

Bean Beat

The American Soybean Association

ASA Busy at Commodity Classic and in Washington DC

Commodity Classic Sets New Records

A record number of people participated in the 2008 Commodity Classic Feb. 28-March 1, in Nashville, Tenn. Total registrations were 4,532, up by 420, which is more than 10 percent over the previous record of 4,112 set in Las Vegas in 2004. Registrations this year included 1,479 growers, very near the record of 1,517 set in 2004. The average total acres for growers in attendance was 2,132 and average soybean acres was 824. Media registration set a record at 145, which was 23 more than the previous record of 122. The Trade Show was a sell-out with 847 booths, the highest number of booths ever, reflecting a 20 percent increase over the previous record set in 2005.

Commodity Classic is the combined convention and trade show of the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, and the National Association of Wheat Growers.

ASA Voting Delegates Set Policy Direction for 2008-2009

Soybean producers gathered in Nashville on March 1, at the annual Commodity Classic, to review and revise the policy direction of the American Soybean Association (ASA). One hundred thirty-four producers from ASA's 25 state affiliates served as voting delegates in this annual process that guides the ASA as it pursues future initiatives to improve U.S. soybean farmer profitability. Delegates made the most significant modifications and additions to resolutions dealing with farm policy, production, biodiesel, trade, and organizational issues. Details of these modifications and additions can be found in the ASA newsroom at soygrowers.com/newsroom/news.htm in a news release titled, "ASA Voting Delegates Set Policy Direction for 2008-2009."

ASA Forms Working Group to Implement Structure and Coordination Resolutions

During the resolutions session recently held at Commodity Classic the ASA Voting Delegates passed two resolutions calling upon ASA and the United Soybean Board (USB) to implement structural and operational changes to achieve greater alignment and coordination. One resolution called on ASA and

USB to form a joint "ASA/USB Coordination Committee" comprised of each organization's respective officers. Another resolution recommended that "ASA and USB implement a joint committee structure" with proportional number of committee members and voting rights at the committee level. To develop recommendations on how these resolutions can best be implemented to achieve the coordination and alignment desired, ASA President John Hoffman conferred with USB Chairman Ike Boudreaux about forming a Working Group of past and current ASA and USB leaders. The Working Group will meet to begin developing recommendations.

ASA Board Meets in Washington

The American Soybean Association (ASA) Board of Directors met in Washington D.C., March 8-11. Committee meetings took place on March 8 and 9, then the full Board convened on March 10. In addition to regular Board business, the group of farmer leaders and association staff heard directly from several key Members of Congress including House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN), Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD) and Sen. Kent Conrad (D-ND). On March 11, ASA Board members and state leaders went to Capitol Hill to meet with their elected members of Congress and voice soybean grower views on the Farm Bill, biodiesel, trade and more.



ASA Chairman Rick Ostlie (Left) looks on as House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) speaks to ASA Board Members and state leaders about the Farm Bill. (ASA photo by Karen Edwards)



The American Soybean Association is a national commodity organization with 23,000 members and affiliation with 25 states. For membership details, call 1-800-688-7692.