**Iowa Soybean Association (ISA) Request for Productivity Committee Research Proposals**

**for 2025-2026 (FY26) Funding**

**Please note time-sensitive material. Please distribute to the appropriate Faculty and Staff as soon as possible. Important Dates:**

* ISA RFP distributed: March 10, 2025.
* Proposals due to ISA: By 11:59pm on May 12, 2025.
* ISA Board Review and funding decisions: July 2, 2025.
* FY26 funding cycle: October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026.

The Iowa Soybean Association (ISA) is seeking soybean research proposals for funding to begin on October 1, 2025. The ISA Board will fund research projects that address their goals to increase soybean farmer competitiveness, especially through increased productivity and profitability while improving sustainability. ISA will fund both applied and basic research, as well as Extension & Outreach, that will provide short- and long-term practical benefits to Iowa’s soybean farmers. Key areas of research and outreach focus include the following. Projects should logically fit into one of these broad areas:

* Soybean germplasm discovery and improvement:
  + Specific emphasis on yield, seed quality, and yield preservation.
  + Soybean breeding to increase genetic yield potential and the introgression of defensive traits.
* Soybean disease, nematode, insect pest and abiotic stress biology, management, and yield loss mitigation.
* Weed management within the soybean cropping system.
* Soybean production with improved nutrient management and water quality
* Post-harvest seed handling to maintain or improve quality of seed
* Soybean cropping system production practices, agronomics, and management to enhance productivity, profitability, and sustainability, including digital agriculture, new technologies, and modeling for research, production, and economic impact.

Research proposals are expected to be concise (approx. 5 pages in total length, excluding budget pages) and contain the following (see attached):

* **Cover sheet** (provided): proposal overview and budget
* **Contact Information:** Name, address phone number, and email address of principal investigator and collaborators
* **Project title**
* **Farmer Benefit: Explain how this research will directly benefit a soybean farmer and/or the soybean industry. (200 words or less).**
* **Brief project justification and rationale**: Identified research need, brief review of similar academic and industry research, with references, and how proposed research is necessary, novel and will benefit farmers and the soybean industry.
* **Brief description of proposed research**: Research and communications to be done, purpose, expected outcomes, contribution to project goals, clear statement of communication and outreach strategies.
* **Other funding**: Proposed research may complement and extend but must not duplicate already funded research. Where applicable, a concise listing of related research and funding sources for the PI and collaborators, and a brief description of how this check-off funded research will be used to attract or complement additional funding support (public and private: e.g. USB, QSSB, USDA, company) to extend knowledge or expand research breadth and depth, especially in cases where basic research funding is requested.
* **Clear and concise set of project metrics, economic impact on soybean farmers, and performance measures, milestones and deliverables,** including:
  + Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or performance metrics and how those will be measured
  + An analysis and/or description of program/project economic impact, significance to soybean farmers, and **return on the soybean checkoff investment**
  + Timelines and milestones for deliverables that will extend the state-of-the-art of basic and farmer-focused applied research
  + Communication plan to include farmer-focused publications, field days and similar, as well as updates to the National Soybean Checkoff Research Database.
* Clear description of a **cost-efficient budget**, sub-budgeted to projects within programs. A **budget for years 2 and 3** is requested for multi-year concept projects.

**NEW** – Provide a 3-minute or less video for the ISA Farmer Board of Directors to:

* Summarize your research:
* What impact does it have to serve an Iowa farmer?
* Explain how it helps an Iowa farmer be more productive, profitable, and/or sustainable in their operation.
* Share what impact your research will have on the future of an Iowa farmer and/or the soybean industry.
* Video footage provided must be taken at a resolution of 1080p at 30fps (typical for most cell phones). If you use a phone camera, please shoot footage horizontally/landscape and place the subject clearly in the center of the video.

It is critically important for researchers to identify how the deliverables will positively and tangibly impact Iowa soybean growers in the short- or long-term, and how deliverables will be communicated to growers and to the ISA. **Budgets should include funding for publishing and broadly communicating results and convening meetings if planned.** Researchers should reference first year deliverables when justifying multi-year projects and requests for project renewals, as continued funding will be determined by the demonstration of real, meaningful, and applicable first-year or second-year results. Researchers are strongly encouraged to demonstrate interdisciplinary approaches and collaborations or synergies with other institutions and/or with ISA Research teams when/if appropriate.

Researchers interested in submitting a proposal **should provide an electronic copy of the cover sheet and budget summary in PDF format as provided, the proposal in Microsoft Word format or PDF format, and the video** to David Kurth at [dkurth@iasoybeans.com](mailto:dkurth@iasoybeans.com) by the deadline listed above.

Questions can be addressed to David Kurth at 515-334-1033 or Joe McClure, ISA Staff Lead of the Productivity Committee, by telephone at 515-334-1014 or email at [jmcclure@iasoybeans.com](mailto:jmcclure@iasoybeans.com).

*Funds granted through this program are checkoff funds contributed to Qualified State Soybean Boards pursuant to the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, 7 U.S.C. 6304 (1) (4). Work performed under this Agreement will be performed in accordance with the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act and the Soybean Promotion and Research Order, 7 CFR Part 1220.*