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NEWS RELEASE

United Soybean Board and Soybean Checkoff Support Animal Agriculture Exports

ST. LOUIS (January 12, 2009) – The soybean checkoff is branching out to support industries that are closely connected with the soy industry by partnering with animal agriculture organizations to increase U.S. meat exports.

“Ninety-eight percent of soybean meal is utilized by livestock and poultry industries,” says Tom Brown, a soybean farmer from Morral, Ohio, and USB farmer director. “It’s important to support this market because by maintaining animal ag exports we can preserve the utilization of soybeans by the animal ag industry.”

The soybean checkoff will be partnering with the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) to increase turkey exports to Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Guatemala. In Saudi Arabia, USAPEEC will work with meat processors to teach them to produce breakfast meat from U.S. turkey through technical seminars and workshops. By teaching chefs at high-end restaurants and hotels in Singapore, USAPEEC hopes to introduce U.S. turkey to a greater population and increase demand. USAPEEC will also meet with Guatemalan grocers to coach them through in-store cooking demonstrations and recipes to encourage U.S. turkey consumption and establish the healthfulness and safety of U.S. turkey with consumers.

“From the USB/USAPEEC perspective, our growth is dependent on exports. If we can grow our exports, there will be more production and we will use more soybean meal,” says Greg Tyler, vice president of marketing at USAPEEC. “The poultry industry is very appreciative of support from the soybean checkoff. Without this support, we wouldn’t be able to expand our global markets.”

In Ghana, USAPEEC will conduct community meetings aimed at communicating the safety and quality of U.S. poultry to housewives. Throughout China and Hong Kong, USAPEEC will communicate through advertising, conferences and trade shows to boost consumer confidence in U.S. poultry.

USB’s partnering doesn’t end there. Checkoff funding will also be used to support outreach programs facilitated by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) to increase meat exports to two countries that represent the top two importers of U.S. pork.

“U.S. red meat exports are a key component to the future profitability of the U.S. soybean industry,” says John Hinners, USMEF assistant vice president of industry relations. “In fact every pound of U.S. pork exported represents the utilization of 1.3 pounds of U.S. soybeans.”

This partnership will begin its work in Japan, which has been the No. 1 importer of U.S. pork for several years, by communicating to consumers the quality of U.S. pork. By showcasing the versatility of U.S. pork through recipes and promoting different cuts of pork, USMEF hopes to show Japanese shoppers that U.S. pork is a quality source of protein.

“We are optimistic about the further growth of this industry,” says Erin Daley, economist with USMEF.



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Mexico, the second-largest importer of U.S. pork, is the next market where USMEF and the soybean checkoff will partner to increase the popularity of U.S. pork. Checkoff funding will be used to educate personnel involved in the meat trade, such as butchers, processors and restaurateurs, on how to market U.S. pork as a daily source of protein. This knowledge will help them move U.S. pork from the meat case to the shopping cart.

By working with other funding sources, USMEF is able to leverage every dollar the soybean checkoff invests into additional funding toward these projects.

With the help of soybean checkoff funding assisting in international marketing programs for U.S. pork, 25 percent of U.S. pork production is being exported compared to just 3 percent in 1990, Hinners adds.

"It's important that we partner together with organizations; it makes the dollar go further for all," adds Brown.

USB is made up of 68 farmer-directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. Checkoff funds are invested in the areas of animal utilization, human utilization, industrial utilization, industry relations, market access and supply. As stipulated in the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soybean checkoff.

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