



NCGA FY24 Mid-Year Update



Greetings,

Time flies when you're hard at work, and we are now halfway through our program year and my year as NCGA President. As you know, NCGA is working to align our efforts with the organization's new strategic plan and keep activity levels up on our initiatives. One of our key intentions in the plan is improving on the value we deliver to you, our state partners. This update is one step in that process, and a look at the excellent work already underway to Advocate for policies that work for corn growers, Engage with value chain members and Excel as an organization.

I am proud of the progress we've already made and excited for what's to come. I welcome you to check out the updates that follow and thank you for your engagement and partnership.

Sincerely,

Harold Wolle
NCGA President





Advocate



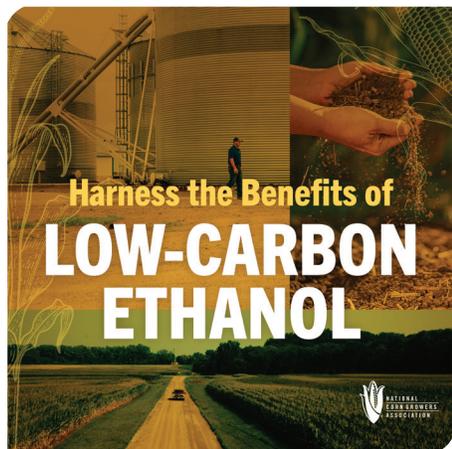
Grassroots Action in White House Letter on Ethanol

3,466 farmers from across the country signed a letter to President Biden in February, calling on the administration to prioritize biofuels like ethanol in its aim to address climate change. It's clear that growers echo NCGA's concerns with the over-reliance on electric vehicles in actions from the White House and regulators. And when corn growers take action with one voice, policymakers listen. NCGA's grassroots advocacy network has grown to more than 40,400 advocates from 48 states and continues to amplify the power of corn advocates in Washington.



Bolstering Corn's Reputation in the Beltway

NCGA's communication campaign in D.C. lays the groundwork for corn's reputation with key policy influencers, including Members of Congress and congressional staff. The previous iteration of this program focused on the impact of corn grower sustainability efforts. This year's evolution of the successful campaign communicates the ways corn growers drive innovation, economic impact and sustainability. Since launching in March, the messages have been seen more than 1.3 million times. Included in the campaign are a full-page [National Ag Day ad](#) in The Hill and targeted outreach during May's Ag on the Mall event.



Washington D.C. Ethanol Education Campaign: What's Next?

The ethanol education campaign is in full swing, communicating the benefits of corn ethanol to decision-makers in D.C. Our focus is ensuring we are in the market at the right time with the right message through social media and search keyword targeting. New this year, we'll have a sponsored piece in POLITICO, host a stakeholder discussion on WTOP-FM, and place video spots at gas stations in the D.C. metro area. Instagram has been a top performing platform, with a 4.5% click-through rate, well above the industry benchmark of 0.88%. Growers and state organizations can engage on this topic using NCGA's new [Ethanol Action Center](#) or by sharing the benefits of the [Next Generation Fuels Act](#).



Members of NCGA's grassroots advocacy network have sent more than 8,200 messages to Capitol Hill carrying NCGA's priorities for the farm bill.

Tax Code Modeling

NCGA has begun a project to strengthen tax advocacy efforts, including analyzing data to demonstrate the on-farm impact of changes to the federal individual and corporate tax codes. In partnership with a consultant, NCGA will model the effects of expiring tax provisions such as estate and gift tax exemptions as well as proposals to repeal the step-up in basis. The modeling will include anonymized tax data from corn growers across the country with various operation sizes. This work is currently underway and will be summarized in a detailed report that NCGA will share with partners following its completion this year.

Tenacious Farm Bill Engagement

A fully reauthorized Farm Bill with improvements to support corn growers is NCGA's top priority. We're at the table on this issue, continuing to advocate for our priorities with key decision-makers. Below are just a few of the ways NCGA has kept corn grower needs top of mind in the runup to legislative movement on the bill:

- **NCGA organized a panel of Agriculture Committee staff to discuss the bill with corn, soybean and wheat growers and staff at Commodity Classic.**
- **Senators Stabenow and Boozman met with the Corn Board during its March meeting to discuss their priorities for the bill.**
- **NCGA endorsed key marker bills to be considered in the Farm Bill, including the FARMER Act introduced by Senator Hoeven, which aims to make crop insurance more affordable.**

Members of NCGA's grassroots advocacy network have sent more than 8,200 messages to Capitol Hill carrying NCGA's priorities for the bill.

Advocating for Growers on EPA's Endangered Species Act Pesticide Policies

NCGA is proactively engaged with government agencies – including EPA, USDA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service – to protect U.S. corn farmers' ability to operate with full access to crop protection products. As the EPA moves forward with its strategy for ESA compliance for herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides, NCGA continues to seek solutions to the challenges growers could face in meeting ESA obligations required for pesticide use. NCGA has been able to work quickly and nimbly in working through practical on-farm solutions by collaborating with the invaluable network of growers serving on the Production Technology Access Action Team and state staff on the ESA Strategy Working Group.



Engage



Corn's Role in the White House Easter Egg Roll

Corn in your eggs? It's more likely than you'd think! That's right, it takes a whole lot of corn to feed layer hens, contributing to the poultry sector's rank as our second-largest livestock customer. To highlight this relationship, NCGA partnered with the American Egg Board to sponsor the 2024 White House Easter Egg Roll. The event reached over 40,000 consumers with information highlighting corn's sustainability as a feed ingredient for layer hens and showcasing how eggs play an important role in consumer diets across the world.

New Summit to Inspire Action on Free Trade

NCGA is planning a first-of-its-kind Trade Summit to connect Farm Bill cooperators, allied industry and partnered commodity groups. In the last two administrations, we have seen little engagement on new free trade agreements that would expand export markets for America's farmers. The Trade Summit will provide an opportunity for the broader agriculture community to discuss trade strategy and collaborate on efforts to spur action on free trade in Washington.

New Challenge Incentivizing Long-Term Corn Uses

NCGA joined several corn organizations to host [The Radicle Corn Value Chain Challenge sponsored by U.S. Corn Farmers](#). The challenge sets out to invest a minimum of \$1.5 million in start-up and growth companies around the world whose innovative technologies and business models create new uses for corn and long-term demand for corn production. Working in tandem with NCGA's Consider Corn Challenge, the quest continues to identify corn-based solutions, from replacements for fossil fuel-derived materials in fuels or plastics to new product categories that expand the ways corn can be used.

Nourish the Future Community Conference

NCGA's initiative to connect science students to modern agriculture, [Nourish the Future](#), brought together 45 teachers at Commodity Classic for the NTF Community Conference. These teachers represent 23 states and teach 19 different content areas in their middle schools and high schools. They participated in hands-on curriculum instruction, explored the trade show to learn about technology and careers in agriculture, learned from NCGA grower-leaders and began developing new curriculum units that will be added to the NTF curriculum library.

NOURISH THE FUTURE

I'm excited to expose my students to the agricultural engineering connections I wasn't even aware of until I came to Commodity Classic. It's a perfect way to bring agriculture into my predominantly mechanical engineering curriculum.

Melissa Boehler, South Carolina

The technology I saw at Commodity Classic that is being used for fertilizer and herbicide application blew my mind and this is perfect to bring back to my botany and food science classes.

Megan Sprague, Wisconsin

Celebrating Cornfed Beef

In partnership with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, NCGA is showcasing the mutually beneficial relationship between corn and beef on RFD-TV's Cattlemen to Cattlemen program. Catch up on the series so far before the final installment later this year. [Episode 1](#) [Episode 2](#) [Episode 3](#)



Research Ambassadors

Eight college students from across the country were selected as NCGA Research Ambassadors for the 2023-2024 academic year. The ambassadors cover a broad range of research areas, from crop breeding and genetics to bioinformatics and phenotyping. During their program, Research Ambassadors share their research and hear directly from corn growers and partners about issues affecting their operations and the broader agriculture industry. They also have opportunities to meet with various industry, academic and non-profit professionals to help them explore career opportunities. NCGA will host the ambassadors at the July Corn Congress, where they will join staff and growers in advocacy work on the Hill.

Ethanol Infrastructure Projects

NCGA and state partners have been working with two of the largest pump manufacturers, who make up 98% of the market, to produce and sell pumps certified to deliver fuel containing up to 25% and 40% ethanol. To date, NCGA and partners have directly funded the production and sale of over 82,500 fueling dispensers in the North American market certified to deliver at least E25 (~6,000 of these are E40).

In partnership with the Renewable Fuels Association, NCGA funded a program to support USDA's Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program. The technical assistance provided in this program through NCGA support has resulted in \$105 million in grants awarded with a 100% success rate for retailers who received grant application assistance. The ROI for this application assistance is roughly \$900 for every \$1 invested by NCGA.

Farmers for Soil Health

In the program's first crop year, 238 growers enrolled nearly 77,000 acres* in [Farmers for Soil Health's](#) cost-share program for cover crop adoption. With support from the largest USDA Climate-Smart Agriculture grant, the program continues to offer webinars, field days and cover crop resources. Also funded by the \$95M grant, State Technical Assistance programs are kicking off in all 20 target states to assist growers with enrollment, data collection and provide expert guidance as they adopt cover crops, including selecting seed and equipment, for the 2024 growing season and beyond. Farmers for Soil Health is a partnership among the National Pork Board, United Soybean Board and NCGA.

*Enrollment stats subject to change upon enrolled acre verification.

Sustainability Data and Incentives

As NCGA moves toward its 2030 sustainability commitments and many companies and industries set similar targets, data to measure the total environmental impact of corn production is critical to maintaining and growing corn demand. We are in the process of defining a scope and exploring potential partners to develop a Life-Cycle Analysis for U.S.-grown corn, which will provide the data needed to help our partners, like livestock and ethanol producers, meet their targets while continuing to support U.S. corn growers. At the same time, we're evaluating ways to create incremental demand paired with an incentive for growers implementing conservation practices.

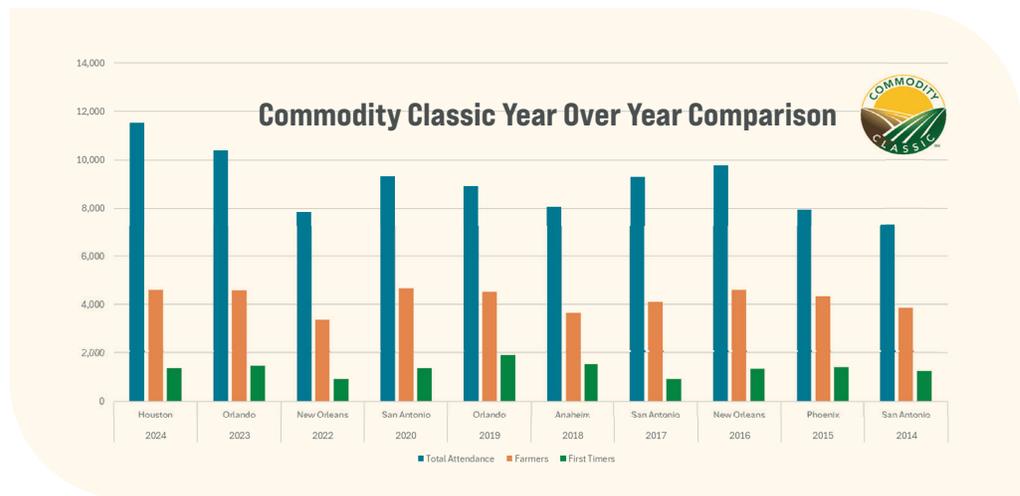


Excel

A Record-Breaking Commodity Classic

2024 Commodity Classic in Houston broke records for attendance, farmer attendance, companies represented in the trade show and more. Of the 11,530 attendees, 4,565 were farmers – and 1,367 farmers were first-time attendees. NCGA was well-represented at the show; nearly half of farmer attendees are connected with NCGA, with 44.6% indicating NCGA as their primary association. Total attendance increased 11% over the 2023 event in Orlando. In a survey of attendees, more than 3 in 4 ranked Commodity Classic as the most valuable show they attend. As a host of the event, NCGA benefits both in outreach opportunities and revenue as Commodity Classic continues to grow.

Total attendance increased 11% over the 2023 event in Orlando.



National Corn Yield Contest Gets a Refresh

In its 60th year, the nation’s premier crop production contest will get an updated look – and a simplified name. Beginning with the 2024 contest launch on May 1, it will be known as **NCGA’s Yield Contest**. The contest is represented with bold colors and visuals to showcase the innovative approaches corn growers use to achieve top yields across 10 classes. This launch is just one piece of a plan to grow the Yield Contest’s impact, increasing grower participation and driving value for participants and for NCGA.



Congrats to This Year’s Leadership Academy Class

This winter, 25 participants from 12 states completed NCGA’s Leadership Academy, the organization’s signature leadership program. Grower leader engagement is vital to NCGA’s success, from local grower events to meetings with legislators. Thanks in part to the skills honed in this program, corn grower advocacy has a strong track record of moving the needle on policy issues. Hats off to the 2023-2024 class! A new crop of leaders from across the country will begin their program this August.

