

U.S. **SORGHUM**

2025 Sorghum Checkoff Annual Report





Get Recipes in Your Inbox

Scan and share your email with us to have fresh and delicious recipes delivered straight to your inbox!



Contents

04

LETTER FROM OUR
PAST CHAIRMAN

07

2025
FINANCIALS

08

OUR
LEADERSHIP

10

OUR
HIGHLIGHTS

Our Mission

Mission: The Sorghum Checkoff commits to reveal the potential and versatility of sorghum through increased shared value.

Vision: Sorghum producers benefit from an innovative and competitive industry.

Purpose: We exist to do as a group what we cannot do individually.

Letter From Our Past Chairman

As I reflect on my year serving as chairman of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, I am reminded why sorghum has been a mainstay crop for thousands of years, and why I often refer to it as the king of ancient grains. Sorghum's resilience, efficiency and versatility are qualities that continue to serve today's producers as we navigate production challenges, market volatility and evolving consumer demands.

This past year highlighted both the strength of U.S. sorghum and the complexities of the environment in which we operate as producers. Yields were exceptional, a testament to the stewardship and capability of farmers across the country. At the same time, trade and domestic use challenges created real headwinds for all of us. However, the strong global interest in U.S. sorghum—clearly on display during our Export Sorghum event and other international engagements—reinforces the long-term importance of showcasing the value of our crop and continued market development.

Early in my tenure as chairman, I had the opportunity to take part in a trade mission to India

with members of Team Sorghum and hosted by the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council. Seeing firsthand the interest and need for U.S. sorghum underscored the global relevance of our crop and the critical role the checkoff plays in opening doors that individual producers cannot open alone. These efforts are foundational to expanding demand and capitalizing on opportunities we can all benefit from.

Equally encouraging were the strides made in elevating sorghum's profile beyond the farm gate. This year saw the launch of exciting new food products featuring sorghum, increased national media attention and the publication of the first-ever sorghum health supplement in the Journal of Food Science. We also announced the first human clinical trial focused on whole grain sorghum's health benefits—an important milestone that further proves sorghum's credibility as a nutritious, functional grain with a role to play in modern diets.

None of this progress would be possible without the exceptional work of the Sorghum Checkoff staff. Their tenacity, dedication, profes-

sionalism and creativity continue to elevate our industry, and I often tell people that there is no other staff that compares to ours.

At its core, the Sorghum Checkoff exists to serve producers, and that responsibility has guided every decision during my time as chairman. I am confident in the strength of our board and its continued commitment to acting in the best interests of producers, ensuring that checkoff resources are used wisely and strategically to build a resilient, profitable future for our industry.

Thank you! It has been an honor to serve alongside such a dedicated board and staff on behalf of my fellow producers. I am proud of the work accomplished this year and optimistic about our future as we continue to champion sorghum—an ancient grain uniquely suited to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.



Ethan Miller
Past USCP Chairman





437 Million
Grain production in 2025 was estimated at 437 million bushels, up 27% from the 2024 total.



6.64 Million
Planted area for 2025 was estimated at 6.64 million acres, up 5% from 2024.



6.02 Million
Area harvested for grain, at 6.02 million acres, was up 7% from 2024.



72.6 Bushels
Grain yield was estimated at 72.6 bushels per acre, up 11.3 bushels from 2024.



90 Bushels
Kansas sorghum averaged 90 bushels per acre in 2025, a 38.5% increase from roughly 65 in 2024.

2025 Financials

Expenses

Market Development
\$3,087,896

Crop Improvement
\$3,221,973

State Funding Passback
\$1,589,187

Sustainability
\$1,020,720

Administrative
\$625,505

USDA Oversight and Reserves
\$146,605

Total Expenses
\$9,733,886

Revenue

Assessments
\$7,141,046

Closed Contract Funds Returned
\$517,872

Investment Income
\$764,483

Total Income
\$8,532,255

State Passback

1. Kansas
\$3,995,837

2. Texas
\$1,610,229

3. Nebraska
\$322,980

4. Oklahoma
\$245,856

5. Colorado
\$207,248

BOLINGER, SEGARS, GILBERT & MOSS, L.L.P., Certified Public Accountants, Lubbock, Texas, audited the United Sorghum Checkoff financial statements for fiscal year 2025 in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The audit identified no significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting for 2025.

Our Leaders

The Sorghum Checkoff is led by a 13-member producer board of directors. Board members are nominated by their qualified state organizations and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

2026 Board Officer Positions



Kim Baldwin
McPherson, KS
Chair



Zack Rendel
Miami, OK
Vice Chair



Scott Irlbeck
Lubbock, TX
Secretary



Dale Stoltzfus
Schuylkill Haven, PA
Treasurer

2025 U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council Board of Directors



Verity Ulibarri
Melrose, NM
Chair



Adam Schindler
Reliance, SD
Sorghum Sector Director



Leadership Sorghum

The Sorghum Checkoff is developing the next generation of leaders for the sorghum industry with its Leadership Sorghum program.



Apply Now

Scan to learn more about Leadership Sorghum.

leadership
SORGHUM

a program sponsored by the

Sorghum Advances Product Development and Commercialization

The Sorghum Checkoff supported continued product development and market expansion by advancing sorghum's use across food categories. Mission MightyMe reformulated its peanut puffs, replacing rice with sorghum to improve nutrition while maintaining a gluten-free, allergen-friendly product. Seven Sundays launched Little Crispies, a new cereal line featuring sorghum flakes as the first ingredient, supported by checkoff-backed on-pack education through the "Get the Dirt on Sorghum" feature.

The checkoff also supported COB Snacks as the brand expanded sorghum-based snack offerings, reinforcing sorghum's role as a functional, consumer-ready ingredient in the snack aisle. Together, these efforts strengthened commercialization, validated sorghum's versatility and positioned it as a scalable ingredient for innovation across cereals, snacks and prepared foods.



First-Ever Sorghum Supplement Published in Journal of Food Science

After more than a year of collaboration, the Sorghum Checkoff published the first-ever sorghum-focused supplement in the Journal of Food Science. The issue compiles cutting-edge research showing sorghum's potential to support human health and encourages its inclusion in food products.



First-Ever Sorghum Human Clinical Trial

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program launched the first human clinical trial to evaluate whole grain sorghum's health benefits. Conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and co-funded by USCP in partnership with USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Commodity Board program, this landmark study will investigate how daily consumption of two whole-grain sorghum varieties — a traditional white sorghum and a phenolic-rich "sumac" sorghum — influences key health markers such as insulin resistance, inflammation and gut microbiome composition.

Consumer Awareness Campaign Expands Sorghum's Reach Through PR and Paid Media

In 2025, the Sorghum Checkoff executed an integrated PR and paid media strategy to elevate sorghum from niche awareness to mainstream consideration. National campaigns delivered a 13% lift in brand awareness and a 15% increase in consumers identifying as regular sorghum buyers. Paid media now accounts for 62% of website traffic and drove a 300% increase in site visits during campaign flights.

High-impact video and social placements achieved strong completion rates and increased followership across platforms. Influencer partnerships extended reach, generated direct sales through Amazon and increased visibility in emerging markets, including pet food. Together, PR, paid media and digital storytelling improved consumer sentiment and positioned sorghum as a modern, relevant ingredient for today's consumers.

2025 Highlights

Export Sorghum 2025 Connects Global Buyers with U.S. Industry

More than 130 participants from around the world gathered for Export Sorghum 2025, a one-and-a-half-day seminar hosted by the Sorghum Checkoff, Kansas Sorghum, Texas Grain Sorghum Producers, and the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council. The event united international grain buyers with U.S. farmers and industry leaders to explore the value of U.S. sorghum in global markets and foster new trade partnerships through collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Online Course Expands Global Knowledge of Sorghum in Poultry Feed

The Sorghum Checkoff, in partnership with Kansas State University's IGP Institute, hosted an eight-week online course titled U.S. Sorghum in Poultry Nutrition and Feed Manufacturing. Designed for feed industry professionals, the course provided a foundational understanding of poultry nutrition and feed production, while emphasizing the unique advantages of U.S. sorghum over other grains. Participants gained practical tools to integrate sorghum into poultry rations and improve technical skills in feed formulation, storage, and manufacturing processes.

The Sorghum Assurance Protocol (SAP) is Announced

The U.S. Sorghum Assurances Protocol defines how American sorghum meets the highest environmental, social and governance standards. Backed by USDA programs and grower compliance, it provides verified assurances to buyers, processors and international markets seeking sustainable grain inputs. The protocol is structured into three tiers: Tier 1 Conservation Compliance, verified by USDA FSA/NRCS ; Tier 2 Low-Risk Grassland Conversion via annual survey; and Tier 3 Bespoke Supply Chain Partnerships, custom assurances developed with buyers. The program will be housed within the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council system, which will oversee administration, verification and coordination

Malaysia Opens Market for U.S. Sorghum

U.S. sorghum gained new market access in Malaysia following the government's decision to ease import restrictions and requirements. This milestone was made possible through coordinated efforts by the U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council, APHIS, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Sorghum Checkoff. By addressing key trade barriers that previously limited access, U.S. sorghum is now better positioned to serve Malaysia's growing demand for high-quality feed grains.

Successful India Mission with National Sorghum Producers

The Sorghum Checkoff and National Sorghum Producers participated in a U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council Joint Officers' Mission to India. Leaders including Chairman Ethan Miller and CEO Tim Lust promoted U.S. sorghum for feed, biofuels and more, while fostering key relationships in a rapidly growing market.

Sorghum Checkoff Participates in Value-Added Feed Ingredients Buyers Mission 2025

USCP Director of Feed Ingredient Utilization Brent Crafton represented the Sorghum Checkoff during the Value-Added Feed Ingredients Buyers Mission 2025, held in partnership with the American Feed Industry Association at the International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE) in Atlanta, Georgia. Organized by Food Export-Midwest & Northeast, this event facilitated one-on-one meetings with eight pre-qualified international buyers from Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Mexico and Vietnam. Discussions covered sorghum grain quality, feed formulation for poultry, swine, and aquaculture diets, and export logistics, including container shipping options from multiple U.S. regions. Buyers also expressed interest in connecting with U.S. merchandisers and exploring

on-farm feed demonstration partnerships. The Buyers Mission continues to serve as a cost-effective market development tool, allowing the checkoff to build global relationships and support the expansion of U.S. grain sorghum in international feed programs.



Export Sorghum 2025 in San Antonio, Texas. Chinese participants during field visits.



U.S. Grains & BioProducts Council Joint Officers' Mission to India, January 2025, promoting U.S. sorghum for feed, biofuels and sustainable aviation fuel.

Ethan Triplett Joins the Sorghum Checkoff as Crop Improvement Director



The Sorghum Checkoff welcomed Dr. Ethan Triplett as its new Crop Improvement Director in 2025. A Canyon, Texas native, Ethan holds a Ph.D. in crop physiology from Texas Tech University and B.S. and M.S. degrees in plant science from West Texas A&M

University. He brings extensive expertise in plant breeding, entomology and plant physiology, with a focus on sorghum trait discovery and host-plant resistance mechanisms. In his new role, Ethan will lead initiatives to enhance sorghum genetics, advance production sustainability and position sorghum as a competitive crop for the future. His work will target early-stage innovations and partnerships to support producers and maintain sorghum's value across the supply chain.

Regional Development: Tulsa Port of Catoosa

In 2025, members of Team Sorghum met with Savage Company and the Tulsa Port Authority to explore new infrastructure opportunities at the Tulsa Port of Catoosa that could benefit sorghum producers. The port plans to construct a circle

track facility that will divert empty intermodal containers—typically en route to Long Beach/L.A. via BNSF rail—for agricultural use. This development opens the door for containerized and identity-preserved (IP) sorghum exports from the region. Team Sorghum participants included Zack Rendel, Kent Martin, Scott Arthaud, Adam York, Jeff Hickman and Zach Simon, with Florentino Lopez joining virtually to present on current container export volumes and the potential for expansion through Catoosa. Their presence helped ensure Savage Company recognized the strategic value of incorporating sorghum into the facility's operations, creating new market access and potential premiums for producers. Zach Simon, Director of Ingredient Utilization & Pet Food, will continue to lead relationship-building efforts with port staff and Savage Company to keep Team Sorghum informed and engaged as the project develops

Sorghum Returns to Ethanol Market Stability

For the second year in a row, sorghum use in ethanol production has returned to historical levels, with 10 plants consistently grinding sorghum. After several years of reduced usage, this rebound is the result of targeted outreach by the Sorghum Checkoff, including virtual and in-person visits to address plant concerns. With positive momentum, additional plants are now considering sorghum for fall 2025 and beyond.

Forage Sorghum Market Outreach

We're seeing encouraging momentum as sorghum forage gains attention in the region. Several dairies confirmed they are already feeding sorghum silage, and others expressed interest in learning more or connecting us with their nutritionists and farm managers. Even where direct contact wasn't possible, information packets were left to begin the conversation. Importantly, producers shared both opportunities and challenges, like ongoing pest pressure, that align well with our outreach and research efforts. These calls demonstrate that our proactive engagement is opening doors and positioning sorghum forage as a meaningful part of the dairy feed conversation moving forward.

Sorghum Experience Immerses Students in Feed Innovation

The Sorghum Checkoff hosted seven graduate-level students in Colorado for its Sorghum Experience program, offering firsthand exposure to sorghum's role as a functional ingredient in livestock and pet nutrition. Through industry-led discussions and site visits, participants explored how sorghum supports animal health, performance and product consistency. The immersive experience helped build technical understanding and real-world context around sorghum's value across feed sectors.



Tulsa Port of Catoosa, a strategic asset with potential to benefit sorghum producers.



Momentum builds as sorghum forage gains attention.



Graduate-level students in during the Sorghum Experience program.



SORGHUMCHECKOFF.COM

4201 N. INTERSTATE 27
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79403
(806) 687 8727

See the full list of Sorghum Checkoff funded projects.
Visit sorghumcheckoff.com/resources/research/