

# EMERGE

SPRING 2024

## HAROLD WOLLE

SHAPING THE  
FUTURE

SDCUC  
DOING IMPORTANT  
WORK FOR FARMERS

A SOUTH DAKOTA CORN PUBLICATION



CALLING FOR  
FERTILIZER PRICE  
TRANSPARENCY

## KYLE WILHELMSSEN

BURKE CORN YIELD  
CONTEST WINNER

SD CORN



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**ON THE COVER:** NATIONAL CORN GROWERS  
ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT HAROLD WOLLE

## LIFE ON THE FARM

**SUBMIT YOUR PHOTO FOR A CHANCE TO WIN!**

Real-life, authentic images from our members' perspectives are what we love to share throughout our organization as well as with individuals who have never stepped foot outside of a city block. Winners will be determined twice annually and may be showcased in upcoming **Emerge** publications as well as SD Corn's web and social media sites.

**UPLOAD HERE:**



Prizes will be awarded to  
the top three entries!

You can also enter your photos with **National Corn Growers Association** at **Fields-of-Corn.com** for your chance to win cash prizes! Deadline is **November 30, 2024**.





# JIM KETELHUT

**PUKWANA  
SDCUC PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 9**

**W**e are in the process of putting Old Man Winter behind us for another year. An important season for us in agriculture, it has given us time to slow down, recharge our batteries and reflect on the past year. Many of us use this as

a chance to evaluate our operations and reflect on what worked and what we maybe want to put behind us.

The financial challenges and tight margins are ever present in agriculture and we are always conscious of the dollars we spend, and how to best use those dollars. Some of these capital expenditures have a quick turnover rate, such as fertilizer, seed and chemicals. For example, some take a longer amount of time to justify their expense including machinery and land. This is precisely what we do on the SDCUC, we are ever mindful of the importance of the checkoff dollars and the impact they can have.

This past year we helped support Feeding South Dakota, which helps to combat hunger in the state. Our advertising campaign supports the ethanol market and we have been engaged with research in-state as well as multi-state projects to determine consumer sentiment which helps mold our message. We continually support organizations such as the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Meat Export Federation as they work to maintain and expand overseas markets. These examples are just a few of the many worthy projects and long-standing relationships we as the Council invest in.

Just as in production agriculture, it is always a challenging decision as to where to place checkoff dollars. Some have faster payback such as participating in a Regional Conservation Partnership Program [RCPP] while a research project we fund today might not have an impact for 5 to 10 years. Rest assured that the SDCUC board and I take this responsibility seriously.



## SDCUC BOARD MEMBERS



**NICK FICKBOHM**  
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**JUSTIN MINNAERT**  
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*Mitchell, District 8*





# DAVE ELLENS

**MADISON  
SDCGA PRESIDENT, DISTRICT 2**

Looking back on the past few months, it's hard to pick just a few things to talk about that we've been working on at the South Dakota Corn Growers Association. One event that I want to highlight is the 38th Annual South Dakota Corn Conference that was held on January 20th.

Despite the frigid temperature, it was great to see so many growers come to the daytime educational sessions and get updates about grain markets, weather and ethanol from industry leading experts. The networking and interaction between growers within our state really makes this a special event.

The evening banquet always makes me feel extreme pride in our organization and the direction we are headed. It also excites me to see where our industry is going in the future; highlighting and awarding organizations and people in the state who have done so much to advocate for corn growers. We also recognized 18 Corn Yield Contest winners who are state leaders in innovative and sustainable practices to improve their land's productivity.

One of my favorite parts of the evening is seeing the support from South Dakota dignitaries who take time out of their busy schedules to attend our event. We were appreciative that U.S. Senator Mike Rounds could join us at our Friday night board reception, and I'll take this opportunity to once again thank Governor Kristi Noem, U.S. Senator John Thune and U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson for attending Saturday's evening banquet. To see them encourages me that what we are doing in this organization is making an impact and a difference for our corn farmers.

Here's to a mild end to winter and a friendly welcome to spring for a successful planting season.



## SDCGA BOARD MEMBERS



**TRAVIS MOCKLER**  
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*Woonsocket, Industry Director*

**REBECCA WELLENSTEIN**  
*Centerville, Industry Director*



Jim with his wife Natalie in their Mud Boots.

# FARM WIFE COMMUNICATIONS

*An anecdote by South Dakota Corn Utilization Council President Jim Ketelhut.*

The wife has been gone for a few days visiting our daughter so I have been down to visiting with our two dogs in the evenings. It has made me realize how much I miss my wife when she's gone, and made me stop and reflect on how we communicate here on the farm. For those of you non-ag related people you will probably in all your married life never have the opportunity to communicate with your spouse like we do on the farm. So for your enjoyment I have included a list of my favorites here, I have included an explanation with some of those that I felt needed it.

1. Hey your birthday is next week, how 'bout I buy you those Mud Boots for your birthday!
2. Hey I think we can combine today, can you run grain cart. Oh when you come can you bring me some lunch.
3. You're already south of town? Can you go back to C&B and pick up a part. I'll call and they'll have it ready.
4. Hey the radiator is bad on the combine. The closest place that has one is Beresford; if you leave right now I think you can make it by closing. I talked to some guy in parts and he said he could stick around for a bit if you were running late, just give him a call if you aren't going to make it by 6:00. I forgot his name.
5. Hey we haven't done anything in a while, you wanna grab a couple beers and come with me to tag calves this evening? Oh you better wear your Mud Boots!
6. I'm bringing you a calf, he's pretty cold, I'll leave him in the mud room, see what you can do! (which means pretend you are Jesus Christ

and the calf is Lazarus, I'll be back in 3 hours to take him back to the cow).

7. It's been a long day of harvest, just call up to "Buzzards" and get a pizza to go; we won't even stop at home to clean up because we are getting it to go. (Which means we'll go in and run into somebody we know, have a couple beers and eat our "to go" pizza out of the box at a table.)
8. Make sure and ask that trucker how he wants to be loaded. Ya I'll call and tell him to chill out and that you know how to run that tractor and grain cart better than he does!
9. Can you come run the 4-wheeler. I need you to keep a cow off of me while I tag her calf. Oh ya you might need your Mud Boots!
10. End of the Day --- Me---"love you", Her---"love you too".

Life would get awfully long if we couldn't laugh at ourselves and I can't think of anyone I'd rather be laughing with than my wife!

Farm spouses are often the unsung heroes of our farms. South Dakota Corn Growers Association welcomes them into our membership through our **FREE couples membership**.

**CONTACT MARGARETP@SDCORN.ORG TO JOIN TODAY!**



**SOUTH DAKOTA CORN UTILIZATION COUNCIL**

# **ACCOMPLISHES IMPORTANT WORK FOR SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS**



**O**ne of the most active commodity organizations in the state, the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council (SDCUC) plays a critical role for South Dakota corn farmers. Led by a

board of directors, nine districts in South Dakota are represented by active corn farmers who are committed to promoting corn on a state and national level.



### THE SDCUC IS RUN BY A VOLUNTEER, PEER-ELECTED PRODUCER BOARD

The peer-elected producer board is tasked with developing and maintaining new and existing corn markets, promoting new uses for corn and increasing profitability for all South Dakota corn producers. These members meet a minimum of four times annually and many times have special meetings for pressing issues.

### ONE-CENT CHECKOFF

This special fund makes utilization research possible, allowing SDCUC to develop new and innovative uses for corn and corn byproducts that benefit South Dakota corn producers. Checkoff dollars also fund the U.S. Grains Council, U.S. Meat Export Federation and the National Corn Growers Association [NCGA] to help move the needle forward for corn on a national



**I serve on the SDCUC board because this is my opportunity to help increase profitability for all corn farmers in South Dakota. It also helps to ensure sustainability for farm operations now and for future generations through long-term investments in education, research and the development of new markets.”**

**- Justin Minnaert, Madison Farmer and Secretary/Treasurer of the SDCUC, District 2**

scale. SDCUC invests millions to expand and establish market uses for corn.

### SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION (NCGA)

SDCUC joins nearly 40,000 dues-paying corn growers and the interests of more than 300,000 farmers across the nation to support the work of NCGA. NCGA's current priorities include supporting ethanol, sustainability, trade and the farm bill in Washington D.C., in addition to a variety of other issues important to corn growers nationwide.

### CURRENT INITIATIVES BEING ADDRESSED

The SDCUC supports work on multiple efforts that affect farmers today and for the future, including the following:

- Year-Round Sales of UNL 88/E15
- Promotion of Consumer-Focused Ethanol Sales
- Dakota Lakes Research Farm
- National Challenge to Establish New Commercial Uses and Markets for Corn





# SHAPING THE FUTURE

*National Corn Growers Association President Harold Wolle's  
top priority is to advocate for corn farmers.*





**F**ifth-generation Minnesota corn farmer Harold Wolle has seen a lot over the years, but the current climate in Washington, D.C. has him concerned. Not only because of the “fair amount of dysfunction in Congress over the past year”, but because of the shrinking population of farmers across the nation and their ability to advocate for their future effectively.

Wolle is currently the President of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), and has also previously served on NCGA committees and the organization’s board including as a board liaison to the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Advisory Board. In addition, he is also the past president of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association.

He shares, “I want to advocate for corn farmers. We are so few in numbers compared to the population in our country, it’s crucial that we advocate strongly for our industry. We need to do it for ourselves and our future generations because no one else is going to do this for us.”





Harold Wolle presents at the SDCGA 38th Annual Corn Conference.

From Madelia, MN, he has made a conscious effort to transition the leadership of his family farm's operations to his son Matthew so that he has more time to commit to the NCGA. He laughs, "My son is 45 and since I've transitioned the farm to him, he lets me drive his equipment in the spring and fall. I'm not sure who came out better on this deal."

Wolle's 2024 Presidential Leadership Theme for NCGA is Shaping the Future. He notes, "Nothing shapes the future like effective advocacy. And no other group does advocacy as well as our state corn grower groups and NCGA."

As the keynote lunch speaker for the South Dakota Corn Growers Association's [SDCGA] 38th Annual Corn Conference last January, he presented NCGA's key priorities for 2024 including:

- Farm Bill. A fully reauthorized farm bill with policy improvements to benefit corn growers.
- Growth Markets for Ethanol. A legislative solution to ensure E15, as well as higher ethanol blends, are available to consumers year-round.
- Livestock Demand. Ensuring livestock feed remains a solid market for U.S. corn and increasing demand for U.S. animal ag exports.

- Access to Technology. Addressing challenges to technologies that may be used – or not used – like pesticides in the future.
- Corn Reputation. Educate decision-makers in Washington D.C. about corn and corn growers, laying the groundwork for the conversations with legislators and partners on growers priorities, from sustainability to ethanol policy and more.

According to Wolle, as one of the largest commodity groups in the nation, NCGA has 37,000 members that represent 300,000 growers who contribute to the corn checkoff program. However, he does recognize that because the majority of farmers across the nation are now 57 and older, the need for younger members is a pressing issue.

"It's critical that we recruit and engage with younger members and I think as they become involved in production agriculture, they'll become aware of the issues and the need for an organization that will advocate for them," says Wolle. "Young farmers are the future of agriculture in South Dakota and the nation. The issues that we are working on, sustainable aviation fuel, the



**There are so many issues facing ag that we need advocates. Individual farmers don't have the ability to interact with agencies or federal lawmakers – growers associations do have that ability. And when the National Corn Growers Association talks people listen."**

**– Harold Wolle, NCGA President**





Endangered Species Act and estate taxes all affect the future. Young producers need to be involved now so they can help shape the future. I think we would get bypassed in decisions that are being made without the NCGA's support, so we really need to get this next generation involved now."

South Dakota Corn Growers Association brought a resolution to Corn Congress last year regarding a mandatory base acre update. Wolle shares, "I support a mandatory base acre update. I think it's an issue of fairness. Why should a corn field on one side of a fence be eligible for the farm bill safety net and a corn field on the other side not be eligible based solely on when the fields were brought into production." He continues, "South Dakota Corn championed this issue and shepherded it through the resolution process at Corn Congress and now it is the official position of NCGA."

Harold recently attended a trade mission to Japan in response to a new Japanese biofuel policy, alongside fellow NCGA officers and representatives from the U.S. Grains Council. An eye-opening experience, the opportunity to help build relationships that will positively impact the exports of U.S. corn and corn products as a feed for livestock and ethanol was a promising endeavor.

He shares, "Currently, Japan has committed to start the process of direct-blending so we visited a station that distributed fuel with an E7 pump. We're hopeful that it will become the standard and then see an E10 blend instituted. That would be about a billion-gallon demand for ethanol and that's what we're advocating for."

As NCGA President, Wolle has an agenda to visit member corn states around the country and was pleased to make South Dakota one of his first stops. "I like South Dakota from one end to the other. I've gone to Sturgis for 15 years on a Road King and our daughter went to Augustana so I'm very familiar with the state." He says, "I know a fair number of the board members and I go back a ways with them. I want to give a word of thanks to South Dakotans for their support of NCGA."



# FERTILIZER COSTS A CRITICAL CONCERN FOR CORN FARMERS

*South Dakota Corn calls for transparency in industry.*



**A**s the planting season for 2024 approaches, input expenses and their effect on the bottom line is once more a critical factor for South Dakota farmers. While prices have declined somewhat since 2022, they remain one of the most significant expenses for several crops.

The South Dakota Corn Utilization Council [SDCUC] is working diligently to help address this concern for the corn growers of South Dakota and to safeguard, when possible, the ability to farm profitably. In this subsector, the few number of participants likely constitutes at the least some



degree of market failure. Because of this, that concentrated market power means increased transparency, considered an important component for supply and demand to actually function properly, is a reasonable request going forward.

At the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Corn Congress on February 29th, a resolution was brought forth by the South Dakota Corn Growers Association (SDCGA) and the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA):

“Support mandatory price reporting to the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Marketing Service, including marketed quantities, by domestic and international manufacturers and wholesalers of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium fertilizer and fertilizer products. Data shall be published in a manner that protects proprietary business information.”

**“Farmers experienced record fertilizer prices in 2021 and 2022,” said Minnesota Corn Growers Association President Dana Allen-Tully. “This resolution is focused on transparency and enables NCGA and its members to advocate for initial steps to increase transparency of fertilizer pricing by manufacturers. We believe this is a reasonable step given the small number of fertilizer manufacturers.”**

**The Agricultural & Applied Economics Association conducted a survey to 6,000 Midwestern farmers located in Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota in 2022. The goal was to determine how the spike in fertilizer prices would impact their farm operations and how they would utilize strategies to reduce the use of synthetic fertilizer. Of the 1,119 responses, the following information was determined:**

Of 16 listed issues,

**78.6%**

of the respondents ranked fertilizer as among the top three issues that had the greatest effect on their operations.



Of these,

**41.2%**

rated fertilizer as the factor most likely to influence their operations, followed by extreme weather (25.2%) and fuel prices (6.9%).



**27.4%**

rated fertilizer as the second most important influencing factor, followed by fuel prices (22.5%) and weeds (8.6%).



Information taken from the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association website ([aaea.org](http://aaea.org)).





# THE FRIENDLY FUEL

*The South Dakota Corn Utilization Council's new campaign promotes ethanol sales for young drivers through wallet and engine friendly facts.*

**F**or drivers, choosing what to put in their tank at the pump may not always be easy to understand. Typically, confusion for consumers may come down to fuel knowledge, availability of fuel blends and pump labeling which is inconsistent from station to station.

Research conducted by the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council (SDCUC) showed that what seems to impact most drivers about the gas they choose are two facts: mileage and how it affects final fuel costs as well as the fact that it can be safely used in the vast majority of modern engines. Young people are the most likely to change their fueling habits or in the case of a new driver, begin their fueling habits with ethanol, when provided with messages that resonate, educate and align with their values.

According to Sioux Falls teen driver Scarlett, "When choosing gas, I don't really know what the most important part is. Probably, which one is right for your car, so maybe I should get on that and figure out which one is correct."

The South Dakota Corn Utilization Council is working with Flynn Wright, an award-winning marketing agency, to produce the Friendly Fuel campaign. The

**The Friendly Fuel campaign is getting noticed – more than**

## 10 MILLION

**impressions have been served to young drivers since November of 2023!**



creative and educational assets are built to resonate with young drivers. The goal of the campaign is simple: to explain the benefits of ethanol and how to identify and select it easily at the pump. Your checkoff dollars are being invested in educating young drivers that have many choices at the pump today and who will eventually be making decisions on the car lot that impact corn growers.

According to Flynn Wright's Senior Account Executive Lindsay Fiegle, "The Friendly Fuel campaign's look, feel and voice were strategically created to be just that – friendly. We crafted two key messaging points that ethanol-blended fuels are money friendly and mileage friendly with young drivers in mind. We intentionally kept them simple and approachable – and thus, easy to remember and actionable when making decisions at the pump."

## YOUNG DRIVER THOUGHTS



Gas is so expensive and the types are confusing so I just pick the same one every time."

–Skylar, 17



I don't know what type of gas is right for my car, I just know what button to press on the pump when I get there."

–Scarlett, 16

# WHAT'S WHAT AT THE PUMP



## Unleaded 88

A money friendly, mileage friendly blend with up to 15% ethanol. This friendly fuel can be used in nearly all vehicles built since 2001.



## Unleaded 87

A money friendly, mileage friendly blend with 10% ethanol. If you see two "87" buttons, the friendly fuel is the one with the lowest price.



## Premium Gasoline

A non-ethanol blend for high-performance vehicles. As you can probably guess from the word "premium," this fuel costs a lot more than friendly fuel.



## Flex Fuel

A specialized blend containing 51% to 83% ethanol. Vehicles that can use this fuel have a yellow gas cap, Flex Fuel badges and/or a Flex Fuel sticker under the hood.



Focused on promoting the sale of ethanol during peak travel periods, the majority of the campaign's tactics over the winter holiday season centered on static and digital billboards, social media and broadcast and streaming radio in order reach the targeted demographic of individuals 13-34. With Spring Break travel underway, advertising includes gas pump toppers, nozzles, and pump videos. It will also include student influencers from USD and SDSU as well as a Fueling Friendship Giveaway, where friends can nominate friends to win free fuel gift cards.

"The campaign's creative concept and media mix were crafted to increase the overall awareness and understanding of ethanol-based fuels, while also helping to reframe negative perceptions around ethanol's impact on fuel efficiency and engine performance. Ultimately, the goal of the Friendly Fuel campaign is to reach young drivers and help convey that ethanol is a smart and safe choice for their wallet and vehicle," shared Mel Peterson, Senior Account Manager of Flynn Wright.

VISIT [THEFRIENDLYFUEL.COM](http://THEFRIENDLYFUEL.COM)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION.



**We've been working with agricultural clients for many of the four decades we've been in business, mostly communicating with and marketing to others in agriculture. In some cases, we have promoted agricultural products and the importance of them to consumers – but the work we are doing for the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council promoting ethanol usage may be among the most targeted and product-specific agricultural campaigns we've done. We are excited about how strategic and creative we've been able to be with the positioning and message delivery. We believe it will have an impact among consumers, particularly young drivers, which will in turn greatly benefit South Dakota corn growers over the coming years."**

**– Jeff White, Flynn Wright Senior Vice President & Associate Partner**



# BURKE FARMER WINS MORE THAN CORN YIELD CONTEST

*Incorporating better practices to improve yields also improves productivity and sustainability of family farm.*



**F**or Kyle Wilhelmsen, farming has been in his blood since he was born and raised on a family farm just south of Burke, SD. A former full-time South Dakota Army National Guardsman based out of Chamberlain, Kyle had to work his way back to the farm like so many young farmers do today who don't have the opportunity to step into an operation that can support multiple family members.

In 2011, Kyle helped take over the reins of the family farm, but it was still a challenge to make it work. "I had the opportunity to come back to the farm and it was best for my family and farm, but I had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. My wife Amber and I knew we had to be diversified, but we were committed to making this a success. Fortunately, a lot of area farmers I knew growing up were getting ready to retire, and I knew there

would be opportunities for me to do custom farming and renting land."

Today, Kyle has prospered and has continued working with his mode of diversification for success. In addition to custom farming which has him working in a radius of 20 miles, he plants corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, alfalfa, sorghum, rye and hay as well as running 100 head of cattle. He has also embraced planting cover crops after



Kyle with his wife Amber and their children.





Kyle's daughter in the winning field.



Kyle and other South Dakota CYC winners were recognized at the SDCGA 38th Annual Corn Conference.

his nephew, who earned his agronomy degree from South Dakota State University, shared the benefits of it.

Kyle notes, "I've learned that you have to build up your ground and improve soil health to not only maintain it but enrich it because if you don't take care of it, it won't take care of you. Since we've started doing this our yields have really come around. Our 'bad' spots have had phenomenal yield improvements because the ground is holding the water and suppressing the weeds. I really believe it's information like this that can help you improve so you better be listening, looking and paying attention. You can't continue to do it like it's always been done before and expect to be successful."

Because of his innovative practices, Kyle and his seed corn dealer, Tom Waterbury, have been amazed by the results. He shares, "The yields we were bringing were incredible and unbelievable for this area, so Tom introduced me to the corn growers Corn Yield Contest and that's how I got involved.

# CORN YIELD CONTEST

**Opens May 1st, 2024**

The Corn Yield Contest (CYC) is a National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) competition held annually. It has been organized to encourage the development of new, sustainable and innovative management practices resulting in higher yields and to show the importance of using sound agricultural practices in United States corn production. Trophies are awarded to the first, second and third place national winners, and first, second and third place state winners in each class.

Eligible South Dakota entrants must be a South Dakota Corn Growers Association member and can't have refunded from the South Dakota corn checkoff program in the past marketing year.

## CONTEST CLASSES

- Conventional Non-Irrigated
- No-Till Non-Irrigated
- Strip-Till, includes Minimum Till, Mulch-Till, Ridge-Till Non-Irrigated
- No-Till Irrigated
- Strip-Till, includes Minimum-Till, Mulch-Till, Ridge-Till Irrigated
- Conventional Irrigated

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR SEED CORN DEALER OR CALL THE SD CORN OFFICE AT 605.334.0100. WATCH FOR A CYC WEBINAR COMING SOON!**



Find the full contest rules here:



It's a great program for the farmers out there because it really drives you to be a better farmer. There's more to it than just entering a contest, and I know that now that I went to the Corn Conference and experienced it firsthand. It really opened my eyes as to what this organization is all about."

This year, Kyle placed third in the No Till, Non-Irrigated category. "I learned a lot this first year and I think I'll be a lot more competitive in the coming years. There are so many things that have to be implemented together to get a higher yield and there's a lot of heartache with it. You're trying your hardest with the investment per acre and at the end of the day my average wasn't where I wanted it to be, but I am working on doing what I need to do to improve that."

As to why other farmers should consider becoming involved in the Corn Yield Contest and South Dakota Corn Growers Association?

“



**The farming game is easy come, easy go because of the risks we all take. But when you go home at the end of the day you have your family – you can sit down with your kids, watch tv, eat dinner and help them with their homework. That's what's this is all about. The biggest tool anyone has in their life is their voice and that's a fact. When you can voice your opinion, your concerns, and even bad ideas you can build on them. That's what the corn growers are doing. They want to get better farm programs, conservation, practices and make the kernel of corn more diversified. That's how we are all going to be successful in the end."**

**– Kyle Wilhelmsen**



Kyle with his seed corn dealer, Tom Waterbury, and LG Seeds District Sales Manager, Justin Blasius.

Kyle shares, "Here's the deal and the biggest point of this all. You're submitting money for a membership and that money is going in the future of our corn. We can only grow so many products out here and with corn there is so much money invested into it we need to improve more on what we have. So, let's improve even more on it through better fuels, plastics, oils, so many things that can be done. When my kids want to take over farming, they need to have a direction to make this work. The South Dakota Corn Growers Association is helping with that."

Not only has Kyle recognized the value of the organization, he is committed to becoming more involved in the future along with his wife Amber who has also joined as a member. He shares, "My wife said this is so neat and that we should have done this before and that we need to be more involved, so I am absolutely going to do this contest again next year, lose or fail I don't care because I'm having fun doing it. It's made me rethink some things and how I can improve on them, but this is also a morale booster. I was so glad to be on stage with these other guys who are great farmers because I was there with them. I put myself out there and I'm glad I did."

## FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA PROGRAMS

- MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION
- CHILD HUNGER
- SENIOR BOXES
- AGENCY PARTNERS
- WELLNESS PANTRIES

# SOUTH DAKOTA CORN PRODUCERS FIGHT HUNGER

*\$100,000 donation to Feeding South Dakota puts food on the table for South Dakotans in need.*

**A**ccording to Feeding South Dakota, nearly 73,000 South Dakotans are food insecure - lacking access to the food they need to provide nutrition to themselves and their family. Through a variety of programs and agency partnerships, Feeding South Dakota provides food access in every county of South Dakota.

Feeding South Dakota relies on donations of both funding and food as well as through volunteers and food and fund drives to support its mission. To assist with that initiative, the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council (SDCUC) made a substantial gift of \$100,000 in 2023 to Feeding South Dakota to fight hunger across the state.

"South Dakota corn producers work to grow a product that provides affordable fuel and food for our state, nation and world," said Jim Ketelhut, President of the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council. "This gift to Feeding South Dakota is an opportunity to directly impact our neighbors facing hunger, right here at home."

Lori Dykstra, CEO of Feeding South Dakota shares, "Our ability to put food on the tables of those facing hunger starts with the work of our South Dakota farmers. This generous gift will help us sustain our programs while meeting the rise in need we've been experiencing."



## 3,422

packages of food are distributed to children across South Dakota through the Backpack Program



## 10,114

families are served every month through 120 Mobile Food Distribution sites



## 1.5 MILLION

pounds of meat are distributed every year to hungry individuals and families



## SOUTH DAKOTA CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

# HOLDS SUCCESSFUL 38TH ANNUAL CORN CONFERENCE

*More than 500 in attendance at day-long event gathered for education and celebration.*



U.S. Senator Thune and South Dakota Corn Growers Association President Dave Ellens.



Shauna and Charlie Nickeson and U.S. Senator Mike Rounds.



SD Corn Executive Director DaNita Murray and South Dakota Corn Growers Association President Dave Ellens present U.S. Senator John Thune and U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson with awards.

**T**he South Dakota Corn Growers Association (SDCGA) 38th Annual Corn Conference held on Saturday, January 20th, was a day of education, celebration and great company. More than 500 individuals braved the bitter cold to learn from leading industry speakers and network with fellow farmers.

Professional agricultural speakers including Tommy Grisafi, Eric Snodgrass and Kenneth Zuckerberg provided expert insights during the morning and afternoon sessions. Rob Sharkey, the Sharkfarmer, headlined the evening banquet. In addition, Governor Kristi Noem, U.S. Senator John Thune and U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson took the stage to share comments with the crowd. U.S. Senator Mike Rounds was a special guest speaker on January 19th for a pre-conference event.

"The Corn Conference was a wonderful day and evening of celebration with our members and community friends," SDCGA President Dave Ellens said. "This was our opportunity to share why SDCGA is a critical advocate for corn farmers. The fact that we had the state's top four delegates join us is a testament to that."



Kenneth Zuckerberg presents *Managing Risk During Risky Times*.



South Dakota Corn Growers Association Board Member Scott Stahl talks with U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson.



Governor Kristi Noem addresses the audience.

# AWARDS

## OUTSTANDING LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

The Outstanding Legislative Leadership Award honors lawmakers who are passionate about leading our state's corn growers to the next level.

**U.S. Senator John Thune**  
**U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson**

## EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Excellence in Public Outreach Award is given each year to an individual or organization who goes the extra mile in spreading agriculture's story to the general public with fairness, accuracy and due diligence.

**Ariana Schumacher, AgWeek**

## EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE

This honor goes to an outstanding individual or organization who exemplifies excellence in agriculture through significant contributions to the industry.

**AgPhD – Brian and Darren Hefty**

## MVP IN AGRICULTURE

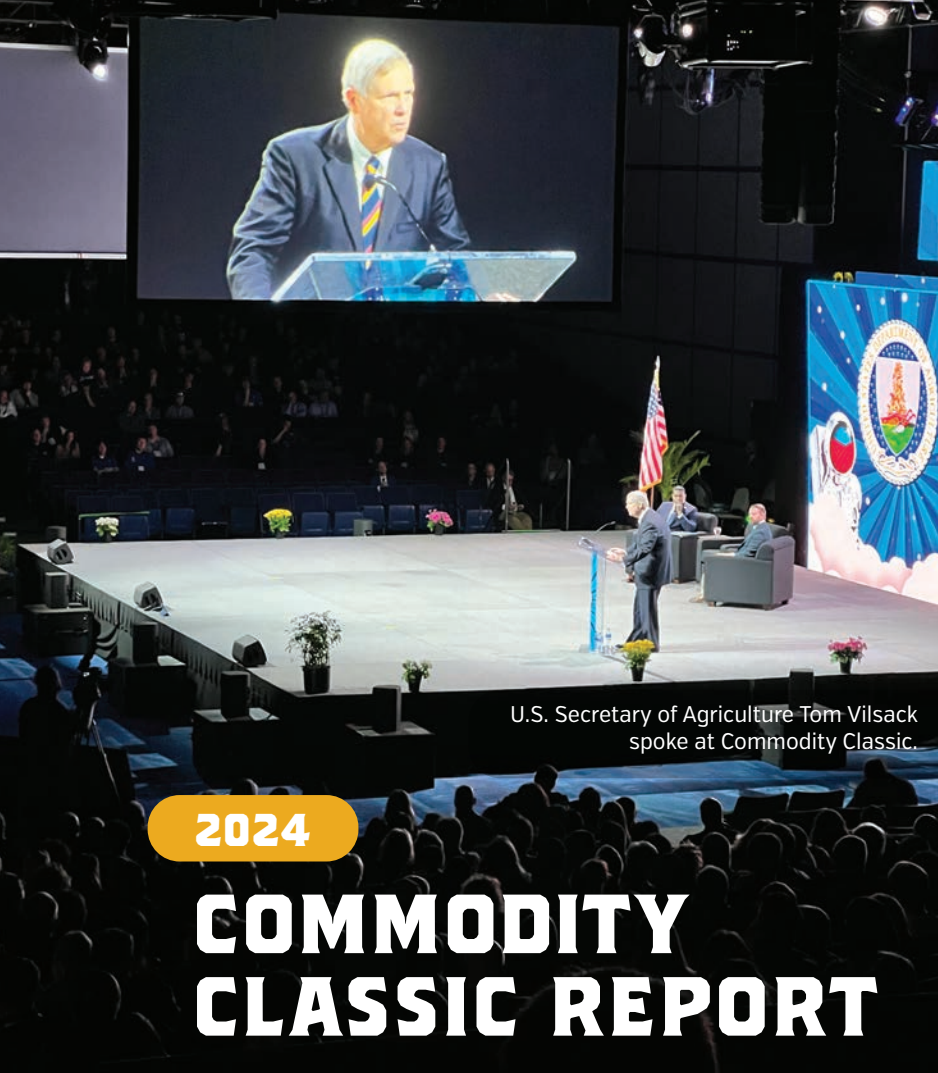
The MVP in Agriculture Award honors an individual who has dedicated their career to advancing and advocating for the agriculture industry.

**Nate Franzén, President, Ag Banking Division, First Dakota National Bank**

## SOUTH DAKOTA CORN YIELD CONTEST WINNERS

- Tom Arens of Yankton, Pioneer
- Dwight Brenner of Armour, Pioneer
- Ben Crick of Menno, Pioneer
- Dennis Dehaan of Platte, Pioneer
- Steve Hagena of Davis, Pioneer
- Robert [Bob] Holzwarth of Hazel, Hefty Seed
- Dana Johnson of Milbank, Pioneer
- Eugene Johnson of Flandreau, DEKALB
- Scott McKee of Hawarden, Pioneer
- Nick Olson of Vermillion, DEKALB
- Tyler Poeschl of Yankton, Pioneer
- Kory Standy of Platte, DEKALB
- Joey Waldner of Huron, Beck's Hybrids
- Kyle Wilhelmsen of Burke, LG Seeds
- Harold Wipf of Scotland, Pioneer
- John Yaggie of Yankton, Pioneer





U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack spoke at Commodity Classic.

2024

# COMMODITY CLASSIC REPORT

**S**outh Dakota Corn Growers Association (SDCGA) delegates represented corn farmers at America's largest farmer-led, farmer-focused agricultural and educational experience.

A super-charged agricultural event, the Commodity Classic hosted a record-breaking crowd of more than 11,000 farmers from across the nation in Houston, TX last February 28th through March 1st.

It's the official trade show and convention for four different national commodity organizations: National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), American Soybean Association (ASA), National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) and National



South Dakota Corn Growers Association members and staff at Corn Congress: Doug Noem, Reno Brueggeman, Dave Ellens, Scott Stahl, Mark Gross, DaNita Murray, Trent Kubik, Jim Ketelhut, Gary Duffy and Chad Blindauer.



State winners from the Corn Yield Contest were recognized at the National Corn Growers Association's Winner's Circle in Houston, TX.



Jim Ketelhut, Dave Ellens and Trent Kubik at Corn Congress.

Sorghum Producers [NSP]. State corn organizations conducted their own caucus meeting, attended a NCGA CornPAC reception, participated in Corn Congress to impact NCGA's priorities in Washington D.C. and celebrated national Corn Yield Contest winners.

SDCGA sent the following delegates to represent their members:

- Chad Blindauer
- Reno Brueggeman
- Gary Duffy
- Dave Ellens
- Mark Gross
- Jim Ketelhut
- Trent Kubik
- Doug Noem
- Scott Stahl

A resolution proposed by the SDCGA, along with Minnesota Corn Growers Association, was passed during Corn Congress and states that the NCGA will:

**“Support mandatory price reporting to the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Marketing Service, including marketed quantities, by domestic and international manufacturers and wholesalers of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium fertilizer and fertilizer products. Data shall be published in a manner that protects proprietary business information.”**

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

At South Dakota Corn Growers Association, we know we couldn't have achieved the successes we have without the support of agricultural stakeholders. The larger voice we have, the more effective we are and will continue to be. We would like to share a sincere thank you for the support we've received so far in 2024.

## 38TH ANNUAL CORN CONFERENCE LEADING SPONSORS

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and Environmental Sciences**

**SD Soybean Checkoff**

**Sioux Valley Energy**

## 2024 CORPORATE PARTNERS

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[ACE]\***

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**Mustang Seeds**

**Pioneer/Corteva\***

**Schlechter Ag Liquids\***

**South Dakota Biotech Association**

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## WHY JOIN THE SOUTH DAKOTA CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION?

### ASK OUR MEMBERS!



Being a member is the cheapest way you can help market your product hands down. The membership fee is nothing compared to the money we're already throwing down an acre. It's a bag of ripped open seed or spilled fuel, I mean you've got to look at it that way. The South Dakota Corn Growers Association can lobby for corn farmers in Pierre and Washington D.C., I mean to me it's a no brainer to participate and be involved. This is a good deal and a great membership."

– Kyle Wilhelmsen, Burke farmer and  
SDCGA member



### SDCGA FIGHTS FOR YOUR RIGHTS IN BOTH WASHINGTON D.C. AND PIERRE!

- Protecting your profitability by asking for market transparency
- Bringing the long-term farm safety net into this century through a mandatory base acre update
- Fighting for meaningful benefit to landowners from 45Q federal tax credit for CO2 pipeline construction

**JOIN TODAY BY CALLING THE SD CORN OFFICE AT 605.334.0100**



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