

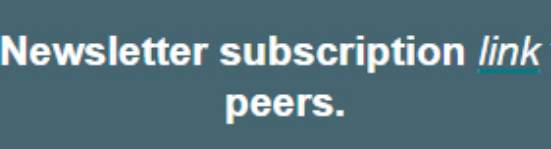
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February 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the U.S. Sustainability Alliance's February newsletter! In this edition, we introduce our newest member and report on the U.S. Census of Agriculture, highlighting key conservation trends. We're also honored to feature a guest article from an internationally recognized meat industry expert who specializes in beef quality. Dr. Chris Calkins, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, shares how science can promote better trading relationships. Other stories include highlights from the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol's latest annual report – membership and sustainability progress are up! Plus, we look at how U.S. soy farmers continue to innovate and operate more sustainably on and off the farm.

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The American Feed Industry Association Joins the USSA

The American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) has become the 26th member of the U.S. Sustainability Alliance (USSA). The world's largest organization devoted to representing the interests of the animal food industry and its suppliers, AFIA plays a vital role in supporting sustainable animal agriculture. Its membership extends USSA's reach into a sector that exported close to \$900 million in animal and pet food products to the UK and EU in 2023. [Read more about USSA's newest member.](#)



Census of Agriculture: Use of Renewable Energy and No-Till Farming Rises

Since the release of the 2022 Census of Agriculture on 13 February (2024), analysts and industry watchers have pored over more than 600 data points about America's farms and ranches. While the initial analysis has largely focused on the trend for larger, fewer farms and an aging farmer population, there are some bright spots in the data in the area of conservation. [Read more about the Census findings.](#)



Using Science to Build Better Trading Relationships

Dr. Chris Calkins, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, argues that strong, sustainable trading relationships are based on fact. The key is having a genuinely distinctive product and effectively and credibly communicating what sets it apart. In this exclusive article for the U.S. Sustainability Alliance, Dr. Calkins explains how Nebraska's focus on beef quality and the science behind it has resulted in continued commercial success. [Read Dr. Calkins' article to learn more.](#)



U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol Increases Acreage, Reduces Environmental Impact

The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, a voluntary, farm-level sustainability program, has tripled its membership in just three years while continuing to make sustainability improvements. According to its third annual report, U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol growers now represent nearly a quarter of the entire cotton-growing area of the United States and have significantly reduced their environmental impacts since 2015. Achievements range from a 79% reduction in soil loss to a 14% increase in water use efficiency. [Read the results in full.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

California was the largest provider of agricultural products in 2022 (also in 2017), generating sales of \$59 billion - 11% of the U.S. total. The other top providers of agricultural products were Iowa (\$43.9B), Texas (\$32.2B), Nebraska (\$29.4B), and Minnesota (\$28.5B).

Source: The 2022 Census of Agriculture; Farm Economics



Partnerships Drive Innovation and Sustainability for U.S. Soy

Thanks to partnerships and research supported by their checkoff investments, U.S. soy farmers continue to innovate and operate more sustainably on and off the farm. A new report from the United Soybean Board showcases their latest efforts to address climate change and boost productivity, enhance food security and nutrition, and develop new uses for renewable U.S. soy products. [Read the report highlights.](#)



Cultivating Healthy Soil and a Sustainable Future in Georgia

Ricky Dollison is a fourth-generation Black farmer and the owner of Dollison Farms, a 220-acre (90-hectare) operation established by his grandfather in 1949. Ricky attributes his diverse agricultural knowledge to his father, who taught him and his siblings how to take care of the land. Now, Ricky is investing in the conservation of the farm to secure its future for his children and generations to come. [Read about the sustainability practices Ricky uses.](#)

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING THIS MONTH

Meeting U.S. farmers face-to-face and hearing about their conservation practices is hard to beat, but the following videos come a close second in bringing U.S. sustainable agriculture to life.

- DelicioUS! – Made in the USA's YouTube channel hosts videos on topical issues, from animal welfare to climate change mitigation. Discover how innovation helps farmers to be even better stewards of the land. [Click here.](#)
- U.S. Wheat Associates' Stories of Stewardship video series is essential viewing. In episode two, we meet Oklahoma wheat grower Tom Cannon, who shares his family's approach to soil health. Tune in [here.](#)
- Sand County Foundation is a rich source of interviews with U.S. sustainable farmers like rancher Bill and Pennie Slovek from North Dakota, recipients of the Leopold Conservation Award. Watch their story [here.](#)

For more on the above, check out our social media accounts!

The USSA is the voice of U.S. sustainable food and agricultural production. It represents the fertile lands and expansive waters of a great country and gives a voice to all that work and rely on them for food, clothing and materials.

Today, we represent more than twenty farming, fishery and forestry associations and supply chain partners who are together responsible for close to \$8 billion of annual U.S. food and agricultural exports to the UK and EU.

USSA Member Organizations:

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute; Almond Board of California; American Feed Industry Association; American Hardwood Export Council; American Peanut Council; California Prune Board; Cotton Council International; Food Export Association of the Midwest; Food Export USA Northeast; Intertribal Agriculture Council; Leather and Hide Council of America; North American Export Grain Association; North American Renderers Association; North Carolina SweetPotato Commission; Organic Trade Association; Softwood Export Council; U.S. Dairy Export Council; U.S. Dry Bean Council; U.S. Grains Council; U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.; U.S. Meat Export Federation; U.S. Soybean Export Council; U.S. Wheat Associates; USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council; USA Poultry & Egg Export Council; and USA Rice Federation.

[Learn More About Our Members](#)



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