Making Conservation Retail Real

Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance promotes the adoption of conservation practices for improved land stewardship while maintaining profitability for Iowa farmers and landowners.

For 23 years, this group of agricultural retailers, manufacturers and industry supporters builds upon their extensive customer relationships to identify and implement solutions to reduce nutrient loss, build healthier soils and improve the quality of Iowa’s waterbodies.

ACWA Footprint

10 regular members
9 associate members
362 service locations
35,000 farmer customers
17 million rowcrop acres
81 Iowa counties

1255 SW Prairie Trail Parkway
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
contact: kristen@acwaiowa.com

www.acwaiowa.com

Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance

ACWA

Facebook: AgCleanWaterAlliance
# Table of Contents

## General Information
- Registration and Facility Information .................................................. 5
- Meeting Space Map ............................................................................. 7
- Schedule in Brief .................................................................................. 8

## Sponsors
- Meeting Sponsors .............................................................................. 9

## Program
- Wednesday Schedule and Events ....................................................... 10
- Thursday Schedule and Events .......................................................... 14
- Speaker Bios ....................................................................................... 17

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**WITH SUPPORT FROM THE WALTON FAMILY FOUNDATION**
Making Retail Conservation Real

Des Moines, Iowa
February 21-22, 2024

DRIVEN TO DELIVER
advancements in conservation agronomy to make Iowa farmers more productive, profitable and sustainable.

LEARN MORE about our work in conservation agronomy.
Registration and Facility Information

The registration desk is located in the Prefunction Area on the Second Floor. Staff will be on site to assist you.

Registration Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>10:00 AM – 11:00 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>7:45 AM – 8:15 AM</td>
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Meeting Registration

The meeting registration fee covers one participant. All registered attendees will receive a registration packet, which contains a formal name badge and program.

Your name badge acts as your admission ticket to all meeting activities. Please be sure your name badge is worn at all times in the meeting area. For your safety, it is recommended that you do not wear your name badge outside the meeting area.

Please Note: No refunds will be given for the meeting registration. The meeting organizers reserve the right to cancel activities without prior notice.

COVID-19 Policy

Please note any interaction with the general public poses a risk of being exposed to COVID-19, and we cannot guarantee that you will not be exposed while in attendance at the meeting. To help promote the health and safety of others, please do not attend the meeting if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or you have recently been exposed to COVID-19. The meeting will follow the Des Moines public health guidelines which can be found at www.dsm.city/departments/city_manager_s_office/covid-19. As of now, no public health orders are currently in effect in Des Moines. Face coverings are still highly recommended for those who are immunocompromised and those who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated or boosted. Face coverings provide an added layer of protection for those who are fully vaccinated and boosted. We will inform attendees if any changes occur prior to the meeting. By attending the meeting, you knowingly and freely accept the risks associated with COVID-19.

Internet

Select the “Hilton Honors Meeting” network, enter “MRCR2024” as the password when prompted, and complete the required steps to connect to the free internet connection.

Lost and Found

Check with the front desk of the Hilton or at the registration desk.

Name Badge Recycling

If you wish to recycle your name badge, please return it to the registration desk at the end of the meeting.

Photo Release

Registration and attendance at, or participation in, the Making Retail Conservation Real Meeting constitutes an agreement by the attendee for the meeting organizers to use the attendee’s likeness (all photos, videos, or digital media) in any format without payment or other consideration. The meeting organizers may use the images for nonprofit educational, informational, or promotional purposes. The meeting organizers will not sell the rights to the images or likeness to any other entity.

CEUs

The meeting organizers have worked to secure continuing education credits (CEUs) from various certifying organizations. Each session will have a sheet for you to sign in and out with your name and certification number.
MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET.

You know that when you implement the 4Rs of nutrient management — Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place — you maximize plant nutrient uptake and minimize field losses. But when you add conservation practices, you get 4R Plus, and something much more. Healthier soil. Reduced erosion. Less runoff. And cleaner water.

It’s more than soil. It’s your livelihood. It’s your legacy.
Learn more at 4RPlus.org.
Meeting Space Map

First Floor

Second Floor
Schedule in Brief

All sessions will be held in the Cloud Ballroom and Prefunction Area on the Second Floor.

MEETING EMCEE: Afton Holt, CornerPost Marketing
MEETING FACILITATION LEAD: Jeff Kappen, Bâton Global

Wednesday, February 21

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM  Registration Open
11:00 AM - 11:30 AM  Welcome and Meeting Overview
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM  Public Leaders Making Significant Investments
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM   Lunch with Bâton Global Study Report and Case Studies
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM    Leadership Tracks: Exploring the Drivers of Disruption behind Making Retail Conservation Real
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM    Break
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM    Group Facilitation Analyzing the Drivers
4:00 PM - 4:45 PM    Outcomes of Group Facilitation: Sharing Top Strategies for Each Driver
4:45 PM - 5:00 PM    Wrap Up and Adjourn
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM    Networking Reception

Thursday, February 22

7:45 AM - 8:15 AM    Registration Open and Light Breakfast
8:15 AM - 8:30 AM    Welcome, Recap, and Upcoming Itinerary
8:30 AM - 9:30 AM    Paving the Way to Making Retail Conservation Real: Current Experiences with Conservation Agronomy
9:30 AM - 10:00 AM   Break
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM  Conservation Agronomy Strategic Roadmap
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM  Making Retail Conservation Real: Creating the Infinite Game for Scalable Conservation
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM  Closing and Adjourn
Thank you to these ACWA members for additional support of the Making Retail Conservation Real Meeting!

CENTRAL VALLEY AG COOPERATIVE
GOLD EAGLE COOPERATIVE
HEARTLAND CO-OP
HELENA AGRI-ENTERPRISES LLC
LANDUS COOPERATIVE
NEW COOPERATIVE
NUTRIEN AG SOLUTIONS
PRO COOPERATIVE
VAN DIEST SUPPLY COMPANY

GREAT OUTDOORS FOUNDATION
IOWA AGRICULTURE WATER ALLIANCE
IOWA SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

PRESENTING SPONSORS

Platinum Sponsors

Silver Sponsor

Supporters

Walton Family Foundation
Wednesday Schedule and Events

All sessions will be held in the Cloud Ballroom and Prefunction Area on the Second Floor.

MEETING EMCEE: Afton Holt, CornerPost Marketing

MEETING FACILITATION LEAD: Jeff Kappen, Bâton Global

Schedule

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11:00 AM - 11:30 AM  Welcome and Meeting Overview

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM  Public Leaders Making Significant Investments

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM   Lunch with Bâton Global Study Report and Case Studies

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM    Leadership Tracks: Exploring the Drivers of Disruption behind Making Retail Conservation Real

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2:45 PM - 4:00 PM    Group Facilitation Analyzing the Drivers

4:00 PM - 4:45 PM    Outcomes of Group Facilitation: Sharing Top Strategies for Each Driver

4:45 PM - 5:00 PM    Wrap Up and Adjourn

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM    Networking Reception

Events

Welcome and Meeting Overview

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Speakers: Roger Wolf, Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS)

The event will be opened by Roger Wolf, Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) with a welcome and meeting overview.
Public Leaders Making Significant Investments
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
**Speakers:** Grant Menke, Iowa Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS); Robert Bonnie, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation, USDA

Agency leaders will share their insights and thoughts on where scalable conservation, ag retail, and the common good relates.

Lunch with Bâton Global Study Report and Case Studies
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
**Speaker:** Jeffrey A. Kappen, Ph.D., Partner, Bâton Global

During the lunch hour, hear about recent research into the state of conservation agronomy assessed through interviews conducted around the Midwest. What is going well? What have the main obstacles been?

Leadership Track: Exploring the Drivers of Disruption behind Making Retail Conservation Real
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

This session will include lightning presentation panelists highlighting three different questions revolving around the Trends and Drivers feeding retailer conservation service delivery structures. Individuals will receive participant handbooks to help them organize their thoughts and support facilitated roundtables for discussing and harvesting information from the audience after a break.

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

**Speakers:** Grant Kvalheim, CEO & President, Athene USA; President, Athene Holding Ltd.; Board of Director’s Member, Great Outdoors Foundation; Mary Beth Stevenson, Watersheds & Source Water Program Manager, City of Cedar Rapids; Ruth McCabe, Conservation Manager, Heartland Coop; Iowa 2022 Nuffield Scholar

Upstream conservation services help secure water supplies, and quality downstream such as drinking water and recreation. Upstream conservation can also help mitigate the risks of floods and droughts. Downstream stakeholders need connections with upstream stakeholders who have the horsepower to impact scalable conservation systems. Hear about drivers and trends to help make the connections.

DATA DRIVEN INVESTMENTS AND INNOVATIONS

**Speakers:** Kent Klingbeil, CCA, Lead Agronomist, Advanced Agrilytics, LLC; Matt Herman, Chief Officer Demand and Advocacy, Iowa Soybean Association; Adam Kiel, Executive Vice President, AgOutcomes; Vincent Gauthier, Manager, Environmental Defense Fund

The technologies of farming have changed dramatically in the last generation. Progressive farmers are utilizing data and information to optimize management performance. Precision agriculture is being realized on farms and has the potential to interplay with scalable conservation. Data is an asset that could be valued up and down the ag value chain. Hear about innovations driving value capture and opportunities in this space.
Wednesday Schedule and Events

**INVESTMENTS IN CONSERVATION AGRONOMY**

**Speakers:** Scott Raubenstine, Vice President of Agricultural Services, Perdue AgriBusiness; Alex Echols, Program Strategist Agriculture, The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment; Leif Fixen, Agriculture Strategy Manager, The Nature Conservancy; Sean McMahon, Executive Director, Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance

Significant public, private and philanthropic investments are occurring to scale-up conservation services. Various policies and programs are being rolled out to create new opportunities including state nutrient reduction strategies, water quality initiatives, sustainability and ecosystem services programming. Hear about some of these drivers, their challenges, and opportunities to consider.

**Group Facilitation Analyzing the Drivers**

2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

**Speaker:** Jeffrey A. Kappen, Ph.D., Partner, Bâton Global

What are some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that we need to account for if we are to embrace the vision of Making Retail Conservation Real and for considering future action?

**Outcomes of Group Facilitation: Sharing Top Strategies for Each Driver**

4:00 PM - 4:45 PM

**Speaker:** Jeffrey A. Kappen, Ph.D., Partner, Bâton Global

This session will share the intelligence from our discussions and harvesting themes for continuing the conversation.

**Wrap Up and Adjourn**

4:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Speaker:** Roger Wolf, Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS)

**Networking Reception**

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

This reception will allow an opportunity for attendees to network. A selection of appetizers will be served, with two drink tickets per attendee.
Making a Difference for Iowa Farmers + Communities

IAWA has fundraised over $1.2 million for Conservation Agronomists at ag retailers across Iowa. We work together to help farmers achieve profitability and sustainability.

LEARN MORE, WORK WITH US:
www.iaagwater.org
Thursday Schedule and Events

All sessions will be held in the Cloud Ballroom and Prefunction Area on the Second Floor.

**MEETING EMCEE:** Afton Holt, CornerPost Marketing

**MEETING FACILITATION LEAD:** Jeff Kappen, Bâton Global

### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Paving the Way to Making Retail Conservation Real: Current Experiences with Conservation Agronomy Models</td>
</tr>
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<td>9:30 AM - 10:00 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>11:45 AM - 12:00 PM</td>
<td>Closing and Adjourn</td>
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### Events

**Welcome, Recap, and Upcoming Itinerary**

7:45 AM - 8:15 AM

**Speaker:** Roger Wolf, *Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS)*

Thursday will be opened by Roger Wolf, *Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS)* with a recap and overview of the upcoming itinerary.
Thursday Schedule and Events

Paving the Way to Making Retail Conservation Real: Current Experiences with Conservation Agronomy
8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

Speakers: Mike Gilman, Conservation Agronomy Lead, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Thomas Fawcett, Director, Environmental Resources & Precision Ag, Heartland Co-op; Tim Hushon, Sustainable AgTech Director, The Mill (MD & PA); Ryan Locke, Director of Sustainability Partnerships & Business Development, Nutrien Ag Solutions; Spencer Herbert, Conservation Agronomist Coordinator, Truterra; Cammie Vaupel, Communications, Programs, and Brand Coordinator, American Plains Co-op; Landon Van Dyke, Sales Agronomist, Key Co-op

Ag retailers have experimented with different ways of integrating and resourcing conservation agronomists into their existing operations. Vignettes and insights from industry peers will provide illustrations of what your next steps could be if you’re interested in expanding your own programming. These experiences show a variety of ways that conservation solutions can add to your value proposition and connect farmers to valuable resources to enhance the productivity of their farming systems.

Conservation Agronomy Strategic Roadmap
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Speaker: Jeffrey A. Kappen, Ph.D., Partner, Bâton Global

Join us for an interactive session where we will reflect upon all the discussions and presentations at the meeting to navigate a path forward for accelerating the conservation services in agricultural retail. Your contributions will shape how we move from ideas to actions.

Making Retail Conservation Real: Creating the Infinite Game for Scalable Conservation
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Speaker: Roger Wolf, Director of Conservation, Iowa Soybean Association (ISA); Executive Director, Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA); and Board Treasurer, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS)

Ag retail, and the sales agronomist as the trusted advisor of the farmer, is commonly the last entity a farmer speaks with before making a decision for their farm production system. Scalable conservation refers to the ability to conserve natural resources in a way that can be replicated, expanded and adapted to different contexts and scales. Meeting the need for scalable conservation with the mindset of the infinite game may be the compelling vision leaders can take to realize Making Retail Conservation Real.
88% of consumers will be more loyal to a company that supports social or environmental issues.

You want to make an impact. We can make it happen. GreatOutdoorsFoundation.org
Afton Holt is the founder and President of CornerPost, an agriculture-focused marketing and PR agency, based in Iowa that reaches across the U.S. She champions agriculture by delivering creative problem-solving that challenges the status quo for the industry’s leading clients and initiatives through her career experience in agribusiness, farm production background, public policy involvement and get-it-done grit. Residing in Fort Dodge, Iowa, her central Iowa roots also include a degree from Iowa State University in Ag Education and Animal Science. Her initial career began with Becker Underwood in Ames, Iowa and NEW Cooperative, Fort Dodge, Iowa before launching her own entrepreneurial journey in 2012, continuing to grow a team of agriculture champions. Afton believes in bringing boots-on-the-ground knowledge that encourages innovative thinking and collaboration to match the economic and operational needs of our farmers, producers and ag retail.

Jeffrey A. Kappen is a founding partner of Bâton Global serving as an advisor to private and public sector organizations on the development and execution of their global strategies, leadership development programs, and market analyses. Concurrent to his leadership role at Bâton Global, Jeff is also an Associate Professor of Management and International Business Drake University. In addition to teaching in the areas of leadership, management, global studies, and sustainable development, he maintains an active research agenda on emerging trends in sustainability, the influence of culture on the formation of transnational partnerships, and linguistic diversity in organizations. Jeff is active in the community serving on the boards of organizations focused on the arts and culture, financial literacy, and citizen diplomacy. Jeff holds a B.A. with honors from Beloit College, an MBA from the University of Wisconsin, and a Ph.D. in Management and Organization Studies from the University of Massachusetts. Over the past five years, Bâton Global has partnered with several organizations to assess the commercial and environmental impact of conservation agronomists and to examine their integration into business operations. During this conference, Jeff and other team members will be sharing recent research findings and facilitating conversations to advance our collective thinking and future industry practice.

Roger Wolf is the Director of Conservation at the Iowa Soybean Association Research Center for Farming Innovation. He also serves as the Executive Director on behalf of Agricultures Clean Water Alliance, a 501c3 organization of ag retailers and cooperatives working to advance solutions that reduce nutrient loss, build healthier soils, and improve Iowa’s waters. He provides leadership support creating, developing, and overseeing programs and services designed to advance agricultural leadership in achieving data-driven environmental performance at farm and watershed scales, while improving agronomic and economic performance. With over 30 years of experience in the field, Roger has been instrumental in developing innovative solutions to some of the most pressing environmental challenges facing the agricultural industry today. He is a passionate advocate for sustainable agriculture and is committed to helping farmers expand profit opportunities while promoting environmentally sensitive production using the soybean checkoff and other resources.
**Grant Menke** was appointed Deputy Secretary of Agriculture by Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig in January 2023. Prior to joining the Department, Grant worked for the Iowa Corn Growers Association and Iowa Corn Promotion Board as Vice President of Market Development. Before that opportunity, he worked as the State Director for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development. He has also worked as the Policy Director for Iowa Renewable Fuels Association and held a position on the United States Senate Finance Committee staff of U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley. A graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, Grant was raised on a corn and soybean farm near Calumet in rural O’Brien County. Today, he lives in Ankeny with his wife, Susie, and their four boys. As Deputy Secretary, Grant is responsible for the operations of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, focusing on policy, budget, and personnel.

**Robert Bonnie** is the Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation at USDA. Prior to his confirmation he served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Climate Advisor at USDA. Before joining USDA, Robert was at Duke University first as a Rubenstein Fellow and later as an Executive in Residence at the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions working on conservation and environmental issues in rural America. In 2020, Robert also worked with the Bipartisan Policy Center on its Farm and Forest Carbon Solutions Initiative. He was Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA from 2013 to 2017 and a senior advisor to Secretary Tom Vilsack from 2009 to 2013. Prior to joining USDA, Robert was vice president for land conservation at Environmental Defense Fund where he focused on developing incentives to reward stewardship on private lands. Robert has master’s degrees from Duke in forestry and environmental management. He lives with his wife, Julie, and daughter, Lilly, in Loudoun County, Virginia.

**Grant Kvalheim** is CEO and President of Athene USA and President of Athene Holding Ltd. He previously served as the President of Athene Holding Ltd. from January 2011 until September 2015 before resuming the role in April 2022, served as the Chief Financial Officer from January 2011 until April 2013, and served as a director from January 2012 until February 2014. Grant is responsible for leading the US operating companies with a focus on growth initiatives. Grant became a Partner at Apollo with the merger of Athene and Apollo in January 2022 and serves as an observer on the Apollo Executive Committee. Prior to joining Athene, Grant was a senior executive of Barclays Capital (“Barclays”) from early 2001 to the end of 2007, becoming Co-President in September 2005. During his time at Barclays, he converted a European investment grade credit business into a leading global credit franchise across both securitized and non-securitized credit products, and significantly expanded Barclays’ investment banking platform. Prior to joining Barclays, Grant held senior executive positions in the investment banks of Deutsche Bank and Merrill Lynch. Grant received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Claremont McKenna College and his Master of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Chicago.
Mary Beth Stevenson has served as the Watersheds and Source Water Program Manager for the City of Cedar Rapids since 2019. She supports the City’s engagement in watershed-based efforts to improve water quality and reduce flood risk. This includes grant writing and management, building relationships with upstream producers and agricultural communities, and coordinating the City’s participation in the State of Iowa’s Nutrient Reduction Exchange. Prior to her role with the City of Cedar Rapids, she worked for 10 years for Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Mary Beth holds a master’s degree in conservation biology from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree in biology from Grinnell College.

Ruth McCabe leads the Conservation Team at Heartland Co-op. She is a passionate advocate for sustainable farming practices in the Midwest and has devoted her career to working with farmers who want to adopt conservation into their management plans. Ruth is a Certified Professional Agronomist, an Iowa CCA, and has her M.S. in Crop Production and Physiology from Iowa State University. Prior to her current role, Ruth worked as a technical agronomist, organic agronomist and research agronomist around the Midwest for over a decade. Ruth is also a 2022 Nuffield International Farming Scholar and has spent the last two years traveling around the world to study how farmers are adopting conservation in other countries.

Kent Klingbeil joined the Advanced Agrilytics team in 2020. He works as the Lead Agronomist in Iowa and Missouri and provides technical training to the Advanced Agrilytics Agronomy team while working directly with multiple operations across Iowa. With 19 years of experience in the Agriculture Industry, Kent’s experience spans retail, precision agriculture, and sustainability. Kent graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor’s degree in Agricultural Business, Agronomy, and a Masters’s Degree in Seed Technology and Business. He also is a member of the Certified Crop Advisor Board in Iowa. Kent grew up on the family farm in northern Iowa and currently resides in Huxley, Iowa.

Matt Herman is the chief officer of demand and advocacy at the Iowa Soybean Association. He is passionate about leveraging policy to support a more productive, profitable, and sustainable soybean rotation. To expand opportunities Matt bridges the divide between policymakers, scientists, and industry. Matt has worked in private and public roles including at Renewable Energy Group (now Chevron), BIO, and the National Biodiesel Board. Matt went to Iowa State University where he studied policy and bioenergy.
Adam Kiel is a managing director of the Soil and Water Outcomes Fund. The Soil and Water Outcomes Fund works with public and private partners to support on-farm generation of ecosystem services. Adam has over 20 years of experience in the field and held a prior role as Director of Conservation for the Iowa Soybean Association and positions with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and National Park Service. Adam grew up on a family farm in northeast Iowa.

Vincent Gauthier is a manager for climate-smart agriculture at Environmental Defense Fund and a thought leader on agriculture finance solutions that help farmers and ranchers adapt to a changing climate. Vincent collaborates directly with farmers, ranchers, and agriculture lenders to identify and address financial challenges to climate solutions in the agriculture sector. He has advanced actionable financial data on climate-smart agriculture practices and is bringing climate risk assessment and management to the agriculture finance sector. He values spending time with farmers and ranchers to understand the climate and weather challenges they face. Vincent is trained in economics and holds a masters in environmental management from Duke University.

Scott Raubenstine is the Vice President of Agricultural Services at Perdue Agribusiness. Scott manages a team of agronomists and grower relations managers who contract with growers to produce Specialty Crop grains that fuel the Perdue supply chain. Prior to joining Perdue, Scott worked in the agribusiness retail sector for Nutrien (Crop Production Services) in Greenville, OH, and was the Marketing and Business Development Manager for the Americas at Everris, NA (Subsidiary of Israeli Chemical, Ltd) in Columbus, Ohio. Scott grew up on a 500-acre family dairy, beef, pig, and chicken farm in Hanover, Pennsylvania. Scott has been working with growers managing crop and grain risks for over 30 years. Scott earned a BS in Agricultural Mechanization from Pennsylvania State University and dual Masters Degrees in Seed Technology/Business Management and Professional Agricultural at Iowa State University. Scott is a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) and a Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg).
Speaker Bios

Alex Echols is the Program Strategist, Agriculture, at the Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment. Alex joined the foundation in January of 2019 and brings experience in the agricultural sector, philanthropy, conservation and government. Prior to joining the Foundation, Alex ran an independent business to help advance conservation outcomes, particularly in water quality and biodiversity. He also built a company, Ecosystem Services Exchange, that improves farm profitability and water quality. Previously Alex ran the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, worked as the government affairs director of a recycling trade association and worked for the U.S. Senate for 12 years. While working for the Senate, Alex was the principal staff lead in developing the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill. Alex grew up on The New Farm (1780) in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. Living there and in Latin America, he witnessed how conservation and economic opportunity go hand in hand. Alex’s undergraduate degree is in interdisciplinary studies with a focus in environmental science. He has an undergraduate degree from Miami University in Environmental Science, masters of planning from Texas A&M University and an honorary PhD from the School of Hard Knocks.

Leif Fixen is a North America Agriculture Strategy Manager for The Nature Conservancy with over two decades of expertise in conservation agriculture. Leif spearheads TNC’s Farmer Advisor Strategy, collaborating closely with agribusinesses, agronomists, and fellow farmer advisors. His primary objective revolves around aiding these stakeholders in their engagement with farmers, enabling them to identify and implement inventive technical and financial solutions that will expedite the widespread adoption of regenerative practices. Before joining TNC, Leif held the position of Pacific Northwest Conservation Program Manager at the American Farmland Trust. During this tenure, he focused on formulating effective approaches to encourage farmers and ranchers to voluntarily embrace conservation practices. Leif’s roots trace back to a small farm near Brookings, SD, and he earned a BS in Agronomy and Forestry from South Dakota State University. Leif is an alumni of the Washington AgForestry Leadership Program.

Sean McMahon is the Executive Director of IAWA and works with key partners to champion farmer engagement and adoption of conservation practices that improve water quality. Sean has more than 20 years of experience in conservation and agriculture including leading diverse coalitions dedicated to improving water quality. He formerly directed The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) North America Agriculture Program. He also served as state director of the Iowa Chapter of TNC where he chaired the Iowa’s Water and Land Legacy campaign. Prior to that, he directed national land stewardship campaigns with the National Wildlife Federation. Sean served in a variety of senior staff positions at the U.S. Department of the Interior. Sean is a member of the Farm Foundation Roundtable and serves on the board of the CropLife Foundation. He is also chair of the Conservation Reserve Program Subcommittee of the Iowa NRCS State Technical Committee and serves on an advisory body for the U.S. Soybean Export Council and the Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award Selection Committee.
Mike Gilman is the Conservation Agronomy Team Lead for the Iowa Soybean Association’s Research Center for Farming Innovation. Mike joined the Iowa Soybean Association in 2023. He leads a team of five conservation agronomists positioned across the state of Iowa. Through technical education and outreach, the team is working to scale the implementation of conservation practices on Iowa farms and ultimately enhance the farms’ productivity, profitability, and sustainability. Prior to joining the Iowa Soybean Association Mike worked as an Agronomy Sales Lead at Advanced AgriLytics offering precision agronomy consulting services. In previous experiences spanning more than 20 years, Mike has worked in agriculture software sales, precision agriculture equipment sales, agriculture retail, and the seed industry. Mike holds a bachelor’s degree in agriculture business from Iowa State University. Mike was born and raised on a row crop and livestock farm near Creston in Southwest Iowa.

Thomas Fawcett started his career with Heartland Co-op in 2005. Throughout his time with the cooperative, he worked at the Colo, Iowa location in operations, sold and serviced precision ag hardware, and is currently serving as Heartland Co-op’s Director of Environmental Resources and Precision Ag. Thomas is passionate about Heartland Co-op’s promise to help farmers produce and market profitably, and he strives to accomplish this each day.

Ryan Locke is currently the Director of Sustainability Partnerships and Business Development at Nutrien Ag Solutions, a global agricultural fertilizer and crop inputs provider. In this role he guides the North American engagement and partnership strategy and serves as the global liaison for Nutrien’s retail sustainability efforts supporting agriculture producers’ access, participation, and value capture in sustainability and climate smart aligned programming throughout the ag value channel. Before his time at Nutrien, Ryan held previous roles of increasing responsibility with market leading organizations including FMC, Bayer Crop Science, Novozymes, and Syngenta. Ryan is a graduate of Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas with a B.S. in Animal Science. He also holds an Executive Business degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and certification in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Corporate and Organizational Structures from the University of South Florida. He is a professional member of Minorites in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), a founding member of Young Professionals in Agriculture, and a 2023 Farm Foundation Young Agri-Food Leader. When not advocating for producers, sustainable practices, and improving diversity in agriculture Ryan can be found in Omaha, Nebraska with his wife Hayley, daughter Skylar, and two dogs Vulcan and Jasper.
Speaker Bios

Tim Hushon is the Sustainable AgTech Director for ag retailer The Mill, operating in Maryland & Pennsylvania. Utilizing data driven management decisions, he takes pride in maintaining superior grower support around nutrient efficiency. These actions place a vital focus on farm profitability, resulting in sustainability for future generations.

Spencer Herbert has been with Truterra for five years, working with ag retailers to equip them with tools, services, and funding opportunities to support their growers in implementing conservation. In his role as Conservation Agronomist Coordinator, Spencer works with Truterra ag retailers to provide conservation assistance and expertise to growers through employment of a conservation agronomist. Spencer assists retailers in accessing funding opportunities, along with providing training, networking opportunities, and ongoing support to conservation agronomists within the Truterra network.

Cammie Vaupel, American Plains Co-op, is a seasoned professional with over 16 years of experience in the cooperative system. With a strong background in agricultural sales, Cammie has transitioned into a multifaceted role as the Communications, Programs, and Brand Coordinator. In this position, she plays a crucial role in shaping the organization's image, managing communication strategies, and overseeing various programs. Cammie's expertise extends to her current focus on carbon programs, where she actively contributes to initiatives aimed at sustainable and environmentally responsible practices within the agricultural sector. Her dedication to promoting eco-friendly solutions aligns with the cooperative's commitment to innovation and responsible agriculture. Throughout her career, Cammie has demonstrated a keen understanding of the intricacies of sales agronomy, coupled with effective communication and branding strategies. Her diverse skill set positions her as a valuable asset to the American Plains Cooperative, contributing to its success and fostering a sustainable future in the agricultural industry.

Landon Van Dyke has been working for Key Cooperative the past seven years balancing agronomy sales, running the trials program, precision data and taking initiative to develop conservation at Key. He assists farmers in navigating carbon credits, enrolling in Truterra programs and implementing cover crops. His goal is to implement these practices in a beneficial way for the farmer, yet leaving the ground better than started.
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