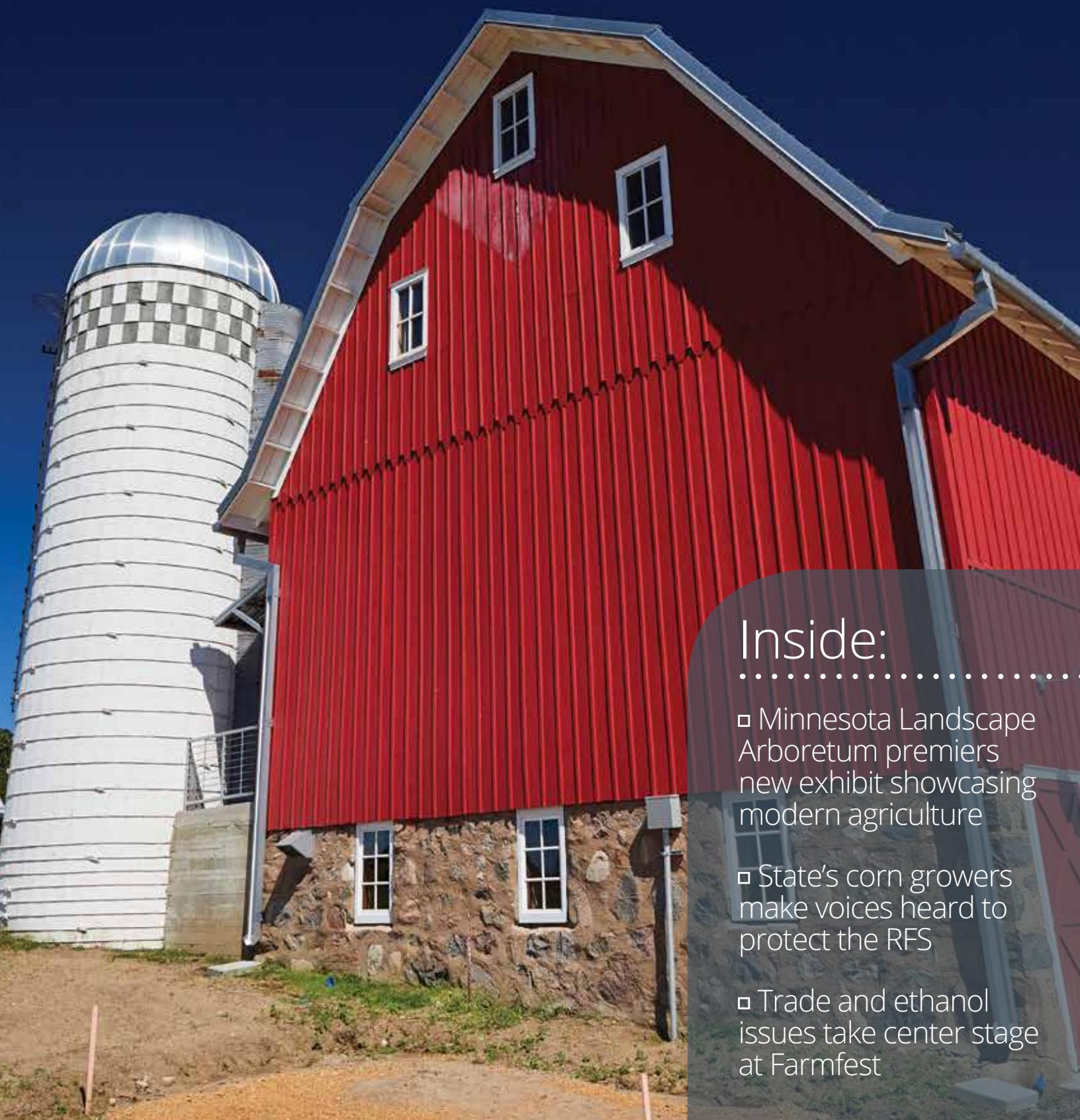


corntalk



Official Publication of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association • September 2019



Inside:

- Minnesota Landscape Arboretum premieres new exhibit showcasing modern agriculture
- State's corn growers make voices heard to protect the RFS
- Trade and ethanol issues take center stage at Farmfest

Become an Ag Insider today

The MCGA Ag Insider is a monthly e-newsletter created for future leaders in the world of agriculture. Free to subscribe, the newsletter delivers premium content detailing the latest research influencing practices on the farm, policy impacting the future of agriculture, scholarship opportunities and unique events for young members of Minnesota's ag sector.

Subscribe today at info.mncorn.org/Ag-Insider. Ag Insider is delivered to your inbox the final Thursday of every month.

About the cover

While focused on the future, the Farm at the Arb exhibit will also honor agriculture's past with a renovated red barn. Learn more on page 6.



The Monthly Ag Insider

Minnesota's corn farmers partner with the University of Minnesota to produce greener plastics

Corn-based plastics would have tremendous environmental benefits while opening up an exciting new market for corn farmers. [Read more](#)

Women in agriculture pair up with metro moms for evening of cooking and conversation

The event, organized by CommonGround Minnesota, was an opportunity to connect with an influential metro audience and discuss

table of contents

3 Farmer leaders advocate in Washington	9 Federal issues center stage at Farmfest	13 Haag re-elected to NCGA Corn Board
4 Farmers unite to protect RFS	10 Fairstalk debuts at State Fair	13 Busch inducted into Recruiter Hall of Fame
4 USMCA requires grassroots action	10 Ag & Food Day returns to U of M campus	13 Minnesota Corn directors meet with U of M researchers
5 Innovation Grant RFP now open	11 Minnesota United go to farm country	14 County highlights
5 Meat exports benefit corn growers	11 MCGA night with St. Paul Saints	15 Fall fuel promotion events
6 'Farm at the Arb' exhibit grand opening	12 Winslow elected MCR&PC chair	15 Join MCGA today
8 MCGA at Farmfest 2019	12 Willis elected secretary-treasurer of USGC	16 Calendar of Events

Official Publication of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association

Published six times a year from the state MCGA/MCR&PC office: 738 First Avenue East Shakopee, MN 55379

September 2019

Corn Talk Advisory Committee:

Adam Birr
Brian Thalmann
Scott Winslow
Les Anderson
Jim O'Connor
Editor: Brent Renneke

Follow us on social media:



Minnesota Corn advocates for top priorities in Washington

To advocate for policy priorities important to all Minnesota corn farmers, Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) farmer leaders spent mid-July in Washington, D.C., meeting with fellow directors from other state corn organizations and spending time with members of Minnesota's congressional delegations, agriculture committee leaders and key federal agencies.

While in Washington, farmer leaders participated in Corn Congress sessions with the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). The annual event brings directors together to debate grassroots policy resolutions that articulate NCGA's federal positions on policies impacting corn farmers. This year at Corn Congress, delegates approved a "Sense of the Corn Congress," urging President Trump to uphold his commitment to America's farmers and to help protect the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).

Delegates unanimously approved the statement in response to actions by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue waivers to oil refiners exempting them from compliance requirements of the RFS. At the time of Corn Congress, 38 refinery waiver applications were pending at the EPA.

Protecting the RFS and ratification of the United States-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement (USMCA) were top messages delivered by MCGA leaders in meetings with members and staff of Minnesota's ten Congressional delegation offices.

In addition to Capitol Hill visits, MCGA leaders also met with agency leadership at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including the

Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Each meeting was an opportunity to discuss farm bill implementation and utilization of various programs that support agriculture in Minnesota.

Leaders also had the opportunity to meet with the Agriculture Advisor to EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and carry forward MCGA's concern about the waiver process undermining the RFS and the market for ethanol.

Finally, leaders had the opportunity to visit with the Chief Agricultural Negotiator for the U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Gregg Doud. The group covered several important trade topics and discussed new market opportunities for Minnesota corn and corn products.

The annual July trip to Washington is a critical time for MCGA leaders to advocate on behalf of Minnesota corn farmers to work toward policy and program outcomes that benefit agriculture and Minnesota farm families. ■

The advocacy efforts of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association are bolstered by an engaged membership. Whether it is a call-to-action or an opportunity to promote corn farming with local residents, MCGA is a grassroots organization that benefits from its members staying connected.

Text "MCGA" to 50457 to receive text alerts on future call-to-actions, and subscribe to Leader Update at mncorn.org/leaderupdate for the latest on policy, research and more.



Chief Agricultural Negotiator Gregg Doud met with Minnesota Corn directors to discuss the latest on trade issues impacting corn farmers.

Minnesota farmers unite to protect the RFS

The power of grassroots efforts came through earlier this month when Minnesota corn farmers submitted more than 700 comments, over 300 to both President Trump and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), demanding actions are taken to protect the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).

The passionate response from the ag community followed news in late July that the EPA would approve 31 small refinery waivers, removing an



Refinery waivers are removing billions of ethanol-equivalent gallons from the nation's fuel supply.

additional 1.43 billion gallons of U.S. biofuels from the nation's supply. Total biofuel gallons removed since 2016 exceeded 4 billion gallons with the latest round of waivers.

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association's (MCGA) two-fold call-to-action included contacting President Trump, asking he keeps his promise to stop the EPA's issuing of refinery waivers and uphold the RFS. Farmers also reached out to the EPA as part of the comment period for the latest Renewable Volume Obligations (RVO). Comments stressed that any waived gallons through small refinery exemptions are accounted for in the RVO.

Along with comments by the National Corn Growers Association, MCGA submitted comments on the 2020 RVO stressing any gallons waived need to be redistributed in the RVO. Citing the billions of gallons already removed through retroactive refinery waivers, MCGA President Brian Thalmann said the proposed volume of 15 billion conventional biofuel gallons is meaningless if refinery waivers are not accounted for in the volume totals.

As a grassroots organization, MCGA depends on its members to elevate the issues that are impacting corn farmers. Thank you to all members who took action and made their voices heard to stop ethanol demand destruction. ■

USMCA ratification requires grassroots action from Minnesota farmers

One potential bright spot for Minnesota farmers continues to be the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which all participating countries have signed. However, the crucial step of legislative approval continues to loom as a potential roadblock to finalizing the agreement.

Legislators recently returned to Washington following the August recess with ratification of USMCA at the top of their to-do lists. It is imperative Minnesota farmers make their voice heard to drive home the importance of the USMCA and its ratification. The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) is asking corn farmers to **text "MCGA" to 50457 to be added to a text alert system that will make it easy to participate in a call-to-action calling for ratification.**

Legislative approval of USMCA is vital for the nation's corn farmers:

U.S. ag exports have tripled to Canada and quintupled to Mexico since NAFTA, which the USMCA will replace. In 2018 alone, more than 21 million metric tons of corn and corn co-products were exported to Mexico and Canada, valued at \$4.56 billion. Those exports produced \$4.1 billion in economic activity, supporting 25,000 jobs and 300,000 farms.

Mexico alone purchases 25 percent of American corn exports, making it the top buyer of American corn. Canada is the second largest buyer of American ethanol, importing 352 million gallons last year. With its proximity, Canada is an especially vital market for Minnesota producers.

MCGA recently spent time in Washington where it underlined the need for USMCA ratification, citing these statistics with all 10 members of Minnesota's congressional delegation. It was a vital opportunity to

address this top priority, but the power of grassroots action is necessary to elevate it.

As the debate ramps up in the nation's capital, Minnesota's farm community will need to make their voice heard and share how important USMCA is to their livelihood. Legislators need to hear from the farmers who have been faced with a perfect storm of challenges this spring, and learn what even more trade uncertainty would mean for growers navigating today's challenging times.

With Congress back, it is important corn farmers join the text alert system to participate in a call for ratification and bring some much-needed positive trade news to corn country. ■



Minnesota's corn farmers depend on the USMCA to keep key export markets flourishing.

The 2020 Innovation Grant Program RFP is open for Minnesota's corn growers

Minnesota corn farmers once again have the opportunity to put their innovative conservation ideas into action through the Minnesota Corn Innovation Grant Program. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the program officially opened in August, with proposals being accepted until Dec. 31, 2019.

In its fifth year, the Innovation Grant Program has widened its focus for innovative projects on the farm. Last year, the program expanded to accept solutions to prevent both nitrogen and phosphorous loss to ground and surface water. This year, the program also seeks innovative ideas in nutrient use efficiency, tillage, economics and management, and production practices that enhance water quality.

"The Innovation Grant Program continues to be a great avenue for Minnesota's corn farmers to showcase innovation on the farm in a way that has the potential to influence statewide farming practices," Minnesota Corn Growers Association Senior Research Director Paul Meints said. "By expanding our focus this year, we look forward to new and exciting ideas that build a more sustainable future for our growers."

To date, the program has invested nearly \$600,000 in more than 50 farmer-led research projects bringing novel solutions to nutrient management and water quality protection.



Blue Earth farmer Matt Alford was one of 12 2019 Innovation Grant Program participants.

In 2020, farmers are eligible for up to \$7,000 per year in funding, dependent on the cost to carry out each farmer-led project involving ideas toward environmental and/or economic sustainability. Replicated trials may also be funded at up to \$30,000 per year, but must include a statistical design and analysis protocol in the proposal. Criteria and expectations for each of the proposal levels are available within the RFP. Projects must be applied for and conducted by an active Minnesota corn farmer subject to the Minnesota corn check-off.

Visit mncorn.org/research for more information and to apply online before 3 p.m., Dec. 31, 2019. ■

Study highlights value of red meat to corn growers



Red meat exports are forecasted to be a strong market for corn growers in the years ahead.

Beef and pork exports added 39 cents per bushel to the price of corn in 2018, according to the latest report by World Perspectives, which analyzed the impact of red meat exports on the value of feed grains like corn.

U.S. red meat exports generated a market value of \$164 million to Minnesota corn and \$23 million to Minnesota distillers' grains (DDGS) in 2018. Nationally, market value generated was \$1.62 billion for corn last year. Since 2015, meat exports represent the fastest growing category for corn, according to the report.

Over the next 10 years, the report forecasts U.S. red meat exports will generate a market value of \$1.94 billion to Minnesota corn and \$245 million to Minnesota DDGS. Nationally, the report forecasts exports will generate a projected \$30.8 billion in cumulative annual market value to corn and soybeans based on USDA's long-term forecast for crop prices.

Commissioned in partnership by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) and National Corn Growers Association, World Perspectives first quantified the impact of U.S. beef and pork exports on corn use and value in 2016. The report continues to provide a snapshot of the growing importance of U.S. red meat exports for corn farmers in Minnesota and beyond.

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association is a member of USMEF and supports its mission to increase demand for U.S. livestock industries. Livestock feed remains the largest market for American corn. ■

feature story.....

'Farm at the Arb' exhibit brings modern agriculture to the U of M Arboretum

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum will for the first time tell the story of modern Minnesota agriculture in a new farm exhibit opening this month. Supported by the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA), the Farm at the Arb provides the Arboretum's more than 500,000 annual visitors an up-close look at how food is grown today.

Nearly 10 years in the making, the new exhibit will honor agriculture's past, while focusing on the present and future. An iconic red barn that dates back to the 1920s will serve as a gorgeous backdrop, but the focus for visitors will be on the seven different plots surrounding it. Each will feature a different crop grown in Minnesota today. Paths will dissect plots of corn, soybeans, wheat and more, providing visitors a close look.

"One of the more basic opportunities is for visitors to learn what these crops look like," said Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Director Peter Moe. "Many have driven past corn and soybeans at 55 miles per hour, but don't really know what each crop looks like."

Lining the plots, interactive panels will dive into the many different decisions farmers must make each year, based on climate, changing markets and more. For example, visitors can see soil that has been no-tilled, strip-tilled and full-tilled, and learn more about the factors that go into choosing each practice.

"We are striving with this exhibit to give people the language and the concepts to understand some of the issues that farmers are facing," said Sandy Tanck, who is the manager of interpretation and family programs at the Arboretum. "A lot of our visitors might not even know what tillage means, but once they go through the station they can learn about what farmers consider and the trade-offs."



MCGA supported the Farm at the Arb as an opportunity to engage Minnesotans who don't have a connection to agriculture. Thousands of metro citizens who travel to the Arboretum each year can now learn about how crops are grown today.

"The Farm at the Arb will be fun for the whole family, while adding the educational opportunities that will introduce attendees of all ages to Minnesota agriculture in a new and exciting way," MCGA President Brian Thalmann said.

The new exhibit is the largest addition to the Arboretum during Moe and Tanck's tenure with the Chaska attraction, which dates back 40 years. The expansion to agriculture was aided by the Arboretum being part of the University's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS).

The project included Tanck and her staff working directly with faculty in Extension, agronomy and plant genetics, and soil, climate and water. All served as a vital resource to tell the story of how farmers are protecting the soil, promoting water quality and growing more food on less acreage than ever.

"We are fortunate to have our colleagues, because it allows us to be a trusted source of information for people to understand what is science-based, as opposed to what is just an emotional feeling they may have," Moe said.

In addition to a deeper understanding of agriculture, the new exhibit is also an opportunity to highlight the exciting research at CFANS that is shaping the future of agriculture, according to CFANS Dean Brian Buhr.

"The new Farm at the Arb provides a wonderful opportunity for more Minnesotans to understand how their food is grown and to experience the future of farming," Buhr said. "Additionally, the Farm at the Arb highlights insightful ways University of Minnesota research – from breeding new fruit varieties to studying soil health and cropping systems – enriches the lives of individuals and families throughout the state and across the world, and how we are one of the leading contributors to rural- and urban-community economic vitality throughout Minnesota."

The Farm at the Arb was unveiled to the public at a festival celebrating the first phase of the new exhibit earlier this month. Over the next few years, it will continue to evolve, including the addition of an outdoor kitchen, farmhouse, community garden highlighting minorities in agriculture and more. With each addition, the Farm at the Arb will grow as both an attraction for Arboretum visitors and a venue for ag-specific events. ■

The renovated red barn features a number of educational opportunities for attendees, including a look at fruits and grains introduced by the University of Minnesota dating back to the late 1800's.



Another busy week for Minnesota Corn at Farmfest

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) returned to Gilfillan Estate in early August for Farmfest 2019. The annual event was a great opportunity for MCGA staff, directors and corn grower members to meet with Minnesota farmers, elected officials and more.

Thousands of farmers came to the Minnesota Corn tent to learn the many ways "MN Corn Grows MN" and try some sweet corn ice cream. In addition to catching up on the latest in research, ethanol and policy, many visitors signed up or renewed their MCGA membership and received a custom MCGA headlamp as a thank you for joining.

Over the three-day event, Gov. Tim Walz, Minnesota legislative leaders, U.S. Congress members, state commissioners, and new University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel all stopped by to chat with MCGA directors in the tent. ■



Gov. Tim Walz stepped behind the freezer to serve some sweet corn ice cream, in addition to meeting with directors in the tent.



Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman spoke with grower leaders at Farmfest.



U.S. Representative Collin Peterson also met with Minnesota Corn directors following a listening session on the Wednesday of Farmfest.



U. S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue stopped by after his Farmfest listening session to discuss issues impacting corn farmers.



New University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel and CFANS Dean Brian Buhr visited the tent to chat with directors and MCGA Executive Director Adam Birr.

Federal issues take center stage

The Wick Building on the Farmfest grounds was abuzz with forums and listening sessions diving into the topics that are front-of-mind for corn farmers in Minnesota and beyond.

On Aug. 6, the first day of Farmfest, Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) director and National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Corn Board member Harold Wolle participated in a panel of national farm leaders focused on federal issues. In the panel, Wolle stressed the number one priority of MCGA and NCGA is to increase demand for corn, which starts with trade. Wolle stressed the importance of continuing to support the U.S. Grains Council, which helped build China as a market and will continue to serve a vital role to grow alternative markets if the trade dispute continues.

Later that afternoon, MCGA was proud to sponsor a forum that brought nine state commissioners to the Wick Building. Hosted by Fluence Forum's Blois Olson, the forum was a unique opportunity to discuss how the state's ag sector can better work with state agencies.

MCGA directors were also able to participate in the discussion with the commissioners. In a crowd Q&A, Wolle addressed the need for a buffer tax credit, and MCGA President Brian Thalmann emphasized the importance of continuing the momentum around E15 now that year-round sales are a reality.

On the second day of Farmfest, a listening session with U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue drew the largest crowd of the week. While the impact of ongoing trade disputes was a commonly expressed source of frustration for the audience, a common theme in remarks was the need to increase domestic demand for agricultural products.

Thalmann had an opportunity to provide a statement in front of Perdue where he expressed his concern for future generations having an opportunity to farm as issues like trade and ethanol demand destruction continue to impact family farms.

"I hope that when some of these trade deals get completed there will be a place for my son and everybody else's son and daughters to still be involved in agriculture," Thalmann said.

His remarks and others during the listening sessions captured the attention of not only state media, but also national outlets. ■



Wolle (second from right) joined other national ag leaders in a forum on federal ag issues impacting farmers.

Minnesota Corn Fairstalk debuts at Minnesota State Fair

Debuting this year at the Minnesota State Fair, the Minnesota Corn Fairstalk celebrates Minnesota agriculture and the vital role it plays in the growth of our state. The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) and Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) proudly partnered with the State Fair to bring the Fairstalk to attendees as part of a larger renovation of the fairgrounds' North End.

Greeting guests as they meander through the renovated area, the 24-foot-tall Fairstalk features giant LED screens displaying fun facts about corn and farming, as well as news from the fair. The eye-catching structure will also feature video of Minnesota's corn farmers as they work to become the most sustainable and environmentally friendly corn farmers in the nation. An interactive feature, the Fairstalk showcases social media posts from fair attendees who use #mnstatefair.

The one-of-a-kind art installation will be a popular photo opportunity for visitors in the years ahead.

For both MCGA and MCR&PC, supporting the Minnesota Corn Fairstalk is an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of corn farming in Minnesota with the more than 2 million people who attend the State Fair annually. ▶



MCGA President Brian Thalmann introduced the Fairstalk during a ribbon cutting ceremony the first day of the fair.



Maizey will once again be the center of attention for incoming Gopher fans on Oct. 12.

Ag & Food Day to bring pre-game party to University of Minnesota

Ag & Food Day returns to the University of Minnesota prior to the Gopher football team taking on the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers on Oct. 12. Celebrate Ag and Food Day is an annual celebration of all things Minnesota agriculture, with festivities taking place prior to and during the game.

Typically held earlier in the season, Ag & Food Day 2019 will take place during an exciting Big Ten matchup with the Nebraska Cornhuskers—a fitting team to play on a day of celebrating agriculture.

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association will be featured on the video board in-stadium, on the radio, and will also have a presence on the plaza.

If you are going to the game, be sure to arrive a little early and stop by! ▶

The Minnesota United take their skills to farm country

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) has long partnered with the Minnesota United to share the impact of Minnesota corn farmers with the team's metro fan base. Later this month, it will be the Minnesota United traveling to share what they know best in Minnesota farm country.

The Minnesota United will host a sold-out soccer clinic in Farmington on September 28, featuring the club's field staff and a Minnesota United player. Youth aged 7 to 12 will have an opportunity to work with the soccer team to improve their soccer skills during a 90-minute clinic with the United's trained staff.

Also part of MCGA's partnership, the Minnesota United recently held its annual MCGA Night during a match against the Portland Timbers in early August. The match, which was televised live on ESPN, was attended by a sell-out crowd of nearly 20,000 fans.

The corn-themed party began prior to kick-off on the plaza outside Allianz Field with Twin Cities Road Crew and Minnesota Corn mascot Maizey. Attendees also received MCGA-branded rally towels, and facts about Minnesota's corn farmers were shared with fans throughout the match. ■



Maizey and United mascot "PK" will be part of the festivities in September.

Saints celebrate state's corn farmers at MCGA Night



University of Minnesota Bee Lab representatives returned to CHS Field for an on-field check presentation.

Each year, the season-long partnership between the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) and the St. Paul Saints culminates with MCGA Night, featuring fun giveaways and promotions throughout the evening game.

This year, the event took place in late August as the St. Paul Saints took on the Fargo-Moorhead Redhawks. Fans at the game received packets of pollinator seeds upon entry to promote Minnesota corn farmers' commitment to pollinator habitat. Additionally, the pollinator seed packets themselves were made of a compostable corn-based PLA plastic, which provided another opportunity to share how plastics made from renewable products like corn can have a positive impact.

Introduced last season, MCGA continued to sponsor the "Aww-Shucks" moment of the game. For every error committed during the game, MCGA donates \$100 to the University of Minnesota Bee Lab for pollinator research and education. The promotion raised \$5,000, which was presented to Bee Lab representatives during the game on MCGA Night.

Building on the "Aww-Shucks" moment, a new promotion was introduced this year—the "Moment of Zen."

During the break between innings and continuing into the opposing teams' time at the plate, the crowd was treated to relaxing visuals and music, as well as the soothing voice of the CHS Field public address announcer. Yoga and other zen-like poses were demonstrated atop the dugout by the Saints "ushertainers," adding to the moments of tranquility at each home game.

The season was once again a terrific opportunity to promote Minnesota corn farmers with metro families. ■

Winslow elected to MCR&PC chair

The Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) elected Scott Winslow as its chairman for 2019–2020. Winslow is a farmer from Fountain, who grows corn and soybeans and raises swine. He was elected to MCR&PC in 2015.

"I look forward to working on behalf of Minnesota's corn farmers to ensure we are taking the best action to build a more sustainable future on the farm," Winslow said. "While we are currently in a challenging time in agriculture, I am optimistic about the opportunities ahead to improve our practices and become more profitable."

Jim O'Connor, who farms in Blooming Prairie, was elected vice chair. Mountain Lake farmer Brandon Fast was elected treasurer, and Doug Albin, who farms in Clarkfield, was elected secretary.

Winslow succeeds Delavan farmer Gary Prescher as MCR&PC chair. All newly elected officers began their one-year terms on July 1.

Working in close partnership with the MCR&PC, MCGA identifies and promotes opportunities for Minnesota's 24,000 corn farmers, while building connections with the non-farming public. ■



Gary Prescher (right) hands over the gavel and leadership of the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council to Scott Winslow.

MCR&PC member Chad Willis elected to U.S. Grains Council Secretary-Treasurer



Chad Willis was recognized by U.S. Grains Council for five years of service in June.

Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) member Chad Willis was newly elected to secretary-treasurer of the U.S. Grains Council (USGC). Willis was first elected to the USGC board of directors in 2017.

Willis farms corn and soybeans near Willmar with his wife, Krista. They have two children, Cooper and Amber, who work in agribusiness. Willis has been a member of MCR&PC since 2007.

During his time with both MCR&PC and USGC, building markets for ethanol has been a passion for Willis. While on the board, Willis helped further USGC's mission to grow exports for ethanol, leading to more than 1.6 billion gallons of ethanol exported in 2018. He looks forward to working toward USGC's goal to export four billion gallons of ethanol by 2022.

"I am honored to be able to step into this role and work with my fellow board members and USGC CEO Ryan LeGrand to develop markets for American corn farmers, who continue to face challenging times," Willis said. "Our work to date has ignited tremendous momentum around ethanol markets and more, and I'm excited to continue this progress in the years ahead."

Willis will serve a one-year term as secretary-treasurer for the U.S. Grains Council. MCR&PC and the Minnesota Corn Growers Association have long supported USGC and its mission to develop markets for U.S. producers. ■

MCGA director Tom Haag re-elected to NCGA Corn Board



Haag was first elected to the NCGA Corn Board in 2016.

Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) board member Tom Haag was re-elected to the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Corn Board during July Corn Congress in Washington, D.C. Haag, who farms in Eden Valley, will serve a second term as a Corn Board member after he was first elected in 2016.

A past president of MCGA, Haag farms corn and soybeans with his son, Nathan. He was first elected to the MCGA board of directors in 2010. Haag joins MCGA director Harold Wolle in representing the nation's corn farmers on the national board.

In a letter addressed to the NCGA delegate body prior to the election, Haag highlighted a new farm bill and year-round E15 as recent accomplishments for corn farmers, while acknowledging there is a lot of work left to pull agriculture out of today's challenging times. Now re-elected, Haag is excited about building a more sustainable future on the farm.

"While year-round E15 is a win for farmers, we need to stop the issuing of small refinery waivers in order for those benefits to be fully realized. We also need stability on the trade front," Haag said. "I look forward to working my hardest to make these goals a reality for corn farmers in the years ahead."

Chris Edgington (Iowa), Mike Lefever (Colorado) and Dennis McNinch (Kansas) were also elected to the NCGA Corn Board at Corn Congress, and will join Haag in serving a three-year term. ■

Dale Busch inducted into MCGA Recruiter Hall of Fame

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) inducted top MCGA recruiter Dale Busch into the MCGA Recruiter Hall of Fame this month. Busch is a Watonwan County Corn and Soybean Growers Association board member and a past regional representative for MCGA.

Having a passion for agriculture since growing up on a southern Minnesota farm, Busch was an ag teacher for more than 30 years in St. James and Tracy. Following his teaching career, he joined MCGA as a regional representative where he worked directly with county organizations to encourage membership recruitment. He helped county organizations realize the importance of recruiting events, helping organize call-in nights and county fair outreach.

Most recently, Busch was elected to the Watonwan County board where he has continued his passion for strengthening MCGA through recruiting. Since joining the board, he has helped Watonwan County double its membership.

In the past 20 years, Busch has recruited more than 700 members. His key to recruitment has been the many personal relationships he has made in the St. James area over his years as a teacher and regional representative.

"A large share of the people I was able to recruit were even students of mine at one time," Busch said. "Having a personal relationship with so many here has been fortunate and a key for bringing people to MCGA."

In its mission to build a more sustainable future on the farm, Busch said MCGA is only as influential as its membership, which serves as motivation for his recruiting efforts.

"Membership is the lifeblood of our organization," he said. "When we go to the Capitol or Washington to advocate, we need to have strong numbers in membership to be heard."

Busch will be honored at the MCGA Annual Meeting during MN Ag EXPO 2020 in Mankato. ■



Busch has brought more than 700 members to MCGA over his past 20 years as a recruiter.

Minnesota Corn directors meet up with U of M researchers for evening of conversation

Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) directors and Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) members met with University of Minnesota researchers and officials as part of a meet-and-greet at the Bell Museum in August.

The annual get-together is a great opportunity for Minnesota's farmers to meet with researchers and discuss research needs and ideas that will shape the future of agriculture.

Since 1985, Minnesota's corn farmers have invested \$17.5 million in the University of Minnesota, including \$15.5 million directly supporting research. Approximately 30 researchers were in attendance to discuss

the advancements made possible with this investment and provide insight on areas of opportunity for ag research.

"Minnesota Corn directors put a lot of thought into what projects are funded each year, so this is a great opportunity for our growers to be able to sit down and converse with the people who are carrying out this research," MCGA Senior Research Director Paul Meints said. "It is beneficial for the researchers who can speak with the farmers who benefit from their work, and it is great for the growers, who can walk away with a deeper understanding of the projects they are supporting." ■

county highlights

County corn organizations fuel the grassroots advocacy efforts of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA), while helping promote the importance of corn farming in Minnesota. Throughout the year, county organizations host events that raise awareness of agriculture in their local communities, engage area youth with educational and scholarship opportunities, meet local legislators to discuss issues important to corn farming, and much more.

To shine a light on these initiatives throughout the year, MCGA is highlighting the counties' many successes in each issue of Corn Talk.



County members promoted the clean-air benefits of ethanol and the many uses of corn at the annual night of racing.

Tasseldega returns to Deer Creek Speedway

County corn organizations located in southeast Minnesota banded together to sponsor another great night of free-to-attend racing at Deer Creek Speedway. Rescheduled due to a rainout in July, Tasseldega packed the grandstands on Aug. 10 this year. The event was once again a tremendous opportunity to bring the community together to celebrate corn farming in Minnesota and promote the benefits of ethanol.

Pennington/Red Lake County Corn & Soybean Growers

County Director David Miller and his wife, Peggy, hosted a soil health field day at their farm, Trinity Creek Ranch. The Millers participate in the Soil Health Partnership program, which helped organize the event. The field day took a deep dive into the benefits of interseeding corn, cover crops and more, as well as featured a variety of speakers focused on soil health topics. The event was well-attended and a successful showcase of the conservation-minded practices implemented by the Millers.

Have an event that you would like featured in County Highlights? Contact your local district field manager at mncorn.org/staff.



Dakota/Rice County board members spent the afternoon chatting with consumers at the Lakeville Hy-Vee.

Dakota/Rice County Corn and Soybean Growers

Fuel promotion events have been showcasing the benefits of ethanol-blended fuels across the state all summer. The Dakota/Rice County Corn and Soybean Growers upped their game for a recent event in Lakeville, including having a booth that shares information with consumers about the value of ethanol and other uses of corn. To promote the event, a tractor was on-site the week prior to the event with a large sign letting customers know when they can come back and enjoy discounts.



The group handed out more than 1,000 ears of corn in just under an hour.

Benton/Sherburne County Corn Growers

In early August, the Benton/Sherburne County Corn Growers were the most popular attraction at the Benton County Fair thanks to a free corn boil treating fairgoers. In all, over 1,000 ears of corn were given away. The county organization gave out its annual scholarships to two students pursuing a career in agriculture as part of their presence at the fair.

Stearns County Corn Growers Association

The Stearns County Corn Growers partnered with the St. Cloud Rox, an independent baseball team, to celebrate local agriculture in a "Field of Dreams Night" in late July. Corn mascot Maizey joined Dwier Brown, who played John Kinsella in "Field of Dreams," to throw out the first pitch. More than 70 members of the county organization were able to attend the ball game.

Fall fuel promotion events continue throughout the state

County corn organizations throughout the state have been hard at work organizing fuel promotion events to offer local residents discounts on E15 and E85, while promoting the benefits of ethanol-blended fuels. Events throughout Greater Minnesota continue to be scheduled during the fall.

Find an opportunity to save on ethanol-blended fuels near you at mnfuels.com/events.

The goal with each event is to share information with consumers about the many clean-air benefits of ethanol-blended fuels, while offering a discount at the pump. Ethanol ambassadors are on-hand to speak with drivers, and the American Lung Association is in attendance to discuss E15 and E85 as a Clean Air Choice.™

Learn more at mnfuels.com and find an event near you. ■



Ethanol ambassadors share the benefits of ethanol-blended fuels with consumers at a recent fuel promotion event.

Grassroots action as important today as ever

Whether it's driving home the importance of United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement ratification or protecting the Renewable Fuel Standard, Minnesota corn growers need to make their voice heard on the issues impacting farms and rural families.

But in order to have a strong voice that elevates these issues, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) needs its members to fuel the efforts that build a more sustainable future on the farm. That's why becoming a member of MCGA today is more important than ever.

Thankfully, it's easy to join.

Prospective members can visit mncorn.org/join to learn more about member benefits and how to join, including the benefits of the Partial Refund Program. Using the program, Minnesota corn farmers can invest in an MCGA membership by using their check-off investment.

If you have sold and checked off (in Minnesota) a minimum of 7,500 bushels of corn within the last 12 months, you qualify for a one-year membership to MCGA. Farmers who have sold and checked-off a minimum of 20,000 bushels of their corn at the 1 cent rate within the last 12 months qualify for a three-year MCGA membership. ■

Join MCGA today at
mncorn.org/join.

thanks to our allied partners



MCGA Board Members

- President**
Brian Thalmann of Plato
320-238-2481
- First Vice President**
Les Anderson of Cannon Falls
507-298-0150
- Treasurer**
Tim Waibel of Courtland
507-359-1219
- Secretary**
Bryan Biegler of Lake Wilson
507-920-8186
- Past President**
Kirby Hettver of De Graff
320-226-3677
- Dana Allen-Tully of Eoyota
507-951-5597
- Charles DeGrote of Clara City
320-847-2175
- Tom Haag of Eden Valley*
320-453-7760
- Paul Henning of Okabena
507-370-1688
- Blair Hoseth of Mahnomen
701-261-3574
- Noah Hultgren of Raymond
320-599-5118
- Jim Kanten of Milan
320-297-0375
- Jean Knakmuhs of Marshall
507-829-8421
- Dan Root of Racine
507-951-6657
- John Swanson of Mentor
612-419-9235
- Richard Syverson of Clontarf
320-760-6719
- David (D.J.) VanKlompenburg of Montevideo
320-212-2748
- Harold Wolle Jr. of Madelia*
507-236-2181

MCR&PC Members

- Chair**
Scott Winslow of Fountain
507-951-0363
- Vice Chair**
James O'Connor of Blooming Prairie
507-456-5300
- Treasurer**
Brandon Fast of Mountain Lake
507-220-8275
- Secretary**
Doug Albin of Clarkfield
320-383-2338
- Duane Epland of Twin Lakes
641-590-0928
- George Goblish of Vesta
507-762-3449
- Dwight Mork of Bellingham
320-568-2264
- Myron (Mickey) Peterson of Sacred Heart
320-765-2676
- Gary Prescher of Delavan
507-525-7671
- Brennen Toquam of Claremont
507-456-9551
- Chad Willis of Willmar
320-235-4452
- Ex-Officio Thom Petersen
Minnesota Dept. of Ag
651-201-6219
- *NCGA Corn Board member



738 FIRST AVENUE EAST · SHAKOPEE · MN 55379
P) 952.233.0333 · F) 952.233.0420 · W) MNCORN.ORG

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Twin Cities, MN
Permit #93723

calendar of events

**october
1-3**

RFA Annual Meeting,
Minneapolis

**october
12**

U of M Celebrate
Ag & Food Day,
Minneapolis

**october
13-15**

U.S. Grains
Council Global
Ethanol Summit,
Washington, D.C.

**november
7**

Minnesota Ag
& Food Summit,
Minneapolis

**november
21**

ACE Board Meeting,
Sioux Falls, SD

**november
21-23**

MN Farm Bureau
Annual Meeting,
Bloomington

**november
22-23**

MN Association
of Townships
Annual Conference,
Mankato

**november
22-24**

MN Farmers Union
Annual Meeting,
Minneapolis

**november
28-29**

MCGA offices closed
for Thanksgiving

**december
4**

MCGA Pre-Resolutions
Meeting,
Willmar

Don't toss it out - pass it along!

When you're finished reading Corn Talk, why not pass it along to a friend, colleague or neighbor. This publication is one of the best ways to stay up to date with the news that is important to the state's corn growers, whether it is related to policy, research or outreach to all Minnesotans.

Know someone who should be on the Corn Talk mailing list or notice an error with your subscription? Please contact us at 952-233-0333.