

**Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council
Research Action Team
FY26 Request for Proposal**

1. Summary & Background:

The research action team is comprised of members from the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) and the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA). MSR&PC is made up of an elected board of 15 soybean producers from across the state. On behalf of Minnesota's nearly 26,000 soybean farmers, they direct the investment of soybean checkoff dollars in international and domestic marketing programs, research projects and education and technology transfer efforts designed to increase the profitability of soybean production.

Established by soybean farmers in 1962, MSGA is a nonprofit, farmer-controlled membership organization aimed at monitoring government policies, supporting research activities and market development activities to improve the profitability of soybean farmers throughout the state. These two very distinct and different organizations work together toward a common goal – to increase the profitability of Minnesota soybean farmers.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit pre-proposals from various investigators and collaborators to help enhance environmental stewardship and increase the production profitability of Minnesota soybean producers. The research action team will conduct an open, fair and complete evaluation of all pre-proposals based on the criteria listed herein and select those investigations that best represent the needs the team desires to address.

2. General Guidelines:

This RFP represents an open and competitive process.

Pre-proposals received after 5 p.m. on the date listed on the cover page of this RFP will not be considered.

The individual representative from the cooperator, contractor or partnering organization will be noted as Principal Investigator (PI) from this point forward. If the PI submits a proposal with the intention to outsource or subcontract any of the components of the project, this must be clearly stated and a list of subcontractors to be used shall be included. All fees associated with subcontracts should be included in the budget breakdown. MSR&PC will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors. However, we retain the right to refuse subcontractors you have identified in your pre-proposal.

A strong proposal will fit the mission of the applicable action team as well as show benefit to Minnesota soybean producers as a component of that mission. It is important to identify what significant contribution your project will make toward fulfilling that mission.

Proposals should be written that can be completed in the 12-month contract period. Extensions will be highly discouraged at the end of the awarded contracts.

Proposals will be reviewed by a broad range of farmers and experts. Avoid use of acronyms whenever possible. Include the reason, problem or challenge identification, background, materials and methods that will be used in your project.

Communication of results from this project to Minnesota Soybean growers will be a requirement for all grant recipients, including a project summary for the MSR&PC Research Report. Indicate how you will communicate the results of these projects in your proposal. Grant awardees will also be required to communicate project results through Minnesota Soybean communication program events such as the Prairie Grains Conference, MN Ag Expo, the MN Soybean tent at Farmfest, the MN Soybean booth at Big Iron and/or Minnesota Soybean Minneline articles. Short videos (< 2 minutes each), for use on social media, introducing students (graduate and undergraduate), post docs and other staff associated with the project are also requested. Adjust your budget to include participation at these events.

To enhance communication with soybean producers, please include a communication plan within your proposal. Also, include a one-page, farmer-oriented, project description explaining why the submitted proposal is important to soybean growers and how it may influence environmental stewardship and/or soybean production profitability. **A 2–3-minute video is required to explain the reason, objectives and importance of this project to Minnesota soybean farmers** (Please label your video correctly with the name and organization). Please use [this link](#) to upload your video.

To emphasize the significance of the research findings, all replicated research that includes soybean yield in their methodology must incorporate a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis per treatment. Applicants are required to calculate ROI using the University of Minnesota Crop Budget Calculator. The calculation must include the cost of each treatment and, where applicable, the cost of application. Results from replicated research plots should be extrapolated to a standardized 500-acre scenario for comparison across treatments.

ROI Analysis Checklist:

- Use the University of Minnesota Crop Budget Calculator (or other if it applies)
- Calculate ROI per treatment
- Include the cost of each treatment
- Include application cost (if applicable)
- Extrapolate results to a standardized 500-acre scenario

Indicate if the proposal has been submitted for consideration in a previous funding cycle in current form or is a modification of a previous submission, or if it has been presented to another soybean organization.

Any potential political activity as a component of the proposed work must be identified as part of the pre-proposal process.

General program sponsorship requests are not an acceptable pre-proposal. Pre-proposal funding should be tied to hard costs, contain direct attributable benefits for the Minnesota soybean producers and be in compliance with the USDA Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Program.

3. Investigation Purpose:

Proposals must address specific grower-assessed priority areas identified in the 2025 funding cycle. Proposals outside those priority areas will be given reduced consideration and only after those within the priority areas have been evaluated for funding by the Research Action Team. Research and Technology Transfer projects should be complete, cohesive and focused on providing benefit to soybean producers. **Note: Pre-proposals should investigate solutions statewide (multi-state collaboration is also allowed), be multi-location and involve regional education professionals where possible (it is understood that some basic research may, by necessity, be centrally located). Single region-specific pre-proposals may receive reduced consideration.**

Categories

I. Soybean Pest Management:

- Soybean farmers, and their consultants, need education, technology transfer and information concerning weed management optimization and soybean yield maximization where these weed populations occur. Concerns such as herbicide timing, drift management, application rate, herbicide layering, cover crop management and tillage options, amongst other issues, should be included. Research on weed control in the Amaranthaceae family (pigweed family) is highly encouraged. Projects should include multiple locations across the state from north to south and address the most problematic weeds currently identified in each region.
- Soybean farmers need research into managing against yield and quality-limiting effects of foliar diseases and root and/or stem rots, especially white mold, brown stem rot, sudden death syndrome, phytophthora and red crown rot in soybeans. Research should be multi-locations across the state from north to south and adapted to meet the needs of the diverse cropping systems across the state.
- Soybean farmers need continued research into cultural, chemical and biological control mechanisms for management of soybean insects including, but not limited to, soybean aphid, Japanese beetle and soybean gall midge.
 - Soybean farmers need research into soybean aphid resistance to insecticide treatments and develop alternative treatments, cultural and other management options as/if those resistant populations are identified.
- Soybean farmers in Minnesota need technology transfer and research on soybean cyst nematode (SCN) and how to slow the spread and effectively manage production systems for maximum yield and reduce SCN spread and impact in the region.
 - Soybean farmers need research into understanding the interaction between SCN and other pest issues, such as Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS), soybean aphids (specifically aphid population), other root and/or stem diseases and Iron Deficiency Chlorosis (IDC).

Research should be multi-locational across the state, from north to south, and adapted to meet the needs of the diverse cropping systems across the state.

- Soybean farmers need integrated pest management strategies that deal with new or acute infestations of insect pests such as spider mites, bean leaf beetle, brown marmorated stink bug, etc. Strategies should match production needs across the state, where specific insect pests may challenge soybean production.

II. Agronomic Research and Technology Transfer:

- Soybean farmers need additional technology transfer concerning IDC specifically about use and management of Iron Chelate products, use of cover/companion crops, field mapping and precision application of such products, and efficacy coincident with or in substitution of IDC resistant varieties. Tech transfer efforts should be multi-location across the state north to south utilizing cultivars adapted to relative maturities of each region.
- Soybean farmers need research and technology transfer on crop nutrition to maximize yield and quality potential including, but not limited to, calcium, sulfur, potassium, phosphorus, nitrogen, micronutrients and biologicals. The project should be multi-locational across the state from north to south and adapted to meet the needs of the diverse cropping systems across the state.
- Soybean farmers need research and technology transfer on soil management to maximize soil health, soil retention on the farm landscape, tillage options and productivity of Minnesota soils.
 - Soybean farmers need additional research into the possible interactions between subsurface drainage and other management challenges such as fertility, SCN, IDC in susceptible soils, etc. Research should be multi-locational across the state north to south and adapted to include the diverse cropping systems and rotations specific to each region.
 - Soybean farmers need technology transfer focusing on economical implementation, and development, of carbon index scoring and other soil health/cover crop systems for Minnesota. The impacts on carbon index score that the development of cover crops with wide adaptation or for specific niche scenarios as well as having potential attributes enhancing soybean production (disease and weed control, etc.), cover crop termination timing based on environmental factors instead of calendar factors around planting date, qualities that improve soil health and/or soil retention are needed. Economical and logistically practical establishment methods to optimize carbon index scores, that work within current Minnesota cropping systems specifically a soybean production and rotation system, must also be developed.
- Soybean farmers need research and technology transfer focusing on optimizing soybean yields by integrating multidisciplinary research into cultural practices including variable rate technology and crop rotation at a systems level management strategy. The project should be

multi-locational across the state, north to south, and adapted to meet the needs of the diverse cropping systems across the state addressing the primary components of each region.

- Soybean farmers need production profitability and economic return evaluation of whole farm information systems reported to aid in full season decision processes including cultivar selection, fertility, pest management, weed control management, treatment timing and thresholds of insect pest populations, etc.

III. Soybean Breeding, Molecular Genetics and Functional Genomics:

- Soybean farmers continually need new high yielding varieties with genetic traits that will reduce the impact of diseases, pests and other yield-limiting factors across the wide array of relative maturities across Minnesota.
- Soybean farmers need molecular and functional genomics research to complement existing University of Minnesota public breeding efforts. Research should focus on identification of new resistance to yield limiting pests such as SCN, IDC, insects and plant diseases, and integration of identified genetics into existing breeding lines adapted across Minnesota relative maturities.
- Soybean farmers need expanded development of soybean lines with genetic resistance to soybean aphid including options such as pyramiding aphid resistance genes that impart antibiosis and/or antixenosis resistance to the soybean plant.

4. Specific Guidelines:

Guidelines will be available on the proposal form.

5. Project Schedule/Timeline:

All pre-proposals in response to this RFP are due no later than **5 p.m. CST on Dec. 8, 2025**. Late proposals will not be considered. Evaluation of proposals by the research action team will begin after that date and funding recommendations will be based on only pre-proposals submitted via email at projects@mnsoybean.com.

If clarification on the pre-proposal is needed, the Action Team will contact the PI in late December or early January, and the PI may be invited for a conversation (PowerPoint type presentations are not allowed), tentatively, sometime on Feb. 10, 2026, via an in person or virtual format (Teams). Note: Based on past experiences, participants in a face-to-face conversation have a decided advantage over those using virtual format. Approved pre-proposals will be forwarded to the U of M SPA office, or other appropriate office, for review and approval. Recommendations for funding approval will be presented to the MSR&PC board at the spring 2026 meeting.

6. Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

MSR&PC will evaluate all proposals with equity. To ensure consideration, your proposal should match the mission statement of the MSR&PC research action team. The proposal should also be on time, complete and include:

- Identification as to which RFP priority area the proposal addresses and suitability to provide Minnesota soybean growers with information to meet the Research Action Team mission statement (below)

To help farmers turn discoveries, from unbiased science, into sound environmental and agronomic decisions, resulting in increased profits.

- Adherence to the proposal guidelines listed in Section 3 (Investigative purpose).
- Adherence to deadlines listed in Section 4 and 5 (Project schedule/timeline).
- Value and cost: Submissions will be evaluated on cost effectiveness of the proposal.