



National Grain and Feed Association News Release

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NEWS RELEASE

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NGFA and STC to Host Ag Transportation Summit

Ankeny, Iowa and Washington, D.C., June 4, 2015 – On Aug. 4-5, the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) and the Soy Transportation Coalition (STC) will host the second Ag Transportation Summit: “Transportation Capacity – Overcoming the Challenges.” The event, sponsored in part by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Marketing Service, will be held at the Westin O’Hare near Chicago. The inaugural summit occurred in July 2013.

“U.S. farmers continue to demonstrate an ability to feed a growing and hungry planet,” says Scott Gauslow, a soybean farmer from Colfax, N.D., and chairman of the Soy Transportation Coalition. “However, in order to remain profitable, we must not only produce what customers demand but also be able to transport it to them in a cost effective, reliable manner. Many aspects of our transportation system are not positioned to do so. These challenges must be addressed.”

“This year’s summit will focus on strategies and steps being taken to enhance capacity and efficiency within all transportation modes – highway, rail, barge and ports – to meet the continued, growing demand for moving freight to both domestic and export markets,” said NGFA Chairman Gary Beachner, president and chief executive officer of Beachner Grain Co., Parsons, Kansas. “The U.S. transportation system remains a key competitive advantage for U.S. agriculture. But retaining that advantage requires a continued commitment and efforts by the leaders and stakeholders who will be part of this conference.”

The goals of the summit are: 1.) To raise the awareness of the importance of transportation to the success and profitability of U.S. agriculture; 2.) To precipitate and motivate further action to promote a transportation infrastructure that better serves the interests of U.S. agriculture; 3.) To provide a venue for advocates of U.S. agriculture to network and develop collaborations for the purpose of promoting the transportation needs of U.S. agriculture; and 4.) To build bridges between government and agricultural interests that will result in more effective promotion of agricultural transportation issues.

Confirmed speakers include key executives from most of the U.S. Class I railroads, including BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, CSX Transportation Co., Canadian National Railway; as well as the acting chairman of the federal Surface Transportation Board, **Debra Miller**, top officials from the American Trucking Associations and the National Retail Federation and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Invitations also have been extended to key members of Congress, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the grain industry and others to address the summit.

Specific topics and issues to be addressed during the summit include:

- **Inland Waterways:** The status of funding to upgrade locks and dams, and the potential timing of lock rehabilitation projects, as well as the significance of inland waterways to agriculture.
- **Rail Transportation:** Efforts underway by rail carriers to enhance capacity to serve growing freight demand from agriculture and other sectors. Performance of rail in transporting agricultural products, Trends in rail infrastructure investment.
- **Surface Transportation:** Challenges inherent in the current structure for funding improvements and maintenance of the highway system, as well as potential alternative financing arrangements. The status of potential changes to increase semi-truck weight limits, strategies for addressing the shortage of commercial truck drivers and hours-of-service restrictions.
- **Ports:** Productivity and reliability concerns confronting the nation's ports, needed investments and innovations at foreign ports.
- **Panama Canal Expansion:** An update on the status of the expansion project and its implications for agricultural trade and U.S. ports.

The day and a half event will begin at 8 am on Tuesday, August 4, and conclude at noon on Wednesday, August 5.

Those wishing to participate in the summit can register at www.soytransportation.org or <http://www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/transportation-summit/>. The early bird registration fee is \$265 if received no later than July 1. On-site registration is \$295 per person.

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Established in 2007, the Soy Transportation Coalition is comprised of thirteen state soybean boards, the American Soybean Association, and the United Soybean Board. The goal of the organization is to position the soybean industry to benefit from a transportation system that delivers cost effective, reliable, and competitive service.

The NGFA, established in 1896, consists of more than 1,050 grain, feed, processing, exporting and other grain-related companies that operate more than 7,000 facilities and handle more than 70 percent of all U.S. grains and oilseeds. Its membership includes grain elevators; feed and feed ingredient manufacturers; biofuels companies; grain and oilseed processors and millers; exporters; livestock and poultry integrators; and associated firms that provide goods and services to the nation's grain, feed and processing industry. The NGFA also consists of 26 affiliated State and Regional Grain and Feed Associations, and has strategic alliances with Pet Food Institute and North American Export Grain Association.