

# cornstalk

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## Inside

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- MCGA continues active legislative session
- Introducing MN Corn's 2023 research projects
- MN Corn announces 2023 scholarship recipients

Corn Talk goes to all corn farmers who pay into the Minnesota corn check-off, regardless of whether you're a member of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA). But we'd love to have you join us. Membership drives our engagement and advocacy with elected officials in St. Paul and Washington, D.C., giving corn farmers a voice on important policy issues. It also comes with a host of other benefits, from scholarship opportunities to discounts at retailers.

As you'll read in this edition of Corn Talk, MCGA's advocacy efforts have been especially important during the 2023 state legislative session, as lawmakers have debated proposals that would affect corn farmers and rural communities. Fortunately, MCGA has been there to advocate for corn farmers, providing lawmakers with perspective on important agricultural issues and opposing policies that would negatively impact growers.

If you are not an MCGA member, joining is easy. Simply visit [mncorn.org/join](https://mncorn.org/join). You can also call the Minnesota Corn office to inquire about or renew your membership at (952) 233-0333.



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

table of contents

3	MCGA continues active legislative session	12	By the Numbers: 2022 E15 sales	17	Meet MN Corn's new finance director
4	MCGA urges challenge to Mexico ban	14	MN Corn announces 2023 scholarship recipients	18	MN Corn remembers Gayle Bergstrom
5	MCGA continues year-round E15 advocacy	15	Membership efforts rewarded	19	County Highlights
6	Introducing MN Corn's 2023 research projects	16	Welcome to MCGA's new members		

**About the cover**  
*Former Minnesota Corn Growers Association President Bruce Peterson of Northfield works on his planter during a recent spring.*



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500 E Travelers Trail  
Suite 600  
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April 2023  
  
Corn Talk Advisory Committee:

Adam Birr  
Richard Syverson  
Doug Albin  
Dana Allen-Tully  
Gary Prescher  
Editor: Nate Gotlieb

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# MCGA continues active legislative session

This legislative session, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) has been hard at work advocating for policies that benefit corn farmers while ensuring that proposals that would negatively affect farmers do not advance.

MCGA grower-leaders have built relationships with new members of the DFL majority while maintaining relationships with key committee members and committee chairs. Grower-leaders have also built support for programs at the Minnesota Department Agriculture (MDA) that benefit corn farmers.

A highlight of the session was MCGA's annual Day on the Hill, during which grower-leaders met with Gov. Tim Walz and lawmakers from both political parties. During the event, grower-leaders advocated for policies that would benefit corn farmers and highlighted MCGA's legislative priorities, including bills to assist farmers in implementing sustainability initiatives.

Grower-leaders have also been active in testifying in House and Senate committees on bills that would affect corn farmers. That includes bills that would increase the availability of higher biofuel blends and provide ongoing funding to MDA's Soil Health Financial Assistance grant program.

The biofuel bill (HF1474/SF1246) is sponsored by Rep. Luke Frederick (DFL-Mankato) and Sen. Rob Kupec (DFL-Moorhead) and has bipartisan support. It would allocate \$6 million annually in 2024-25 for grants to help small fuel retailers install equipment compatible with higher biofuel blends, including E15.

In testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Broadband, and Rural Development, MCGA President Richard Syverson noted how corn ethanol reduces lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions 46% on average compared to gasoline, according to multiple studies.

Corn ethanol also reduces particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxide and lowers costs for consumers at the pump, he noted.

"E15 and other higher-level blends not only will benefit Minnesota corn farmers, but people from across the state," Syverson said.



**Minnesota Corn grower-leaders meet with Minnesota House Minority Leader Rep. Lisa Demuth during MCGA's annual Day on the Hill.**

The soil health bill (HF1316/SF1245) sponsored by Rep. Kristi Pursell (DFL-Northfield) and Sen. Heather Gustafson (DFL Vadnais Heights), also has bipartisan support. It would allocate \$10 million in 2024, \$2 million in 2025, and \$2 million annually in the state's budget going forward to MDA's Soil Health Financial Assistance program.

The program was established by the Legislature in 2022 thanks to the advocacy of MCGA and other agriculture groups.

In testimony to the Senate Agriculture Committee, MCGA First Vice President Dana Allen-Tully said healthy soil provides many benefits to Minnesota farmers. She noted how Minnesota's corn organizations have invested in on-farm research that explores practices that can build soil health through the organization's Innovation Grant program.

MCGA thanks Syverson and Allen-Tully for their testimony on these bills and is hopeful they will advance in the final weeks of session.

## Advocating for crop-protection tools

In addition to supporting legislation, MCGA has also been playing defense on certain bills this year, particularly around legislation to further regulate federally approved crop-protection tools.

One bill of concern to MCGA would require farmers to demonstrate a pest problem before planting pesticide treated seed. This bill flies in the face of product approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**Continued on page 17**

# MCGA urges challenge to Mexico ban

This spring, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) and its state and national partners have been urging Mexico to rescind its misguided ban on biotech corn. The ban, which was revised in February, immediately prohibited imports of biotech corn for human consumption while allowing imports of biotech corn for livestock feed and industrial uses as substitutes are explored.

Mexico is one of the most important customers of U.S. corn, most of which is biotech, and the Mexican people depend on these imports. Additionally, the ban is a flagrant violation of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

If left to stand, the ban could raise tortilla prices in Mexico by 40% over the first year and 16% over time, according to a study by World Perspectives, Inc. Additionally, the ban is not based on sound scientific evidence, as regulators and health organizations around the world, from the World Health Organization to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, have confirmed the safety and benefits of biotech crops for decades.

Throughout the spring, MCGA has amplified a National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) call to action urging growers to contact their members of Congress and support the U.S. initiation of a dispute settlement under USMCA. MCGA was pleased in early March when the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) took the initial step to initiate the settlement and continues urging federal officials to do everything they can to remove this trade barrier.

"Minnesota corn farmers need open trade with Mexico, and the Mexican people need U.S. corn," MCGA President Richard Syverson said. "The time to act is now. We call on the USTR to take immediate action to ensure that this ban is rescinded as fast as possible."

Mexico and the U.S. had until April 7 to take action to settle the dispute, according to the USMCA process. If there was no movement at that point, the U.S. could initiate a dispute settlement, which would trigger a panel of experts who would hear the case and make a final settlement determination.



***Mexico's planned ban on biotech corn would hurt American farmers and the Mexican people.***

Read more about MCGA's efforts around Mexico's biotech corn ban at [mncorn.org/blog](https://mncorn.org/blog). You can urge your member of Congress to support the reversal of the ban at [bit.ly/mncornmexico](https://bit.ly/mncornmexico). 🙌

## Fast Facts

- *Mexico is America's largest export market for corn. In 2021-22, the U.S. exported 16.8 million metric tons of corn to Mexico.*
- *According to a study by World Perspectives, Inc., Mexico's decree would increase corn prices there by 19%, inflating the costs of food and other goods.*
- *The U.S. would lose \$73.9 billion in economic output over 10 years because of the ban, according to the study.*



# MCGA continues year-round E15 advocacy

**T**his spring, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) has been advocating for policies to allow for permanent year-round sales of E15. Often marketed as Unleaded 88, the 15% biofuel blend is approved for use in cars, trucks, and SUVs model year 2001 and newer.

In March, MCGA applauded bipartisan members of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate for introducing legislation that would allow for permanent year-round E15 sales nationwide. The bill, called the Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act, was introduced by 35 House and Senate members. From Minnesota, that included Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Sen. Tina Smith, Rep. Angie Craig, Rep. Brad Finstad, and Rep. Michelle Fischbach.

Additionally, during a hearing in March MCGA provided testimony on a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plan that would allow for permanent year-round E15 sales in eight Midwestern states, including Minnesota, beginning in 2024. The plan had been requested by the governors of the eight respective states in 2022.

MCGA is pleased that the plan will allow for permanent year-round E15 sales in the eight states, but disappointed about its delayed implementation. The organization has joined the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) and other groups in urging the EPA to use its existing authority to prevent a disruption in E15 availability this summer.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and the governors of Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota have also urged the EPA to allow for summertime E15 sales in 2023.

"We strongly support granting the governors' petition, but we also ask EPA to use every tool at the agency's disposal to help ensure there is no disruption for the 2023 summer driving season," MCGA board member Jim Kantan said during the March EPA hearing on the plan.

Finally, MCGA is applauding the reintroduction of the Next Generation Fuels Act, a bipartisan bill that would lower fuel prices, reduce carbon emissions, and help shore up America's energy security. In Minnesota, the bill has support from Sen. Klobuchar and Reps. Craig and Finstad.



***MCGA thanks Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and bipartisan members of the state's congressional delegation for their advocacy on year-round E15.***

The Next Generation Fuels Act would clean up our nation's fuel supply and transition new vehicles to use cleaner, more efficient fuels that also lower costs for drivers. By establishing a clean, high-octane standard for fuel and requiring that sources of additional octane result in at least 40% fewer greenhouse gas emissions, the legislation would allow automakers to significantly improve vehicle fuel efficiency through advanced engines.

"The Next Generation Fuels Act addresses some of the country's most pressing concerns by providing consumers with more options in the transition to cleaner fuels and vehicles and supporting our long-term energy security," NCGA President Tom Haag said in a statement.

To read the latest updates on E15, visit [mncorn.org/blog](https://mncorn.org/blog). 🌽

# feature story

## Introducing MN Corn's 2023 research projects



In March, Minnesota Corn announced its 2023 slate of research projects, which aim to increase the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of corn production. This year, Minnesota Corn allocated \$2 million to 30 projects focused on corn-based plastics, ethanol fuel cells, precision irrigation, various nitrogen-fixing bacteria, and more.

Projects are located across the state and are led by both farmers and professional scientists, most of them from the University of Minnesota. They were selected by the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council, based on the recommendations of Minnesota Corn's Discovery & Development Team. Team members evaluated projects based on their novelty, how well they addressed Minnesota Corn's research priorities, and the value they will provide to Minnesota corn farmers.

Over 72% of the funds are allocated to farmer education on and studies of production and environmental stewardship topics, including nutrient management, water quality, drainage systems, and soil health. About 28% of the funds are allocated to projects focused on expanded uses for corn.

Below is a summary of Minnesota Corn's 2023 research allocations. Throughout the year, read updates on the projects at [mncorn.org](https://mncorn.org).

## Education and outreach

### Nitrogen Smart/Nitrogen College

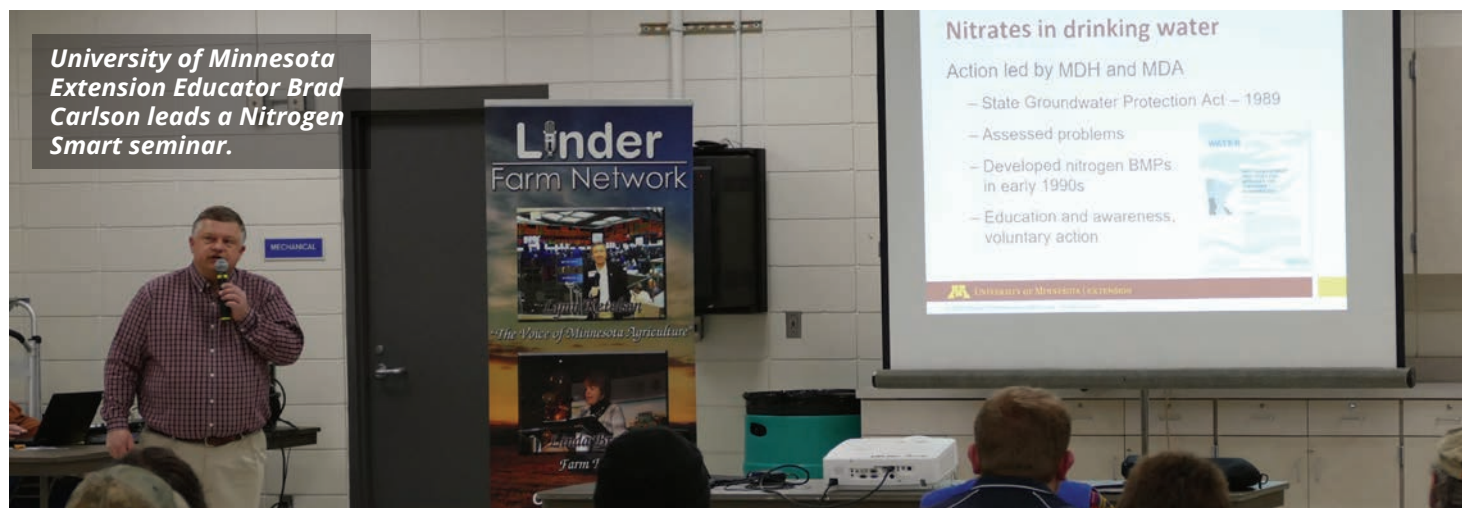
**Project lead:** Brad Carlson, University of Minnesota (UMN)

**Overview:** This investment funds the university's Nitrogen Smart program, which over 1,000 Minnesota farmers have completed over the past eight years. Nitrogen Smart focuses on how nitrogen behaves in the environment and how this affects nitrogen fertilizer management and environmental concerns. The program is also available online for growers to complete at their convenience.

### Advanced Nitrogen Smart

**Project lead:** Brad Carlson, UMN

**Overview:** This investment funds the university's ongoing Advanced Nitrogen Smart series, which provides education and information on maximizing economic return on nitrogen investments while minimizing nitrogen losses. Advanced Nitrogen Smart classes focus on the 4Rs of nitrogen application, adapting nitrogen management to climate, manure management, and preventing nitrate losses. Future topics could include biologicals in nitrogen management and variable rate nitrogen.





## UMN Extension water quality education

**Project lead:** Michael Schmitt, UMN

**Overview:** This investment funds a half-time water quality extension educator position at the University of Minnesota. The educator helps corn growers stay up to date on the latest water quality and nutrient-management research through publications, seminars, workshops, podcasts, videos, and more. The role is held by Brad Carlson.

## Climate smart agriculture Extension program

**Project lead:** Heidi Roop, UMN

**Overview:** This investment funds University of Minnesota Extension's efforts to help corn growers and the agricultural sector manage climate and weather extremes that could impact their productivity and operations. Scientists will hold several engagement events and convene at least one "action planning" workshop to discuss and develop potential management strategies. Project leaders will aggregate the materials and management strategies into a dedicated online and print resource.

## Expanded uses for corn

### Sustainable polyesters from corn as tomorrow's advanced materials

**Project lead:** Marc Hillmyer, UMN/National Science Foundation Center for Sustainable Polymers

**Overview:** This project, which Minnesota Corn has funded since 2019, aims to develop new biobased plastics and polymers and improve existing materials. In 2023, researchers will continue focusing on improving the structure and performance of PLA plastic, developing methods to generate corn-based polymers, exploring the usefulness of new biomolecules, and more.

### Ethanol fuel cells

**Project lead:** Luca Zullo, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)

**Overview:** This project is studying the feasibility of utilizing ethanol as the feedstock for hydrogen, a gas with a variety of industrial uses, including as a fuel cell for power generation. If successful, the project

will allow AURI to build a coalition to seek funding for a commercial-scale project.

## Production and environmental stewardship

### Enhancement of survey efforts for corn pests

**Project lead:** Anthony Hanson, UMN

**Overview:** This investment allows the university to continue surveying for corn pests and diseases. Over the next year, researchers will quantify moth flight time for several insect pests, including black cutworm and European corn borer. They will also survey overwintering European corn borer larvae and develop a specialized survey to determine the risk from key corn diseases, such as stalk rot and tar spot. Ultimately, the effort could lead to a long-term cooperative effort to predict and quantify changes in economic losses from corn pests.



### Dialing in the most profitable and environmentally responsible nitrogen rate

**Project lead:** Fabian Fernandez, UMN

**Overview:** This project is studying how much nitrogen is lost to the environment when the nutrient is applied at different rates. It's also looking at yield, economic return, and nitrogen use efficiency. The study will generate a one-of-a-kind dataset to evaluate nitrogen rates where different production and environmental goal outcomes can be optimized.

## Evaluating conservation practice effectiveness with a paired watershed approach

**Project lead:** Gary Feyereisen, USDA Agricultural Research Service

**Overview:** This project is studying how conservation practices implemented on multiple farms within a watershed impact nutrient losses. The end goal is to compare a south-central Minnesota watershed where enhanced conservation practices are implemented to an adjacent watershed where farmers continue as usual. Researchers will also continue evaluating a bioreactor that filters water from one of the watersheds.

## Hyperstable enzyme to control plant diseases

**Project lead:** Mikael Elias, UMN

**Overview:** This project continues research into enzymes that degrade the small signaling molecules bacteria use to communicate when it's time to activate genes that increase their capacity to cause disease. In 2022, the researchers found that the enzyme can reduce Goss' Wilt on a field scale. In 2023, the researchers will try to confirm whether the enzyme can reduce damage to crops, and evaluate the compatibility of the enzyme with current market products.

## Is fixed ammonium an important part of the nitrogen cycle?

**Project lead:** Daniel Kaiser, UMN

**Overview:** This project will assess how corn responds to nitrogen at various levels of potassium fertilization. The projects will determine how much fixed ammonium is present in soils, how fixed ammonium could be impacted by fixed potassium and vice versa, and ultimately whether fixed ammonium relates to the amount of nitrate present in the soil.

## Mitigating cold and warm season nitrogen losses from corn systems

**Project lead:** Tim Griffis, UMN

**Overview:** This project is studying whether winter rye cover crops and enhanced efficiency fertilizers (EEFs) reduce reactive nitrogen losses during the soil freeze-thaw cycles of spring. In 2023, researchers are focusing on EEFs. The researchers are studying the effectiveness of these practices using indoor growing chambers known as mesocosms.

## Nutrient management dynamics in northwestern Minnesota corn production

**Project lead:** Lindsay Pease, UMN

**Overview:** This project is studying how various sources and rates of phosphorus application in a northwestern Minnesota corn-soybean rotation affect yield, nutrient availability, and nutrient runoff. The findings will help improve the university's nutrient management recommendations for corn-soybean rotations in this region of the state.

## Precision irrigation and nitrogen management for enhancing water-nitrogen use efficiency

**Project lead:** Vasudha Sharma, UMN

**Overview:** This project is researching how variable rate irrigation and variable rate nitrogen affect nitrate leaching, corn plant growth and development, yield, and evapotranspiration as





opposed to uniform methods in central Minnesota. Researchers hope to learn more about precision irrigation solutions, tools, and technologies that can help producers use water and nutrients more efficiently, thereby increasing on-farm profitability and reducing the environmental impact of irrigated agriculture.

## Innovation Grants

### Weed suppressive cover crop incorporation in organic corn educational plot

**Project lead:** Allen Deutz, farmer, Lyon County

**Overview:** Deutz plans to work with educators and students at Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) to plant brassicas and legume cover crops into small organic corn plots during the last cultivation pass. The team will evaluate the effectiveness of the cover crop at suppressing weeds and, after harvest, whether the cover crop-corn stalk mix is more nutritious for cattle than corn stalks alone. Deutz grazes his stock cows in his corn fields after harvest each year.

### Replicated manure vs. commercial fertilizer plot

**Project lead:** Blair Hoseth, farmer, Mahanomen County

**Overview:** Hoseth compared the two nutrient

sources on a corn field in 2022 and found that commercial fertilizer was a slightly better choice from a cost perspective. This year, the project will compare how manure and commercial fertilizer affect yields and organic matter on a soybean field in northwestern Minnesota.

### Living carbon vs. commercial fertilizer

**Project lead:** Gary Prescher, farmer, Faribault County

**Overview:** This project is the third year of a study comparing a composted manure product and commercial fertilizer in corn and soybean fields. New this year, Prescher will plant strips with and without Pivot Bio.

### Testing the effectiveness of microbials and fertility management

**Project lead:** Jakob Hicks, farmer, Redwood County

**Overview:** This project is studying the effectiveness of three microbial products, Pivot Bio, Envita, and Source, at improving yields and soil health when various nitrogen rates are applied. Hicks expects improved yields and soil health in the systems treated with microbial products.

*Herbicide application on a southeastern Minnesota corn field.*



## Wilkin SWCD soil health demonstration site

**Project lead:** Vance Johnson, farmer, Wilkin County

**Overview:** This project continues a study of how an extended five-year crop rotation in combination with different tillage systems and cover crops affects soil properties. Johnson and the Wilkin Soil & Water Conservation District will share the information online and during a field day.

## Evaluating sulfur and ESN with Pivot Bio

**Project lead:** Les Anderson, farmer, Goodhue County

**Overview:** This project is studying how nitrogen application at various rates and in various forms affects corn production. Anderson will compare three treatments: Pivot Bio and 120 pounds of nitrogen per acre preplant; 160 pounds of nitrogen per acre side dressed; and 120 pounds of nitrogen per acre — one-third applied as the environmentally smart nitrogen enhanced efficiency product and two-thirds applied as urea.

## In-furrow compost extract use in corn

**Project lead:** Mark Enninga, farmer, Nobles County

**Overview:** This project is studying whether a compost extract applied in furrow on a strip-tilled farm in Nobles County improves soil nutrient

cycling, plant growth, disease suppression, and boost yield. Compost extract is made by placing a diverse compost into a strainer and using water to forcefully dislodge and suspend the microorganisms and carbon into small particles

## Soil health and economics from long-term cover cropping

**Project lead:** Mikayla Tabert, farmer, Red Lake County

**Overview:** The project aims to demonstrate the economic and soil health benefits of integrating cover crops into a crop rotation. In 2023, Tabert and the team will plant corn and interseed cover crops at the V4 growth stage. They'll present their results at the annual on-farm research summit during the Prairie Grains Conference.

## Azospirillum brasilense inoculation to enhance corn nitrogen uptake

**Project lead:** Paulo Pagliari, UMN

**Overview:** This project continues research into the potential for the nitrogen-fixing bacterium *Azospirillum brasilense* to improve nitrogen use efficiency. In 2022, researchers found a 10% yield increase in inoculated plots vs. non-inoculated plots and to achieve that maximum yield in the non-inoculated plots, twice as much nitrogen was needed.

*Research findings are discussed at a field day in northwestern Minnesota.*





*A cover cropped field in southwestern Minnesota.*



### **Corn yield and soil nutrient availability after algae amendment application**

**Project lead:** Paulo Pagliari, UMN

**Overview:** The project will assess the effectiveness of algae as a field corn fertilizer. The researchers will harvest the algae for this study from an lake with elevated nutrient levels in south-central Minnesota. They will also study whether harvesting the algae improves water quality. Researchers will work with high school students on the project.

### **Purification of procyanidins for nitrous oxide reduction in corn fields**

**Project lead:** CheJen Hsiao, UMN

**Overview:** Grape seed extracts contain the compound procyanidin, which reduces the conversion of nitrates to nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming, but they can also contain compounds that counteract the effects of procyanidins. The researchers in this project will identify the chemical compositions of various extracts and attempt to remove compounds that counteract the effects of procyanidin.

### **Reducing nitrate in a surficial sand aquifer, Mower County, MN**

**Project lead:** Steve Lawler, Mower County Soil & Water Conservation District

**Overview:** This project is studying how cover crops and split nitrogen application affect nitrate leaching. The researchers are conducting the study on a plot in Mower County within an area that has been identified as a sensitive groundwater area by the state.

### **Variable rate nitrogen application in corn fields applied with manure**

**Project lead:** Peter Anthony, farmer Nicollet County

**Overview:** This project will study how precision nitrogen technology affects corn growth, yield, and other agronomic properties on fields that have cover crops and manure. 🙌

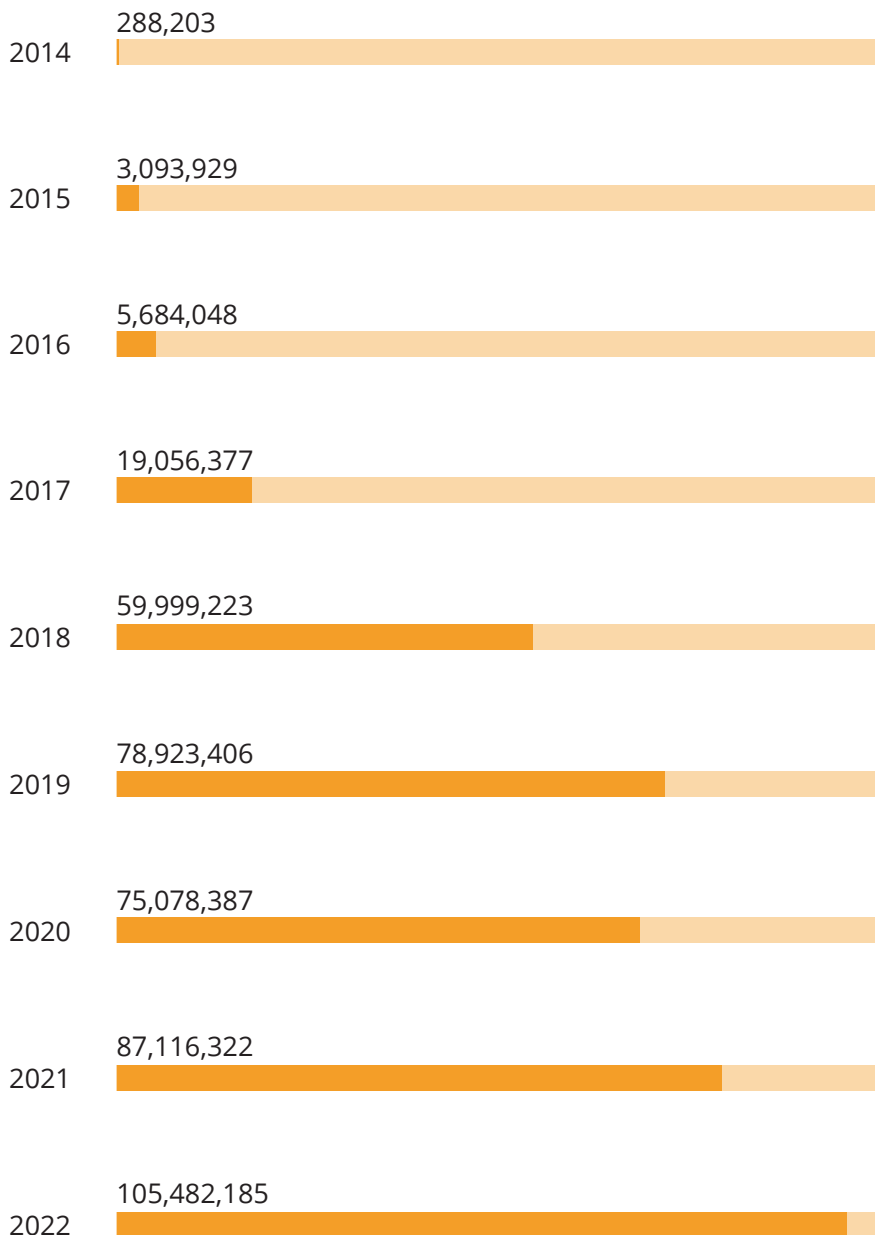
# By the Numbers: 2022 E15 sales

**Unleaded 88 (E15)** sales in Minnesota broke nearly every record in 2022. Here's a closer look at the banner year for the 15% biofuel blend, which is approved for 2001 and newer cars, trucks, and SUVs. Find an Unleaded 88 station near you at [betterfuel.org](https://betterfuel.org)

## OVERALL UNLEADED 88 SALES

### ANNUAL MINNESOTA SALES (GALLONS)

The state topped its previous sales record by over 21%.



## MONTHLY SALES RECORDS

### TOP 10 UNLEADED 88 SALES MONTHS

Eight of the state's top 10 all-time months were in 2022.

Rank	Month	Gallons Reported
1	October 2022	10,070,820
2	December 2022	9,577,586
3	August 2022	9,548,272
4	September 2022	9,483,393
5	November 2022	9,424,160
6	July 2022	9,242,997
7	June 2022	8,948,592
8	May 2022	8,745,345
9	October 2021	8,027,317
10	August 2021	7,951,967



## NEW MONTH, NEW RECORD

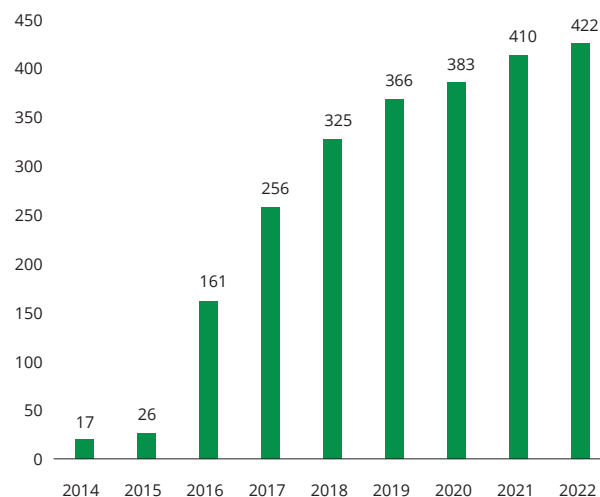
In 2022, Minnesota exceeded sales records for each month of the calendar year.



## MORE AVAILABILITY

### NUMBER OF MINNESOTA UNLEADED 88 STATIONS AT YEAR'S END

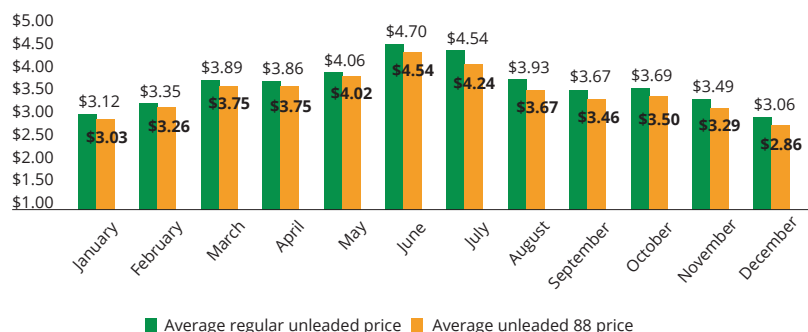
Approximately 16% of Minnesota's 2,620 fuel stations offered Unleaded 88 by the end of 2022.



## STRONG PRICES

### UNLEADED 88 VS REGULAR UNLEADED PRICE PER GALLON

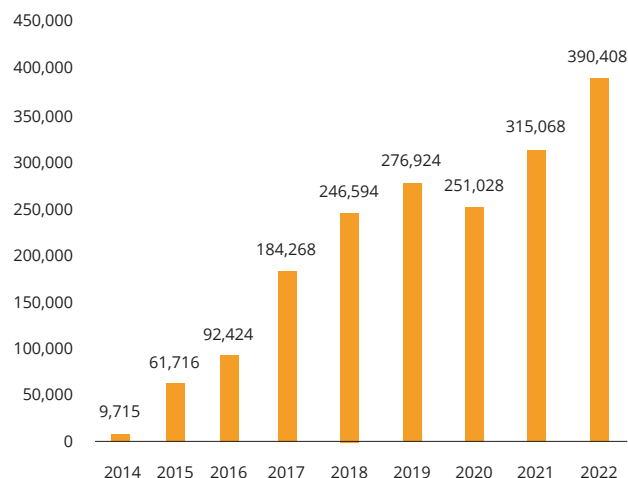
On average, Unleaded 88 cost 17 cents less per gallon than regular unleaded in 2022 in Minnesota. In July, Unleaded 88 averaged 30 cents less per gallon than regular unleaded.



## MORE GALLONS PER STATION

### AVERAGE GALLONS OF UNLEADED 88 SOLD PER STATION

Per-station Unleaded 88 sales increased about 25% in 2022 compared to 2021.



# Minnesota Corn announces 2023 scholarship recipients



In March, Minnesota Corn announced the recipients of its 2023 young adult scholarships. Nicole Koziolk of Northfield, Brynn Lozinski of Clara City, Meredith Taylor of Randolph, and Charles Tesch of Henderson will each receive \$5,000 for their college educations.

Koziolk is a junior at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities studying agricultural communication and marketing. She has been interested in a career in agriculture since joining her local FFA chapter in ninth grade and served as state FFA secretary in 2021-22. In addition to her studies, Koziolk works for the university's Agricultural Communication and Marketing program, is a partner in her family farm, and a member of the Lambda Delta Phi sorority and multiple ag clubs. After college, she plans to work in the marketing department of an agriculture company and become an active MCGA and Minnesota Farm Bureau member.

Lozinski is a freshman at South Dakota State University studying agriculture communications and animal science. She works for her family's pork production company, SDSU's Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory, and writes for the college newspaper, The Collegian. After college, Lozinski hopes to pursue a master's degree in swine science.

Taylor is a sophomore at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities studying agricultural communication and marketing. She's an assistant for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Program at the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Family Development. She is also involved with Lutheran Campus Ministry and a member of Beta of Clovia Sorority, the Block & Bridle Club, and the Randolph FFA chapter. After college, Taylor plans to pursue graduate studies in rural mental health and farm safety.

Tesch is a junior at South Dakota State University studying agronomy and precision agriculture. He's vice president of the SDSU Agronomy and Precision Ag Club and an ambassador for SDSU's Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering. Last summer, Tesch was a crop

consulting intern with Mittman Agronomics Inc. After graduating, he plans to work in the field of research agronomy in southern Minnesota. He also plans to spend his free time working on his family's diversified livestock and crop farming operation.

Since 2019, Minnesota Corn has awarded scholarships to young adult members pursuing careers and degrees in agriculture as part of its mission to support the next generation of farmers and agricultural professionals. To learn more about the Minnesota Corn scholarship, and scholarships offered by county corn and soybean grower associations, visit [mncorn.org/scholarships](https://mncorn.org/scholarships). 🙌



**Nicole Koziolk**



**Brynn Lozinski**



**Meredith Taylor**



**Charles Tesch**



# Membership efforts rewarded

NCGA approves resolutions at 2023 Corn Congress

**T**hank you to the members of Minnesota Corn Growers Association! Because of you, Minnesota Corn was recognized at the 2023 Corn Congress, held March 9-11 in Orlando as part of Commodity Classic, for the highest membership growth in 2022.

Minnesota Corn now boasts nearly 6,800 members, and growing! Be sure to check out the list of new members added since January on page 16. If you have neighbors, family members, or friends who would like to support the work of Minnesota Corn, encourage them to become a member as well. Get information at [mncorn.org/join](https://mncorn.org/join).

## Corn Congress

Over 10,400 attendees – farmers as well as exhibitors, industry stakeholders and members of the media – gathered for the 2023 Commodity Classic March 9-11 in Orlando. Corn Congress was held during Commodity Classic and delegates from across the country voted on changes to resolutions included in the NCGA Policy and Position Papers document.

Adopted changes ranged from preferences for how pesticides and fungicides are labeled to supporting the development of carbon capture technologies, and from opposing Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limits to qualify for crop insurance subsidies to encouraging swift confirmation of agricultural trade appointments to facilitate resolution of trade disputes with trading partners. To review the complete NCGA Policy and Position Papers document, go online to [ncga.com/action-center/policy-book](https://ncga.com/action-center/policy-book).

## Commodity Classic

The 2023 event broke the previous Commodity Classic record of 9,770 attendees, which was set in New Orleans in 2016.

"The excitement in Orlando was energizing," said George Goblish, a Minnesota farmer, ASA member,



***MCGA Director Wes Beck accepts the membership growth award from NCGA at the annual Corn Congress, held during Commodity Classic, March 9-11.***

and co-chair of the 2023 Commodity Classic. "We knew going into the event that registration was up 30% over last year, but to have a record-breaking show just blew us away."

This year's event featured more than 30 educational sessions, a sold-out trade show with over 400 exhibitors, a keynote address by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, and policy meetings of the sponsoring commodity associations.

The 2024 Commodity Classic will be Feb. 29 – March 2, 2024, in Houston, Texas. For information, visit [CommodityClassic.com](https://CommodityClassic.com). 🙌

# Welcome MCGA's new members

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) derives its strength from its members. As such, we welcome membership from all parts of the state to support our mission of building opportunities for corn farmers while improving quality of life.

Over these past few months, our grassroots grower-leaders have been busy building that membership base. Since October, over 620 farmers, businesses, and friends of ag have either become members of MCGA or renewed their membership. With their support, MCGA's membership has reached nearly 6,800. That makes us one of the largest grassroots farm organizations in the U.S.!

Below is a list of MCGA's new members from recent months. We thank each and every one of them for joining the organization and supporting MCGA's mission.

We'd love to have you join us, too! Remember, just because you receive Corn Talk doesn't mean you're a member of MCGA. Membership has its benefits, from helping corn farmers ensure their voice is heard in St. Paul and Washington, D.C., to exclusive scholarship opportunities.

Learn more about joining MCGA at [mncorn.org/join](https://mncorn.org/join). 🌽

Name	Membership County	Name	Membership County	Name	Membership County	Name	Membership County
Adam Aakre	Kittson	Chris Goldsmith	Fillmore	Mackenzie Martinson	Carver	Lee Siewert	Wabasha
Agri-systems, Inc.	Lyon	Braden Greibrok	Mower	Brianna Matheny	McLeod	Wesley Siira	Douglas
Brooke Albers	McLeod	Elizabeth Griebel	Brown	Mary Maurer	Benton	George Sill	Watonwan
Alness Insurance Services LLC	Lyon	Joel Groetsch	Stearns	Jeff Mayo	Martin	Mark Sill	Watonwan
Kyle Althouse	Wright	Josh Groetsch	Stearns	Jonah Mayo	Martin	Marissa Sip	Norman
Adam Anderson	Grant	Arthur Haag	McLeod	Kristian Melson	Martin	Peter Sky	Stearns
Cliff Anderson	Martin	Randy Haberer	Grant	Douglas Meyer	McLeod	Shannon Soost	Nicollet
Hannah Anderson	Clay	Kyle Hagen	McLeod	Gary Miller	Nicollet	Kaillie Sorem	Dakota
Jaxin Anderson	McLeod	Dale Hagesfuen	Swift	Jay Miller	Olmsted	Steven Soupir	Redwood
Nicole Anderson	Renville	Zachary Hausladen	McLeod	Josh Miller	McLeod	SW Minnesota State	Lyon
Michael Backman	Grant	Adam Hazel	Fillmore	Leah Mindemann	Out of State	University Josh Staples	Stevens
Katlyn Balstad	Polk	Matt Heers	Steele	Rick Minor	Swift	Alexis Steckelberg	Steele
Craig Baxter	Waseca	Taylor Herbert	McLeod	Brian Moenkedick	Otter Tail	Nathan Steele	Faribault
Christopher Becker	Martin	Peter Heuer	McLeod	Dustin Moore	Wilkin	Marc Stevens	Chippewa
Matthew Becker	Jackson	Richard Heuer	McLeod	Eric Moore	McLeod	Seth Strehler	Hennepin
Sam Becker	McLeod	Hannah Highum	Fillmore	Brianna Morrow	Martin	Isaac Strierner	Martin
Mike Bedford	Martin	Clement Hillesheim	Brown	Scott Morrow	Martin	Katy Stuhr	Kandiyohi
Ryan Benedict	Redwood	Sam Hoffmann	Brown	Michael Murphy	Dakota	Mark Stuhr	Kandiyohi
Jared Beranek	Nicollet	Grace Hoover	Rice	Lydia Nelson	McLeod	Stephen Stuhr	Kandiyohi
Linda Berens	Swift	Cora Huhn	Meeker	Jon Nelson	Grant	Blake Sunde	Clay
Ryan Biss	Grant	Daylyn Huper	Faribault	Kathy Nelson	Kittson	Shelby Swanson	McLeod
Brian Brandt	Nicollet	Infinity Ag	Lyon	Mark Nowak	Meeker	Mike and Greg	Morrison
Trevore Brekken	Polk	J. Alderink LLC	Benton	Allen Nuffer	Rock	Sweeney	
Sarah Brouwer	Kandiyohi	Erin Jacobson	Waseca	Keith Nygaard	Pope	Tom Taunton	Kandiyohi
Matt Buckentin	McLeod	Sarah Jagodzinske	Martin	David Oachs	Grant	Andrew Theobald	Martin
Breven Buer	Meeker	Rohman		Brady Oberdieck	Watonwan	John Theobald	Martin
Andrew Burns	Sibley	Duane Janssen	Stearns	Scott Oberg	Marshall	Henry Thoreson	Sibley
Larry Buysse	Lyon	Carly Johnson	Brown	Ellyn Oelfke	Sibley	Gerald Tofte	Swift
C & B Operations -Tracy	Lyon	Kyle Johnson	Murray	Laura Oftedahl	Yellow Medicine	Eric Toth	Mille Lacs
Dennis Carlson	Big Stone	Gabrielle Joos	Stevens	Kyle Olson	Otter Tail	Benjamin Trio	Blue Earth
Glen Christen	Stearns	Ryan Jopp	McLeod	Logan O'Rourke	Blue Earth	Tim Twardowski	Todd
Wyatt Christians	Murray	Samantha Kettner	Nicollet	Sawyer Otto	Redwood	Scott Tyberg	Grant
CHS	Lyon	Eli Kirtz	Renville	Rebekka Paskewitz	McLeod	Jakin Tyrrell	Todd
Natalie Clemenson	Goodhue	Nolan Kittleson	Martin	Kevin Pattison	Grant	Hayden Vande Voort	Renville
Nick Cutler	Martin	Dean Kjesbo	Grant	JP Pauman	McLeod	Rachel Visser	McLeod
Paul Dahlseng	Pope	Jason Klaphake	Stearns	Brooks Petersen	Watonwan	Amos Vogel	Brown
Bill Daluge	Wright	Theresa Klassen	Swift	Jacob Peterson	Pine	Elmo Volstad	Yellow Medicine
Sally Daluge	Hennepin	Steven Kleene	Chippewa	Pete's Electric Motor Repair	Lyon	Paisley Von Berge	McLeod
Nathan Dettman	Meeker	Brandon Klug	Martin	Lowell Pietsch	Watonwan	Jackie Vos	Murray
Russell Dewey	Otter Tail	Brianna Knudson	Chippewa	Paul Pietz	Jackson	Alex Voyles	Martin
Nathan Deyle	Todd	Mark Knutson	Wilkin	Rita Quast	McLeod	Kloe Wadd	Waseca
Nichole Tyrrell Deyle	Todd	Glenn Koch	Traverse	Katelyn Radman	Dakota	Richard Walser	Faribault
DJ's Planters Sales & Service LLC	Lyon	Kara Koch	Watonwan	Ralco	Lyon	Chad Wendinger	Sibley
Michael Doherty	Le Sueur	Guy Koehl	Stevens	Allen Rasmussen	McLeod	Dean Weiss	Martin
Gail Donkers	Rice	Dale Kosbab	Martin	MaryEmma Reeser	Le Sueur	Myrna Welter	Olmsted
Dustin's Farm Repair	Lyon	Tom Kramer	Dodge	Todd Reihis	Watonwan	Eric Wenner	Watonwan
John Eilertson	Faribault	Sawyer Kraus	Yellow Medicine	Justin Remus	Brown	Laren Werner	Faribault
Tyler Enestvedt	Renville	Owen Kreutzfeldt	Washington	Casey Restad	Otter Tail	Jessica Widmer	Sibley
Carol Enstad	Yellow Medicine	Nathan Krog	Lincoln	Parker Revier	Renville	Meg Wiebe	Rice
Carolyn Enstad	Murray	Randall Krzmarzick	Brown	Mark Riestenberg	Otter Tail	Cassidy Wiethoff	Renville
Perry Evavold	Grant	Scott Kuehl	Martin	Cory Riewe	Faribault	Jacob Wildman	Pope
Brad Evenson	Blue Earth	Larry Laleman	Murray	Roger & Ron Verly	Lyon	Allie Willcox	McLeod
Richard Fagen	McLeod	Ryan Lamprecht	Wabasha	Crop Insurance		Alan Wille	Martin
Karli Felland	McLeod	Kevin Leininger	Traverse	Wyatt Rollenhagen	Faribault	Jessica Willegal	Sibley
Ella Filk	Martin	Kevin Lindeman	McLeod	Braxton Rose	McLeod	Krist Wollum	Lincoln
Tom Finke	Jackson	Jordan Linscheid	Watonwan	Caleb Rubitschung	Jackson	Tony Zetah	Todd
David Fisher	Stevens	Keith Loe	Chippewa	Karl Ruppert	Murray	Tristan Zetah	Todd
Hannah Flogstad	Stearns	Jason Lorenz	Morrison	Kim Ruppert	Murray	Noah Ziegler	Blue Earth
Hailey Frericks	Stearns	Owen Lorenz	Faribault	John Rusten	Clearwater	Chris Zimmer	Chippewa
Arthur Friauf	McLeod	Brynn Lozinski	Chippewa	Carl Sackreiter	Winona	Nick Zimmer	Chippewa
Jayden Garlick	Martin	Robb Lubenow	Mower	Emma Salisbury	McLeod	Michael Zimmermann	Todd
Robert Garry	Martin	David Ludowese	McLeod	Salzi Blue Power	Stearns		
Cory Gee	Renville	Curtis Luhmann	Winona	Owen Schauer	McLeod		
Russ Germann	Freeborn	Ryan Lund	Lac Qui Parle	Harlan Schavey	Faribault		
Roger Giese	Todd	Evan Madsen	Jackson	Wyatt Schmalz	Renville		
		Mark Maring	Norman	Taylor Schwarze	Meeker		
		Marshall Radio	Lyon	William Shores	Otter Tail		



# Legislation session busy for MCGA

Continued from page 3

and would be a massive burden on farmers, potentially delaying planting each year. The bill could also violate the federal delegated authority to MDA for pesticide and fertilizer regulation.

MCGA submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill and collaborated with other ag lobbyists to ensure our perspective was included in verbal testimony.

Another bill of concern would require MDA and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to develop treated seed disposal guidelines. Minnesota already has guidance on unused/unsold treated seed disposal, and it's unclear how any new guidelines would differ from existing ones. Instead, MCGA would prefer to see the bill amended to instruct MDA to use the already established guidelines.

A third bill on treated seed would require ethanol plants to test for neonicotinoids and perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). This bill is completely unnecessary, as no ethanol plant in Minnesota uses treated seed as a feedstock. Even if they wanted to, they would need a permit from MPCA to do so.

MCGA submitted written testimony and partnered with the Minnesota Bio-fuels Association to testify in opposition to this bill

during a committee hearing.

Additionally, a bill has been proposed to create a statewide drainage registry, which would make it more difficult to complete drainage projects, including improvement projects, in Minnesota. MCGA developed and organized a letter of written opposition from several agriculture groups to the proposal.

Thanks in part to advocacy by MCGA, neither the bills to regulate treated seed nor the bill to create the statewide drainage registry have received a hearing in the Senate. This reduces the likelihood that the bills will become law. Still, MCGA will continue to closely monitor these bills during the final weeks of the session.

Finally, another bill would establish a clean transportation standard that would not be feedstock or technology neutral. MCGA Public Policy Specialist Alex Trunnell testified against the bill, and MCGA submitted written testimony in partnership with Minnesota Soybean Growers Association. Fortunately, the bill's authors have decided not to pursue the bill any further this session.

Get the latest updates on the 2023 legislative session at [mncorn.org/blog](https://mncorn.org/blog). 🙌

## Meet MN Corn's new finance director



**Wuraola Olusanya-Oyebamiji**

Every Meal, a Roseville nonprofit that provides meals to kids and families in need throughout the greater Twin Cities. She has over 10 years of progressive accounting and finance experience in the manufacturing, food and agricultural, and nonprofit industries.

In March, Minnesota Corn welcomed Wuraola Olusanya-Oyebamiji, CPA as the organization's new Senior Finance Director.

Wura comes to Minnesota Corn from

Wura holds bachelor's degrees in accounting from Metro State and Covenant University and a master's degree in information technology management from St. Mary's University of Minnesota. She and her husband reside in Fridley with their three children. When Wura is not working, she is either singing with the choir at her local church, cooking, or spending time with her family.

Welcome to Minnesota Corn, Wura! We're excited to have you aboard. 🙌

# Minnesota Corn remembers Gayle Bergstrom

**F**or 30 years, Adams, Minnesota, farmer Gayle Bergstrom served on the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) Board of Directors and the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC). He advocated for policies to expand ethanol access, promoted investments in the Minnesota corn check-off, and served on National Corn Growers Association committees.

Like his many other community involvements, his Minnesota Corn service was motivated in part by his love of being around people, said his oldest son, Bruce Bergstrom. "He really just enjoyed being part of the community and visiting with people," Bergstrom said. "That was his gift."

Gayle Bergstrom, who retired from Minnesota Corn leadership in 2008, died in March. He was 88.

Bergstrom began farming after graduating from Rose Creek High School in 1952. He had planned on being a sports announcer, Bruce Bergstrom said, but came back to farming when his dad had gallbladder surgery.

"He kind of took over the farm and never left," Bruce Bergstrom said.

In 1984, with his four kids out of school, Bergstrom joined the MCGA board for the first time, serving as president in 1987. That year, he helped lead MCGA's advocacy on a bill to require all unleaded gasoline in Minnesota to contain 10% ethanol.

The bill was eventually stripped of the 10% ethanol provision, but the modified version helped kickstart Minnesota's ethanol industry. Lawmakers later passed a statewide 10% ethanol standard. Bruce Bergstrom said his dad enjoyed talking with lawmakers and government officials about ethanol and was excited about shaping the nascent industry.

In 1990, Bergstrom stepped down from the MCGA board for the first time. He later rejoined the board in 1994. Also that year, he began serving as a member of the National Corn Growers Association's executive committee.

In 1999, Bergstrom joined the MCR&PC, on which he served until 2008 and of which he was chair in 2004-05. Bergstrom also was involved with the U.S. Grains Council, which works to promote U.S. corn, ethanol, and ethanol coproducts abroad.



**Gayle Bergstrom**

MCR&PC Chair Doug Albin, who served with Bergstrom in the 2000s, said Bergstrom enjoyed the camaraderie of his fellow board and council members. "I always thought of him as being a thoughtful, quiet man," Albin said. "When he spoke up, it was time to pay attention and listen."

Former board and council member Richard Peterson said Bergstrom was good at promoting MCGA. In 2014, Bergstrom was elected to the inaugural class of the MCGA Recruiter Hall of Fame.

Longtime former Minnesota farm broadcaster Tom Rothman called Bergstrom a "classic gentleman."

"He was just a likeable guy. I just always liked chatting with him. He loved to talk with you about issues for the corn growers."

In addition to his involvement with Minnesota Corn, Bergstrom was active in his community in Adams. He joined the Rose Creek School Board in 1962 and helped organize the Southland School District in 1972-73. Additionally, he was a member of Little Cedar Lutheran Church, served on the church council, and sang in the church choir for over 50 years.

Bergstrom is survived by his wife of 69 years, Lavonne, their four children, 17 grandchildren, and 23 great-grandchildren. 🙌



# County Highlights

County corn organizations fuel the grassroots advocacy efforts of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA), while helping to 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.



**Murray County grower Paul Mesner leads students through a safety demonstration at the Ag Bowl.**

## Murray, Lyon county growers participate in SMSU FFA event

In February, the Murray and Lyon county corn and soybean growers associations were on hand for the 12th annual Ag Bowl Scholarship Invitational at Southwest Minnesota State University. At the Murray County booth, students viewed a grain bin safety demonstration and identified which of 12 liquids were fit for human consumption. At the Lyon County booth, students answered trivia questions



**Lyon County Corn & Soybean Growers Association President Ken Lanoue asks a trivia question to FFA students.**

to win prizes. Around 1,200 students participated in the event.

## Winona county growers host Promoting Modern Agriculture dinner

In March, the Winona County Farm Bureau and the Winona County Corn & Soybean Growers Association held the 2023 Promoting Modern Agriculture event. The Winona County Corn & Soybean Growers Association presented awards to farmers with the top yields in 2022. The first-place award went to Sobeck Farms, which had a yield of 302.95 bushels per acre with Dekalb. 🌽



**From left to right: Winona County growers Gary Sobeck, Dave Heublein, Ryan Steele, Garrett Wardell, and Glenn Groth.**

### We want to hear from you.

Send photos and brief descriptions of your county events to your district field manager. Find your DFM on our maps at [mncorn.org/staff](https://mncorn.org/staff).

thanks to our allied partners



## MCGA Board Members

### President

Richard Syverson of Clontarf  
320-760-6719

### First Vice President

Dana Allen-Tully of Eyota  
507-951-5597

### Treasurer

Jim Kanten of Milan  
320-297-0375

### Secretary

Wesley Beck of St. James  
507-630-1471

### Past President/Chairman of the Board

Bryan Biegler of Lake Wilson  
507-920-8186

Angela Guentzel of Kasota  
507-317-4372

Tom Haag of Eden Valley\*  
320-453-7760

Blair Hoseth of Mahanomen  
701-261-3574

Clayton Johnson of Pipestone  
507-215-0427

Brad Neumann of Wabasso  
507-822-6951

Ellyn Oelfke of Glencoe  
507-848-6160

Nick Peterson of Clear Lake  
320-293-5823

John Swanson of Mentor  
612-419-9235

Rob Tate of Cannon Falls  
507-298-0308

Brian Thalmann of Plato\*  
320-238-2481

David (D.J.) VanKlompburg of Montevideo  
320-212-2748

Todd Wentzel of Murdock  
320-760-1347

Harold Wolle Jr. of Madelia\*  
507-236-2181

\*NCGA Board member

## MCR&PC Board Members

**Chair** - Doug Albin of Clarkfield  
320-383-2338

**Vice Chair** - Gary Prescher of Delavan  
507-525-7671

**Treasurer** - Duane Epland of Twin Lakes  
641-590-0928

**Secretary** - John Mages of Belgrade  
320-248-1908

Brandon Fast of Mountain Lake  
507-220-8275

Jordan Goblish of Vesta  
507-829-1589

Rodney Moe of Waltham  
952-237-9808

James O'Connor of Blooming Prairie  
507-456-5330

David Vipond of Mahanomen  
218-556-9780

Chad Willis of Willmar  
320-235-4452

Scott Winslow of Fountain  
507-951-0363

**Ex-Officio** - Thom Petersen  
Minnesota Dept. of Ag  
651-201-6219

# APRIL 2023

# corn<sup>talk</sup>

## calendar of events

may  
**1**

MCR&PC election results available

may  
**22**

Last day of 2023 legislative session

may  
**29**

MCGA offices closed for Memorial Day