

IL Corn Growers Association Political Action Committee Newsletter **MAIZE MATTERS**



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POLICY TAKES ROOT THROUGH ADVOCACY

A look at how IL Corn is advancing policy, strengthening partnerships, and advocating for Illinois farmers.

AUGUST 2026



Read more about these photos taken in Washington D.C. on page 3

TL: Jon Rosenstiel and Tim Thompson on action teams panel TR: Sen. Dick Durbin, Illinois 25 Section Presidents, IL Corn Growers Association, and IL Corn staff BL: Steve Fourez at Corn Congress BM: Rep. Eric Sorensen, Hannah Gehring, Jon Rosenstiel, and Mike Shane BR: Jon Hurst, Brad Stotler, and Lindsay Croke at Corn Congress



AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

As America reflects on 250 years, farmers have been a critical piece of the American agricultural landscape. Corn farmers have worked tirelessly to produce one of America's most foundational and abundant crops. They have created monumental economic impacts, industrial innovations, and sustainable practices that played a role in advancing America.

For generations, corn farmers have grown with America, expanding beyond food production into renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, and emerging technologies that were unimaginable just a generation ago.

E15 PASSES IN THE HOUSE WITH ALL 17 ILLINOIS REPRESENTATIVES VOTING "YES"

The U.S. House of Representatives took a major step toward nationwide, year-round E15 sales in mid-May by passing H.R. 1346, the Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act, with a vote of 218 to 203.

IL Corn Growers Association thanks all 17 of our Illinois Representatives for voting yes. We thank Rep. Nikki Budzinski for holding a press conference the day before the vote to rally bipartisan support. We thank our Illinois cosponsors on the bill, Reps. Bost, Miller, LaHood, Sorensen, Budzinski, Kelly, and Jackson for their leadership on this important issue.

Leading up to the vote, agriculture and renewable fuel organizations from across the country joined forces to advocate for E15 in congressional districts where corn and ethanol production are less prevalent, helping build bipartisan support for the legislation. Advocacy teams met with more than 375 Congressional offices to discuss the benefits of year-round E15 sales and answer questions from lawmakers and staff.



T: Rep. Nikki Budzinski speaking at E15 rally in front of the Capitol, with Rep. Adrian Smith, NCGA's VP of Public Policy Lesly McNitt, and Rep. Shontel Brown

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASS FARM BILL 2.0

The Farm, Food, and National Security Act (H.R. 7576) was passed by the House of Representatives with a vote of 224-200 at the end of April. This is the first step for the Farm Bill package since its last enactment in 2018. The bill will be debated and voted on in the Senate. The bill's enactment would update and extend these farm bill provisions through 2031.

As the bill is voted on in the Senate, our focus remains on production costs, conservation programs, protecting the Prop 12 fix, and advancing renewable fuel policies. As family farms face tight margins and unpredictable markets, it is critical that a Farm Bill is passed this year. Many programs help keep farms afloat during years of downturn in the ag economy.



L: Rod Weinzierl, Dan Parker, Chad Dillenger, and Rep. Mary Miller R: Rep. Darin LaHood, Cliff Lane, and Mike Shane

FARMERS PUSH FOR CHANGE AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Illinois farmers from across the state traveled to the state capitol in April to draw attention to the poor farm economy as the planting season begins. Farmers met with their representatives and key legislators to tell their farm family stories. During these discussions, three bills were brought forth that would help farmers now.

Throughout Illinois, agriculture supports jobs, lowers fuel costs, and powers our clean energy future. IL Corn continues to emphasize the importance of expanding and strengthening market opportunities during the alarming downturn of the farm economy.



Sarah Hastings, Melinda Fourez, Sen. Chapin Rose, Mark Degler, Steve Fourez, and Dale Haudrich



CORN CONGRESS TO CAPITOL HILL

Farmer leaders of the IL Corn Growers Association advocated for their peers on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) also held its annual Corn Congress, where IL Corn Growers Association (ICGA) and IL Corn Marketing Board (ICMB) leaders met with farmer leaders from other corn states to discuss policy priorities and goals.

IL Corn invited the 25 Illinois FFA Section Presidents to Washington, D.C., to meet with ICGA, ICMB, and industry partners to learn more about corn, systems, strategies, and the various avenues that affect corn in agriculture.

The Illinois congressional delegation heard firsthand from Illinois corn farmers about the downturn in the agricultural economy. During IL Corn's time in D.C., ICGA and the Illinois FFA District Presidents (FFA) met with 17 congressmen and both Senators.

IL Corn's policy priorities for the 119th Congress in July 2026 focus on farm economy, trade, Farm Bill, renewable fuels, conservation, and waterways.

*T: Brad Stotler, Alayna Smardo, Ashley Deal, Kelsey Scott, Rep. Darin LaHood, Pearl McDade, Ryan Butterfield, Debbie Leigh, Mike Shane, and Cliff Lane
M: Don Guinnip and Sen. Tammy Duckworth
B: Lyndi Allen, Taylor Crouch, Rep. Bill Foster, Jason Cochrane, Chris Gould, and Mark Bunselmeyer*



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USMCA WORKS FOR AMERICA

The U.S.–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) has been delivering real results for American families, farmers, and businesses since 2020. Through this agreement, Mexico and Canada have become the U.S.'s largest export markets for agriculture.

Canada's 2025 Agricultural Export Value

- All Commodities: \$28 Billion
- Ethanol: \$1.7 Billion

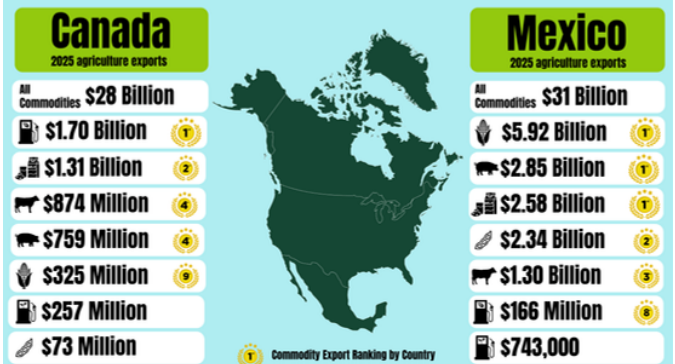
Mexico's 2025 Agricultural Export Value

- All Commodities: \$31 Billion
- Corn: \$5.2 Billion

While the July 1 deadline to begin the USMCA joint review has passed, the need to preserve and strengthen this critical trade agreement remains. President Trump has indicated he intends to renegotiate the agreement, making it essential that the review process move forward quickly and provide certainty for farmers, businesses, and consumers across North America.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT Works for America

Delivering real results for American families, farmers, and businesses since 2020



Impact in Numbers

