

# WISCONSIN CORN NEWSLETTER



## CALENDAR

*\*All dates & locations are current at the time of printing.*

**December 2**

Winter Meetings

WCGA & WCP Board of Directors  
Wisconsin Corn Office - Watertown

**Jan 12-15**

NCGA Action Team and State Meetings  
Louisville

**January 19**

Wisconsin Resolutions Meeting

**January 21**

Ag Day at the Capitol  
Madison

**January 29**

Corn Soy Expo - Corn Annual Meeting

## Register Now for Corn Soy Expo

The Wisconsin Corn•Soy Expo is right around the corner—and now is the time to register. This can't-miss event brings farmers together with industry experts, educators, and exhibitors to share the latest information impacting corn and soybean operations across the state.

From timely policy and market updates to practical agronomic insights and new technologies on the trade show floor, the Corn•Soy Expo delivers value you can take home and put to work on your farm. It's also a great opportunity to connect with fellow growers, ask questions, and strengthen the voice of Wisconsin agriculture.

Registration is open now. Visit [cornsoyexpo.org](http://cornsoyexpo.org).



672 Johnson St STE 305  
Watertown WI 53094-6212  
262.372.3289

## Wisconsin Corn Annual Meeting

The Wisconsin Corn Growers Association, Wisconsin Corn Foundation, and Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board will hold their annual meetings on Wednesday, January 29, at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells, as part of the Corn•Soy Expo.

Corn growers are encouraged to attend these meetings to hear updates on policy priorities, market development efforts, research investments, and grower-focused programs, and to take part in shaping the direction of Wisconsin's corn industry for the year ahead.

Meeting times, room locations, and agendas will be shared in advance through Corn•Soy Expo materials.

# Message from the President



As fall settles in across Wisconsin, harvest reminds us why we do what we do. Long days in the field, changing weather, and the final push to bring the crop home are all part of the season—and a powerful reflection of the resilience and dedication of Wisconsin's corn growers.

This year has brought both challenges and opportunities. From market volatility and input costs to ongoing policy debates at the state and federal level, it's clear that having a strong, unified voice matters more than ever. Through your membership and engagement, Wisconsin Corn Growers continue to advocate for sound policy, expanded markets, and a strong future for our industry.

This fall, your association remains focused on issues that directly impact your operation—biofuels growth, trade development, research investments, and protecting farmer interests in Madison and Washington, D.C. At the same time, we're working to strengthen connections with consumers and partners who depend on corn for food, fuel, and everyday products.

As harvest wraps up, I encourage you to stay engaged, share your story, and take pride in the role you play in feeding families, fueling economies, and sustaining rural communities. Thank you for your commitment to Wisconsin corn and for the work you do every day.

Wishing you a safe and successful harvest season.

*James*

## WCGA testifies in support of sandhill crane hunt

Members of the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association testified in Madison in November, urging lawmakers to advance legislation that would allow for regulated management of sandhill crane populations in Wisconsin.

Corn growers from across the state shared firsthand accounts of increasing crop damage caused by expanding sandhill crane populations, particularly in newly planted corn fields. Testimony focused on the need for science-based wildlife management tools that balance conservation with the economic realities facing farmers.

"Sandhill cranes are no longer a rare or threatened species in Wisconsin, and their growing populations are having a very real impact on farmers," said Rick Gehrke, a corn grower from Omro. "We are seeing significant damage to young corn plants during planting season, and current deterrent options are expensive, time-consuming, and often ineffective."

Growers emphasized that corn is especially vulnerable in early growth stages, when cranes pull seedlings from the ground, frequently requiring replanting and additional input costs.

Casey Kelleher, a corn grower from Whitewater, stressed that the proposed legislation is focused on responsible management, not elimination of the species. "This bill is about giving farmers another tool in the toolbox," Kelleher said. "We value conservation, but effective conservation includes active, science-based management when populations reach levels that cause economic harm."

Wisconsin corn growers noted that many neighboring states already utilize regulated hunting as part of comprehensive sandhill crane management strategies. They urged lawmakers to consider similar approaches to restore balance while maintaining Wisconsin's strong conservation legacy.

The Wisconsin Corn Growers Association thanked legislators for the opportunity to share grower perspectives and encouraged continued collaboration among farmers, wildlife professionals, and policymakers to develop practical, data-driven solutions.

This October, the state ended Fiscal Year 2025 with a General Fund balance of about \$4.6 billion, giving lawmakers added flexibility heading into future budget discussions. Governor Evers also announced over \$145 million in transportation aid payments to local governments for road maintenance as part of ongoing statewide infrastructure investment. At the same time, the federal government shutdown has created uncertainty for FoodShare funding, with the state warning that benefits for roughly 700,000 residents could be disrupted without federal action.

This fall brought several key developments for Wisconsin agriculture. Encouraging progress was made between the United States and China on soybean trade, marking a welcome step toward restoring market access and rebuilding confidence after years of uncertainty. At the state level, lawmakers rejected proposed fee increases on the livestock industry, a decision supported by producers seeking to manage rising costs and maintain competitiveness. Additionally, Assembly Bill 439, which expands eligibility for the Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP), continues to advance. The proposal allows local governments to use engineering assessments to determine road eligibility for repair funding, helping protect critical farm-to-market infrastructure and strengthen Wisconsin's rural economy.

Tensions surrounding administrative authority continue following the Wisconsin Supreme Court's decision this summer limiting legislative control over rulemaking. Rep. Adam Neylon introduced a proposal that would require state administrative rules to be periodically reviewed and renewed. This drew questions from Democrats about constitutional viability and remains a point of contention between both parties.

The 2026 election landscape is continuing to take shape. The Democratic primary for governor continues to grow, including recent entries from Madison-area lawmakers. On the Republican side, the field has shifted as Congressman Tom Tiffany and Washington County Executive Josh Schoemann remain active candidates, while businessman Bill Berrien exited the race. In the Attorney General contest, Fond du Lac County District Attorney Eric Toney has launched a campaign emphasizing public safety, setting up a likely rematch with incumbent Attorney General Josh Kaul who is running for a third term.

## Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board Elections

DATCP has certified three candidates for the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board election, with voting open until January 12, 2026.

- District 1: Randall Woodruff, Chippewa Falls
- District 2: Shane Goplin, Osseo
- District 7: Ken Rosenow, Oconomowoc

All nominees meet eligibility requirements as active corn producers residing in their respective districts. Mail-in ballots have been sent to producers in the affected districts; those who do not receive one by December 19, 2025, may request a ballot at [DATCPMarketOrders@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPMarketOrders@wisconsin.gov). Ballots must be signed and postmarked by January 12, 2026.

Election results will be announced early next year, and elected growers will begin their three-year terms on February 1, 2026.



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