sons, Tyree and Mark, operate High Horizon Farms, Inc., a 4,750 acre family-owned cash grain and beef cattle operation. He served on the Board of Mid Atlantic Credit for 11 years.

A farmer for 50 years, Kable remembers when there were no soybeans grown in his area, and he planted a test plot just to see if they would grow. Now, they are a major part of his operation.

"Today, we are not just dealing with what's happening here, we're dealing with a global marketplace," says Kable. "I'm looking forward to learning from other farmers on the USB, and for speaking for the farmers in our region to promote soybeans in any and all ways we can."

As a member of the United Soybean Board, Kable will join farmer-leaders from throughout the country in directing soy checkoff funds to research, marketing and promotion efforts that increase soybean farmer profitability. The 73 farmer-directors of USB oversee the investments of the soy checkoff to maximize profit opportunities for all U.S. soybean farmers. As stipulated in the federal Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soy checkoff.

Marty Kable

Volunteers Sought To Serve Soybean Board

The Eastern Region Soybean Board (ERSB) is committed to growing leadership to serve on its board that reflects a diversity of perspectives and opinions That diversity is aimed at reflecting size of operation, experience of members, methods of production and distribution, ethnicity and gender, marketing strategies, and other distinguishing factors that will bring different perspectives and ideas to the table.

Individuals who are interested in being considered to serve on the Board are asked to contact Jennifer Reed-Harry, Executive Director.

Fiscal Year 2016 *Oct. 1, 2015 – Sept. 30, 2016*

Income

Carryover from FY'14-15	$ 9,607
FY'15-16 Assessments	$ 80,444
Total Income	$ 90,051

Expenses

50% of FY'15-16 Assessments to United Soybean Board	$ 40,222
Administration, Compliance, Audits, Insurance	$ 11,500
Communications	$ 12,117
Promotion	$ 2,500
Research	$ 15,000
Total Expenses	$ 81,339
Carryover available for FY'16-17	$ 8,712

4 WAYS TO USE DRONES ON YOUR FARM

Make the most of your drone investment

Coming home with a brand-new drone in tow may make you feel like a kid at Christmas, but at the end of the day, any drone you may purchase is a powerful tool. Here is a list of four ways drones can be put to use.

1. Scouting for weeds and insects

Protecting your fields from weeds and insects starts with vigilant scouting from planting to harvest, and the earlier you can kill weeds, the better your chances are of controlling them. But while scouting is an important management practice, many farmers have trouble finding the time to walk through all of their fields. Drones can cover more area in less time, allowing you to monitor pest pressure consistently.

2. Measuring crop health

Plants reflect both visible light and near-infrared (NIR) light, and if a plant is healthy, it will reflect more NIR light. But unless you've been bitten by a radioactive spider, you aren't able to see the difference with your naked eye. Some drones are equipped with imaging technology that can capture both visible and NIR light to be compared and analyzed that will help you identify crop-health issues.

3. Monitor water drainage

Soybeans don't do well in wet soil for prolonged periods of time, so drainage in your fields is very important. Drones with thermal sensors can scan your field and recognize dry and wet areas. This can help you identify problem areas in your field as well help you plan out optimized drainage strategies.

4. Weather damage

There are several things to consider when facing a replanting decision. Using a drone to scan your field can help you determine how much damage was sustained during a storm or other event, which can ultimately help you assess the pros and cons of replanting. Taking aerial photographs of your crops and property following a severe storm will also provide you with documentation that may be necessary for insurance claims.

Remember, drones can be put to use in several ways, but not all ways will be valuable for you. Do your research and make sure the technology is a good fit for your farm before taking the plunge.

New FAA rules for drone operation took effect in August, 2016. Be sure to reference the FAA for the latest rule at *www.faa.gov/UAS*.

YOUR SOY CHECKOFF AT WORK

Research into production issues and new uses, educational outreach and international access are just some of the soy checkoff's many focus areas designed to put money back into the pockets of U.S. soybean farmers.

In Fiscal Year 2016, the Eastern Region Soybean Board awarded a grant to Dr. Heather Darby of the University of Vermont. The grant enabled Dr. Darby to explore two research projects that have the potential of significantly impacting the profitability of soybean producers throughout the New England states.

The first project was a variety trial to identify the best short season varieties and maturities. More than 30 varieties with maturities from 000 to 1.5 were planted and monitored for growth and development as well as for insects and diseases.

The second was a research project on cover crops that have the potential to increase soil quality, minimize pest pressure, and optimize yields. Cover crops were established in the fall after a corn crop or interseeded into soybeans at different stages. The impact of cover crops on weed biomass, soil nutrients and soil health will be measured.

Dr. Darby and her fellow Extension educators and agronomists throughout the New England area will share the results of their research with farmers on their websites, on social media, and at a variety of field days, crop conferences, and other events that draw farmers and crop advisors.

CONTINUED...

Field days showcasing soybean research are eligible for checkoff-funded grants.

CONTINUED from inside...

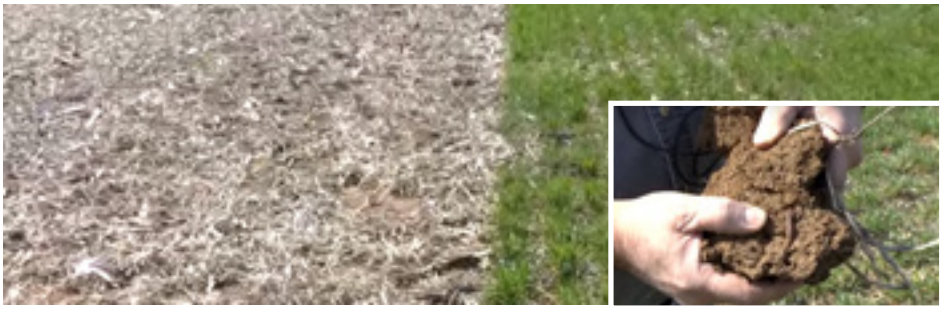
Checkoff grants available

The Eastern Region Soybean Board accepts grant proposals for projects designed to improve the efficiency, profitability, and sustainability of soybean producers in Florida, West Virginia and the New England states

Investigators with new and challenging ideas are encouraged to submit proposals for research focusing on soybean production, utilization, education/information and marketing will be considered. Proposals for field days, grower seminars and educational events are encouraged. All proposals must demonstrate a benefit to soybean producers

In addition to research projects that focus on crop production issues and those that position soy in alternative-use niche markets, the all-farmer Eastern Region Soybean Board will also consider proposals that focus on issues affecting the sustainability of the number one domestic customer for soybean meal: animal agriculture.

Grant applications can be obtained online under the "Forms" tab at easternregionsoy.org. Deadline for proposals is January 20, 2017.



Cover Crops Could Be Right for You

Ohio State University assistant professor and extension educator James Hoorman says the number of acres planted to cover crops on a yearly basis continues to multiply as more and more farmers realize that cover crops are beneficial.

"I've had farmers tell me that cover crops are only suited for small farmers or that it simply won't work for them," he says. "But I know of a farmer who plants over 10,000 acres of cover crops a year."

Risk vs. reward

Numerous rewards may be gained from planting cover crops. Consider all of the following:

Organic matter: Cover crops can increase the amount of organic matter in your soil. "It takes approximately 10 tons of decomposed plant residue and 1,000 pounds of nitrogen per acre to increase soil organic matter by one percent," says Hoorman. Using cover crop mixtures can increase organic matter levels in a much more cost-effective way. Increased organic matter also increases the soil's water-holding capacity, which will pay off in dry spells.

Improved soil structure: Cover crops increase the soil's porosity, improving drainage and decreasing soil compaction.

Weed control: Planting a cover crop can help suppress weed growth by competing for nutrients and sunlight that would otherwise be free for the weeds' taking.

Soil erosion: Cover crops help hold soil in place that may otherwise be susceptible to erosion, lessening nutrient runoff and keeping those valuable nutrients in place for the next crop to use.

However, cover crops are not foolproof. A farmer does assume some additional cost and risks when using them, but most, if not all, can be avoided with well-timed management. It's important to get crops planted in early fall, to give them 60 to 90 days of growth before winter. This may mean that inter-seeding with the corn or soybeans in the ground is needed. Cover crops left to grow too long in the spring, may dry out the soil for the next crop, especially if using cereal rye or winter rye. Management is the key, says Hoorman.

Good things come to those who wait

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to want quick results. But in the case of cover crops, patience is not only a virtue, it's a necessity. It may take three to seven years, says Hoorman, to see the full benefits of using a cover crop. The best results come from planting a cover crop every single year. It's an investment that will pay off over time.

As for the perceived additional cost associated with planting cover crops, Hoorman says it may actually save farmers money. "It costs a tremendous amount of money to do tillage, between the labor, fuel and wear and tear on the equipment. The money farmers would have spent tilling a field should be spent on growing a cover crop.

"Better nutrient retention may lessen the need to apply expensive fertilizers over time and more weed control could reduce the number of herbicide applications in a year, all adding up to additional savings."