



About Minnesota Soybean Staff

Tom Slunecka, Chief Executive Officer

Tom Slunecka grew up on a diversified cattle and grain operation. He has been the chief executive officer of Minnesota Soybean since August of 2012. Before joining the Minnesota Soybean team, Slunecka had a long history in the biofuels and agriculture industries.

His previous experience includes serving as executive director of the Ethanol Promotion & Information Council and vice president of marketing for the National Corn Growers Association. In addition, Slunecka worked with the Urban Air Initiative and Phibro Animal Health, where he was vice president of marketing for PhibroChem, a specialty supply company focused on ethanol and animal agriculture, based in New Jersey.

Slunecka's career has been dedicated to furthering agriculture and understanding all aspects of the industry and what it takes for all branches of agriculture to be successful.

To speak with Tom Slunecka about Minnesota Soybean, please contact tom@mns soybean.com.

Mike Youngerberg, Senior Director of Product Development & Commercialization

Mike Youngerberg, senior director of product development and commercialization for Minnesota Soybean, has been working with the organization for the past 31 years. In that time, Youngerberg has worked hand in hand with the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association, and has led the New Uses action team and the Production action team in checkoff efforts to further uses of soybeans.

Youngerberg also serves as the executive director of the Minnesota Biodiesel Council, which represents the biodiesel producers and feedstock providers in the state of Minnesota.

To speak with Youngerberg about product development and commercialization, please contact mike@mns soybean.com.



Kim Nill, Director of Market Development

Kim Nill, director of market development for Minnesota Soybean, previously spent 17 years working for the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) in a variety of positions. He also spent four years as international marketing manager for MoorMan's Consolidated Nutrition, an animal feed company, which is now part of ADM Alliance Nutrition. The Market Development program, with direction from farmer leaders, oversees the investment of soybean checkoff dollars in international and domestic marketing, transportation and livestock.

To speak with Nill about market development topics, please contact kim@mnsoybean.com.

Dr. David Kee, Director of Research

David Kee, director of research for Minnesota Soybean, has an extensive background in agriculture, especially on the research and extension sides. Dr. Kee was raised on an east Texas beef cattle farm and worked his way through college by cowboying, picking peas and working in an oil field. Kee graduated with his Ph.D. from Auburn University in crop management and his Master of Science in soil science from Texas A&M University.

Before coming to Minnesota Soybean, Kee was director of research at the Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Co-op.

To speak with Kee about research and extension, please contact david@mnsoybean.com.



Joe Smentek, Director of Public Affairs

Joe Smentek is the director of public affairs at Minnesota Soybean. Smentek is also an environmental attorney, working closely with the Environmental Stewardship action team to develop resources for soybean farmers like the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) handbook.

Smentek obtained his J.D. from Hamline University School of Law and holds an LL.M. in environmental law from Pace University School of Law.

To speak with Smentek, please contact joe@mnsoybean.com.

Cathy Riley, Director of Marketing and Communications

Cathy Riley is director of marketing and communications for Minnesota Soybean. She is a lifelong farmer with a passion for agriculture. Because of her love for ag, she has intentionally spent her entire career in agricultural marketing and communications.

Before joining Minnesota Soybean, Riley spent nearly 12 years at AgStar Financial Services in various roles, serving as director of marketing and communications, director of marketing and events, and director of brand marketing and communications. She also spent three years as communications director for Watonwan Farm Service (now CFS).

Riley recently collaborated with Jolene Brown, CSP, on the book, "Holy Crap, I Married a Farmer." She holds a degree in sales, marketing and management.

To speak with with Riley, please contact cathy@mnsoybean.com.