

ASA Board Elects New Officers for 2004-2005

At its July 2004 meeting, the American Soybean Association (ASA) Board of Directors confirmed Neal Bredehoeft from Alma, Missouri, as President, and Ron Heck, from Perry, Iowa, as Chairman. Board members also elected Bob Metz from West Browns Valley, South Dakota, to serve as First Vice President, an office that places Metz in line to be ASA President next year. Also elected were Bob Rikli from Murdock, Neb., as Secretary, and Ed Hegland from Appleton, Minn., as Treasurer.

Four Vice Presidents were

PHOTO BY STEPHEN DOLAN



ASA Executive Committee 2004-05: Front row, L-R: Chairman Ron Heck; President Neal Bredehoeft; and First Vice President Bob Metz. Back row, L-R: Vice President John Dodson; Secretary Bob Rikli; Vice President Gary Joachim; Vice President Rick Ostlie; Vice President John Hoffman; and Treasurer Ed Hegland.

elected: Johnny Dodson from Dyersburg, Tenn., John Hoffman from Waterloo, Iowa, Gary Joachim

from Claremont, Minn., and Richard Ostlie from Northwood, N.D. These soybean producer-leaders form the nine-member ASA Executive Committee.

“Competitiveness is a key issue for soybean farmers,” said new ASA President Neal Bredehoeft. “To maintain our competitiveness, ASA must continue actively working to protect the vitality of our domestic livestock customers, reduce foreign tariffs and remove trade barriers, improve our

transportation infrastructure and protect the United States from Asian soybean rust.”

ASA Takes the Lead on Soybean Rust

Experts describe the spread of Asian soybean rust to the United States as a matter of “when, not if.” Without early detection and proper fungicide applications, soybean rust can cause yield losses of up to 80 percent, depending on the plant’s growth stage at infection.

The American Soybean Association (ASA) is committed to continuing its leadership and educational role on the issue of soybean rust.

Fungicide Availability

Following an effort by ASA and state soybean associations, as of early August, 23 states had submitted Section 18 applications to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use fungicides against soybean rust. EPA has already publicly stated that, if soybean rust is confirmed by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to be in the continental United States, EPA will permit

states to issue a declaration of crisis to spray any of the seven requested Section 18 fungicides as listed on the South Dakota and Minnesota applications.

Meanwhile, EPA has approved a third fungicide out of seven requests by ASA and states. EPA has granted a Quarantine Exemption (Section 18) to Minnesota and South Dakota for tebuconazole (Folicur) on soybeans

PHOTO COURTESY OF MINNESOTA SOYBEAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION



On July, 30, about 115 growers in Mankato, Minn., learned more about soybean rust at the last in a series of seven ASA education meetings.

to control soybean rust. State requests for use of Propiconazole (Tilt, Propimax, Bumper) and myclobutanil (Laredo) to control soybean rust have already received approval.

Grower Education

As part of its ongoing effort to educate and update U.S. soybean growers about Asian soybean rust and its potential spread to the United States, the American Soybean Association (ASA) presented a series of seven education meetings from July 21 to July 30, 2004.

A total of more than 600 people attended the meetings to find out the latest information about soybean rust from government and industry experts.

The seven ASA Soybean Rust Education meetings were held in North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana, Nebraska, Illinois and Minnesota.

ASA Efforts Increase Soymeal Use in Aquaculture

ASA began aquaculture work in China, the largest global producer of aquaculture products, in 1992. At that time, there was very little feed use, and no soybean meal use, by the aquaculture industry. The China aquaculture industry has since grown from 4.5 million metric tons of fish production per year to over 17 million metric tons of annual fish production. This accounts for more than 70 percent of global aquaculture production. As a result of ASA's programs, soybean meal use by the China aquaculture industry in feed is now estimated to exceed 185 million bushels of soybeans a year.

"The high protein level and suitable amino acid complex of soybean meal makes it a key ingredient for aquaculture feeds," said Mike Cremer, ASA/China Aquaculture Technical Director. "Plus, soybean meal is considerably less expensive and more consistent in quality than traditionally used marine animal meals."

Projecting that China's ocean-based aquaculture would dominate the global aquaculture industry in the future, ASA has expanded its efforts to include China's coastal and offshore aquaculture sectors. Activities are focusing on the near-shore marine cage and offshore marine cage sectors. Offshore cages have the greatest development potential due to better water quality and less competition for space from other industries.

Prototype Ocean Cages Launched

In early July 2004, the ASA/China Aquaculture team assembled and launched two prototype Ocean Cages at Lingshui Bay near Sanya on China's Hainan Island.

"The prototype Ocean Cages are designed to allow fish production offshore in clean waters unaffected by industrial pollution and excessive numbers of fish farms, which characterize most of the coastline of China and other Asian nations," said Bob Rikli, Chairman of ASA's Trade Policy & International Affairs Committee.

In the past, primary constraints to expanded ocean-based aquaculture have been the development of cage production systems that withstand ocean storm conditions and technologies for culturing marine fish in those cage systems.

The new prototype cages were designed by Cliff Goudey, Director of the Center for Fisheries Engineering Research of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology,

in collaboration with ASA/China Aquaculture Technical Director Mike Cremer, and Rud Schmittou, who pioneered the ASA/China aquaculture program.

A truncated pyramid design was selected for the cages, with single-point anchoring to allow the cages to float down current and to automatically submerge with increasing storm-generated wind and water currents. Submersion of cages has been found to be essential to protect cage integrity and fish health during high wave conditions. In the event of typhoons the entire

cage can be submerged.

The two cages are each populated with 15,000 35-gram pompano fingerlings. The pompano, a high value marine fish in Asia will grow to 500-gram market size and be harvested in November.

The pompano are feeding aggressively on a feed designed by the ASA/China aquaculture program that contains 35 percent dehulled soybean meal. Both the cages and fish were performing well in the early stages of the feeding demonstration.

The project's aquaculture team will monitor the cages between July and November to determine the stability of the cages during the typhoon season, whether the cages self-submerge as designed during high winds, and whether the cages provide a suitable culture environment for fish.

Significant Growth Projected

Demand for fishery products will continue to increase in response to projected human population growth. Global demand for cultured aquatic products is expected to grow from its current level of approximately 35 million metric tons to more than 60 million metric tons.

"ASA expects that soybean meal inclusion rates in aquafeeds overall will increase to 35 to 40 percent for both quality and cost reasons," Rikli said. "Soybean meal demand for the aquaculture industry in China alone is expected to exceed 7 million metric tons within the next decade."

Aquaculture programs and activities managed by ASA are funded by soybean farmer checkoff dollars invested by the United Soybean Board and various state soybean councils, as well as funding provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

ASA PHOTO



An ocean cage being towed out to sea to Lingshui Bay off China's Hainan Island.