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## PA Soybean Farmers Support Checkoff-Funded Research Projects

**HARRISBURG, PA (February 20, 2017)** – Research and sponsorship projects designed to provide reliable crop production data to soybean growers, develop new uses for soybeans, and to support Pennsylvania's animal agriculture industry have been awarded checkoff grants totaling $288,415 by the Pennsylvania Soybean Board.

At its February meeting, the all-farmer board, which administers the national soybean checkoff program in the Commonwealth, approved a number of research projects focusing on crop management practices and developing new uses of soybeans. Additionally, the board approved grant requests for research benefiting animal agriculture, the largest domestic user of soymeal and the largest sector of Pennsylvania's agricultural industry.

**Funding grants were approved for the following research projects:**

- **Sentinel Plot Program – Penn State**
  The sentinel plot program will be run in collaboration with Penn State Extension to provide soybean growers with statewide assessment of insects and diseases active in soybean fields. Soybean fields throughout the state will be scouted weekly for insect pest and disease population.

- **PA On-Farm Network – Penn State**
  In the coming year, this on-farm product testing network, which was initiated in 2009, will test products and management practices on Pennsylvania farms with Pennsylvania growers. Additionally, dedicated soybean production meetings will be held at various locations throughout the state, and research results will be disseminated through crop meetings and online resources.

- **Soybean Variety Trials – Penn State**
  Annual soybean variety trials are conducted at Penn State's research farms in Lancaster and Centre Counties. Commercial varieties and experimental cultivars will be evaluated. The continuing search for higher yielding varieties, quality traits, the onset of new diseases and insects, and the new focus on value-added traits in the future is essential to soybean producers in Pennsylvania. 2017 marks the 26th consecutive year for the trials, which are designed to evaluate soybean varieties for their performance under Pennsylvania conditions.

- **Increasing Yields & Profitability for Mid-Atlantic Double Crop Soybean – Virginia Tech**
  In collaboration with Pennsylvania and other states in the region, this project will coordinate research to help accelerate double crop soybean growth and yield by providing insight and data to support management recommendations for double crop soybean production.

- **Herbicide Resistant Marestail and Horseweed Education – Penn State**
  Glyphosate-resistant marestail and invasive pigweeds have become a significant pest management problem for no-till soybean producers in Pennsylvania. This project will focus on educating producers on best management practices for prevention and management of herbicide resistant weeds, including proactive monitoring programs, use of herbicide programs that include multiple modes of action and adoption of integrated weed management strategies.

- **Soybean Vein Necrosis- Penn State**
  Pennsylvania soybean production may be facing a new threat in "SNVaV" tosporvirus, a viral disease that has been reported in most soybean growing states. The disease causes development of shriveled, deformed seeds with reduced germination percentage and decrease in oil percentage, seed weight, protein content and fiber content. This project will help understand the disease incidence, distribution and impact on crops.

- **Impact of High Oleic Soybeans on Milk Fat and Rumen Upset – Penn State**
  Soybeans are a valuable source of protein for dairy cow rations, but the inclusion of conventional whole roasted soybean is limited by the amount of polyunsaturated fatty acids in the ration. This study will focus on the impact of high oleic soybeans, which have a more favorable fatty acid profile, as both a protein source and as a substitute for other oilseeds and fat supplements in dairy rations.

- **Reducing Calf Mortality – Penn State**
  Coronoaviruses (CoVs) are a major cause of diarrhea resulting in calf mortality. This research aims to isolate and characterize the genomes of CoVs from calves in Pennsylvania. The project will also evaluate the benefits of all soybean plus corn ration compared to a mixed vegetable protein supplement plus corn in reducing calf diarrhea due to naturally occurring CoV.

- **Mitigating Ulcerative Colitis by Dietary Soy Fiber Supplementation– Penn State**
  This research will examine the colitis-related health effects of soy fiber by investigating the ability of soybean fiber to mitigate colon inflammation and oxidative stress. Such fiber from other sources have been found to have protective effects from inflammatory bowel disease.

**Sponsorship funding was granted to the following:**

- **Mobile Ag Lab - Friends of Agriculture**
  Available to any school in Pennsylvania, the Mobile Ag Lab program provides a fully equipped classroom on wheels where students in grades K-8 come to complete hands-

on science experiments related to agriculture. Lessons directly related to soybeans are included in the curriculum.

**About the Pennsylvania Soybean Board**

The Pennsylvania Soybean Board is a farmer-controlled Board responsible for managing Pennsylvania's share of funds received from the nationwide Soybean Checkoff program. The funding is available under an assessment program, approved by Congress in 1990, under which soybean farmers contribute 50 cents of every $100 they receive for their beans at the first point of sale. Funds are used to develop markets, educate consumers, and research new ways to utilize and produce soybeans more efficiently.

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