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## NEWS RELEASE

### Consumers Believe Soy Is a Healthy Food

*New Consumer Attitudes About Nutrition Gives Soy High Marks*

ST. LOUIS (July 1, 2009) –Eighty-four percent of consumers rate soy products as healthy, according to the recently completed *16th Annual Consumer Attitudes About Nutrition Study*, funded by the soybean checkoff. That’s good news, as 87 percent of consumers express concern about the nutritional content of the food they eat. The number of concerned consumers has remained consistent over the last 11 years.

“A large number of consumers consider soy to be healthy, particularly as a heart-healthy food,” says Jim Stillman, United Soybean Board (USB) director and a soybean farmer from Emmetsburg, Iowa.

The ailing economy seems to be having an effect on U.S. consumers buying decisions as nearly half (46%) report that they are unwilling to pay more for healthier foods and 52 % of those consumers cite the reason as financial. Fortunately, soy is one of the healthy foods that consumers seek out with 30 percent of consumers buying products specifically because they contain soy. Approximately 31 percent of consumers are aware of specific health benefits of soy in their diet.

Soy’s image as a healthy product has increased in the minds of consumers. The number of consumers rating soy products as healthy has seen a dramatic 25 percentage point increase over the last 12 years. During this time, the soybean checkoff has worked with health professionals and other influencers to educate consumers about the health benefits of soyfoods. Stillman points to the checkoff’s work at trade shows, such as the physician’s assistants conference, as a way to spread soyfood messages to health professionals, who in turn promote soyfoods to consumers. The checkoff-funded Soy Nutrition Institute (<http://www.soyconnection.com/soynutritioninstitute/>) also helps inform the health industry about soyfood facts and dispel any soyfood myths that may arise.

The soybean checkoff remains actively involved in making soyfoods even healthier. Efforts are being made to reduce trans fats in soyfoods that use soybean oil. Sixty-nine percent of Americans view trans fat as very unhealthy, which is a significant increase from 2000, when only 38 percent viewed trans fat as very unhealthy. The soybean checkoff has partnered with other links in the soybean value chain to address the trans-fat issue.

“The soybean checkoff has worked extensively with QUALISOY, an industry-wide collaborative effort to bring new, healthier oils to the marketplace,” says Stillman. “Our first success was low-linolenic soybean oil to reduce trans fats. Additional potential heart-healthy traits being researched are high-oleic mid-oleic/low sat, omega-3 fatty-acid oils and other increased value oils and these should be available in the next few years.” Pioneer will introduce its new high oleic oil in limited quantities this year.

The checkoff continues to look for opportunities for soyfoods. The survey indicates that about 25 percent of consumers eat soyfoods at home, but rarely order soy in restaurants, because they say soyfoods are not available. This represents a menu development opportunity for restaurants.

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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