



## **ASA Voting Delegates set policy direction for 2010-2011**

**March 8, 2010... Anaheim, California...** Soybean producers gathered in Anaheim, Calif., last week to review and revise the policy direction of the American Soybean Association (ASA). One hundred thirty three producers from ASA's 25 state affiliates served as Voting Delegates in this annual process that guides the ASA as it pursues future initiatives to improve U.S. soybean farmer profitability.

The voting delegates session was held on Saturday, March 6, following conclusion of the Commodity Classic Convention and Trade Show. What follows are the most significant additions and modifications covering a variety of important soybean issues.

### **CROP INSURANCE**

The actual loss in crop value attributed to crop quantity and quality discounts should be fully covered by crop insurance, and the Federal Crop Insurance premiums due date should be kept as Nov. 1, of each fiscal year. ASA opposes cuts to the Federal crop insurance program that reduce agriculture baseline funding for the 2012 Farm Bill.

ASA strongly urges Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) to reinstate Group Risk Plan (GRP) and Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) policies where they are no longer available.

ASA recognizes that the interaction between a farmer and their crop insurance agent and the amount of service provided by the agent to the farmer exceeds that of other types of insurance. ASA urges the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to consider this when considering the Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA).

ASA requests the Risk Management Agency (RMA) use a fair and equitable formula based off of actual production history (APH) when establishing a historical yield for specialty beans/output trait soybeans. These plug yields should be used for years in which specialty soybean history is unavailable.

### **BIO-ENERGY AND BIO-BASED PRODUCTS**

ASA strongly encourages the retroactive reinstatement of the federal biodiesel tax credit and encourages Congress to make the tax credit permanent. ASA supports restructuring the biodiesel tax credit from a blenders credit to a production credit, and encourages the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) implementation of the Renewable Fuels Standard II.

ASA supports implementation of the bio-energy program as authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill to provide CCC payments to domestic biodiesel producers on all production to offset feedstock costs and subsidized foreign biodiesel imports. ASA supports bio-energy program payments to all domestic biodiesel producers regardless of location or ownership. ASA supports incentives for the use of bio-based products and expansion of USDA's bio-preferred product list, finalization of the bio-based product label, and an equitable tax credit for bio-based products.

### TECHNOLOGY

ASA supports enabling trait providers and seed companies to access and use the data package of a patented biotech trait through agreements and established procedures for the purpose of preparing to register and commercialize generic versions of the trait after patent expiration. ASA supports efforts by the private sector or, if necessary, the federal government that facilitates this process. ASA encourages the seed production companies to continue offering "genetic technology" post patent.

While ASA supports establishing a process to maintain foreign registrations of biotech traits in countries that require them as long as traces of a trait are identified in export shipments, ASA also supports efforts to establish a commercially viable and internationally accepted tolerance levels for the presence of deregistered traits in shipments and products in order to ensure the competitiveness of U.S. soy exports in world markets.

Delegates also added support for the science of nanotechnology to ASA's resolutions. Nanotechnology, which is the study of the controlling of matter on an atomic and molecular scale, could help develop drought and pest resistant crops, and also maximize yield.

ASA strongly supports biotechnology and nanotechnology and believes the development of biotechnology-enhanced and nanotechnology crop varieties and products will benefit farmers, consumers and the environment. ASA believes biotechnology and nanotechnology are key tools that will help meet growing world food, health and energy needs. Production-oriented research should be pursued in both these areas.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

ASA strongly opposes Cap and Trade legislation or similar regulatory rules until such time that an international agreement provides for enforcement of similar provisions world-wide as not to put U.S. farmers or livestock producers at an unfair trade disadvantage.

ASA strongly opposes greenhouse gas restrictions or any other greenhouse gas regulations that would negatively affect the profitability of the U.S. soybean and livestock farmer. Any climate change legislation must ensure that agriculture is not adversely impacted by climate change legislation or regulation, and can maintain international competitiveness.

In the absence of Climate Change legislation, ASA supports legislative measures that would prevent EPA from regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act that will have a harmful effect on U.S. soybean and livestock production.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

ASA recommends that the Clean Water Act be amended to exempt producers from litigation/liability and not require a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit when producers can certify that the pesticides have been used in a manner that complies with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

ASA requests the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) discontinue any further implementation of "chemical specific" or "chemical class specific" use of buffer restrictions on pesticide labeling until the agency establishes protocols to evaluate "drift reduction technology" (DRT) and incorporates DRT language into pesticide labeling.

ASA opposes the establishment, by any unit of government, of water quality impairment taxes or fees, and supports a requirement that Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocations be updated when new science indicates the existing allocations are incorrect.

ASA strongly opposes any effort by EPA or judicial ruling to regulate dust, whether from crop or livestock production, as a pollutant.

## OTHER ISSUES

ASA supports front of package labeling on processed foods indicating the level of saturated fat content on a per serving basis. In recent years, some food companies have significantly increased the amount of saturated fat in their products to avoid listing trans fat content on their labels.

ASA supports establishment of an estate tax exemption of \$5 million per individual with a 100 percent spousal exemption, indexed to inflation with continuation of stepped up basis, and with a maximum tax rate of 30 percent for small businesses. Special use valuation should include all land staying in production agriculture for minimum of 15 years.

U.S. soybean farmers recognize that agricultural development in Least Developed Countries (LDC's) can help drive economic development worldwide. U.S. soybean farmers stand ready to work with participants in the soybean value chain targeting subsistence farmers to improve nutrition to their community, raise themselves from poverty and develop strong local markets providing such assistance complies with current agricultural policy and law.

ASA supports reform of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to address competitiveness issues. ASA supports legislative efforts to promote increased competition in the rail industry to foster better service and lower rates, and strong state and federal assistance in maintaining low volume rail facilities in rural areas of the country. ASA encourages alternative access for farmers in the event of railroad grade closings during and following railroad development.

ASA encourages all soybean farmers to voluntarily be a member of ASA so they better

understand how policy and active farmer involvement compliments their checkoff funded successful marketing, research and education efforts for U.S. soybean farmer profitability.

ASA represents all U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international issues of importance to the soybean industry. ASA's advocacy efforts are made possible through the voluntary membership in ASA by over 22,500 farmers in 31 states where soybeans are grown.

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