

***Your Minnesota
Corn Check-off
Investment
at Work***



What is the corn check-off?

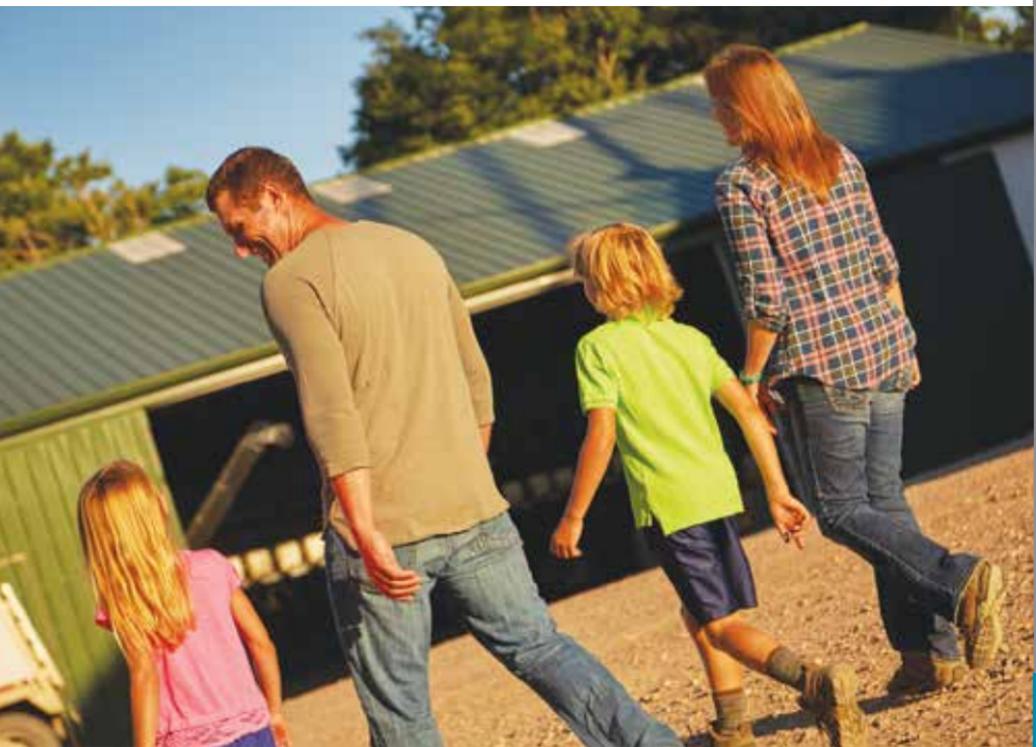
Minnesota's corn farmers passed a referendum conducted by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture in 2009 to increase the state check-off rate from ½ cent to 1 cent per bushel. The effort was targeted at creating more opportunities leading to increased profitability for the state's corn farmers.

The Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) was established to direct Minnesota corn farmers' investment in the corn check-off to enhance quality of life for corn producers. Working alongside the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, MCR&PC invests in the following:

- **Research**
- **Promotion**
- **Outreach**

Learn about the many ways Minnesota corn check-off investments are increasing sustainability and profitability for corn farmers.

Look for this sticker to learn about research, promotion and outreach efforts fueled by farmers' investment in the Minnesota corn check-off.



Farmers' investment in the corn check-off promotes opportunities for the state's 24,000 corn farmers.

Research

Through corn farmers investment in the Minnesota corn check-off, MCR&PC invests \$2.6 million annually in research that improves on-farm practices while identifying new markets for the state's corn crop.

■ **Developing corn-based plastics:** Minnesota corn check-off supported research at the University of Minnesota's Center for Sustainable Polymers (CSP) aims to replace petroleum as a feedstock for plastics with renewable sources like corn. In doing so, the environmental impact of plastic would be drastically reduced, and corn farmers would have a new market with tremendous potential for their crop.



University of Minnesota research focused on using E85 to extend the range of electric car batteries.

the role E85 could play in electric vehicles. Future cars could use E85 in an internal combustion engine that charges the battery, acting as a range extender for electrified vehicles. Carving out a role for ethanol would be a major boost for corn farmers as more drivers choose an alternative to gas-powered vehicles.

■ **Improving on-farm nitrogen management:** The Nitrogen Smart program is supported through farmers' investment in the corn check-off. University of Minnesota Extension staff are helping farmers become more efficient with their nitrogen use, benefitting on-farm economics and the environment. In 2020, 94% of attendees reported they would recommend the course to a fellow farmer. Learn more at z.umn.edu/NitrogenSmart.

MCR&PC recently announced a \$460,000 investment in CSP research that will greatly increase how and where corn-based plastics can be used by adding toughness, strength, better thermal stability, and other characteristics that will expand applications.

■ **Bringing ethanol to electric vehicles:** University of Minnesota research supported through the Minnesota corn check-off examines

Interested in learning more about research supported through your investment in the corn check-off?

Subscribe to the Minnesota Corn Podcast at info.mncorn.org/podcast or visit mncorn.org/research.

Promotion

Through the Minnesota corn check-off, the state's farmers are raising awareness of the benefits of ethanol-blended fuels while making investments in ethanol infrastructure that are critical for its growth.

■ **The rise of E15 in Minnesota:** From 2017 to 2019, gallons of E15 pumped by consumers in Minnesota increased by more than 300%, with new record highs in sales posted each year.

The growth was driven in part by an investment by the state's corn farmers in E15 infrastructure. More than 360 stations offer the cleaner-burning fuel today, compared to 2014 when only 14 retailers offered E15. MCGA has also increased efforts to raise awareness of the many benefits of E15, including launching a marketing campaign reaching metro area consumers via billboards, digital ads, radio ads and more.

■ **Promoting ethanol around the world:** Corn farmers' investment in the check-off supports efforts by the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) to promote the benefits of ethanol-blended fuels and the reliability of Minnesota's ethanol industry.

USGC officials report the global ethanol market has grown from 4.5 billion gallons in 2017 to more than 26 billion gallons in 2020. Corn farmers' support of USGC ethanol promotion efforts are helping grow that demand.

For example, after MCR&PC worked with USGC to host Indonesian officials on a tour of Minnesota's ethanol industry, the world's fourth-most populous country opened its door to ethanol imports, creating an additional 200 million gallons of ethanol demand.

USGC recently reported a record year for ethanol exports—1.70 billion gallons of U.S. ethanol were exported to more than 80 countries. That total is equivalent to 574 million bushels of corn.



Farmers' investment in the corn check-off is building demand for ethanol at home and abroad.

Learn more about the multi-faceted effort to grow E15 by downloading the "Rise of Ethanol in Minnesota" e-book at info.mncorn.org/ethanol.

Outreach

With support from Minnesota corn farmers' check-off investment, consumer outreach efforts through the "MN Corn Grows MN" initiative and programs like CommonGround continue to make an impact.

A recent statewide survey showed 80% of Minnesotans have positive perceptions of Minnesota farmers, and 92% of Minnesotans said farming and agriculture are extremely or very important to our state compared to other industries.

- **"MN Corn Grows MN":** The "MN Corn Grows MN" campaign continues to raise awareness of the importance of corn farming with all Minnesotans at a time when fewer Minnesotans than ever have a connection to the farm.

Fueled by the Minnesota corn check-off, the campaign reaches residents statewide via video streaming services, digital ads, billboards, radio ads and more. The message in each highlights corn farmers' commitment to becoming the most environmentally responsible in the nation and the economic impact corn farmers have on the state. Minnesotans are also directed to MNCornGrowsMN.org, where they can find videos, blogs and infographics sharing the many ways corn farmers are helping the state grow environmentally, economically and sustainably.

- **CommonGround:** CommonGround Minnesota is a group of women in agriculture who volunteer their time to share information about food and farming. With support through the Minnesota corn check-off, the group hosts events that bring together metro moms and food influencers for discussions about modern agriculture. CommonGround continues the conversation year-round through blogger and radio partnerships reaching thousands of consumers. The program has been vital in building trust and addressing misconceptions about agriculture today.

- **County Matching Funds Program:** The Minnesota corn check-off supports more than 225 county-led initiatives per year in local communities. These initiatives, managed and coordinated by county corn grower associations, promote agriculture and corn farming in local communities across the state.

Stay Informed. Stay Connected.

Research, promotion and outreach made possible through corn farmers' investment in the Minnesota corn check-off extends far beyond the initiatives highlighted here. Stay connected to the many ways the Minnesota corn check-off investment is building a brighter future on the farm:

- Subscribe to our free weekly e-newsletter, Leader Update: mncorn.org/LeaderUpdate
- Follow us on Twitter: [@mncorn](https://twitter.com/mncorn)
- Follow us on Facebook: [@MinnesotaCorn](https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaCorn)
- Follow us on Instagram: [@mncorn](https://www.instagram.com/mncorn)
- Subscribe to Corn Talk, a free publication delivered six times annually to the state's corn farmers. If you are a corn farmer and do not receive Corn Talk, email us at info@mncorn.org.



CommonGround events bring together women farmers and metro moms for conversations about food and farming.



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