

General Session Speakers

Kim Baldwin

Board Director

United Sorghum Checkoff Program



Kim Baldwin, from McPherson, Kansas, serves as a Board Director for the United Sorghum Checkoff Program. She is a partner in her family's farming operation, Baldwin Ag Farms & Sales, where they specialize in the production of sorghum, wheat, corn, soybeans, and popcorn. Baldwin also oversees the brand management, marketing, and communications for the family's farm-to-consumer popcorn and sorghum business, Papa Baldy's Poppin' Snacks.

Baldwin currently serves on the U.S. Grains Council's Innovation & Sustainability advisory team and participated in a USGC sorghum trade mission trip to China in 2023. She and her family have hosted numerous trade teams at their central Kansas farm for more than 11 years. Baldwin previously worked as an account director for a strategic

marketing and communications agency, where she collaborated with clients to market and promote Kansas-made ethanol. She also has 16 years of classroom teaching experience in public education and continues to coach and support youth within her community.

She is an active volunteer with CommonGround Kansas, an alumni member of the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL) Program Class XV, and is a member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians and a citizen of Cherokee Nation. She obtained her undergraduate and graduate degrees from New Mexico State University and William Woods University, respectively.

Baldwin, her husband Adam, and their two young children reside on the family farm in central Kansas.

General Session Speakers

Matt Bartek

North American Commercial Lead

Innovative Seed Solutions



Matthew Bartek, Ph.D. serves as the North American Commercial Lead for Innovative Seed Solutions (ISS). His background is in breeding and genetics. Matt graduated from Dr. Bill Rooney's Sorghum breeding program at Texas A&M. Upon graduation he was employed as sorghum breeder for a private seed company based in Lubbock, Texas where he was responsible for development of sweet sorghum hybrid development and technologies, business and market development, and scientific due diligence in M&A activities. In 2014, he and his wife Cara founded a private research and brokerage company focused on grain and forage Sorghum. Matt led all scientific and strategic activities for their company, Bartek Agricultural Research. In 2017, Matt joined ISS as a contract sales and market development partner. Since joining ISS he has participated in the growth and expansion of their North American business. Matt joined ISS as a full-time employee in 2019 and currently leads all commercial activities for North America and Europe. He and his family live near La Grange, Texas.

General Session Speakers

Nathan Boll

Barley Sector Director

U.S. Grains Council



Nathan Boll serves as the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) Barley Sector Director. The U.S. Grains Council is a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. corn, sorghum, barley and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In this capacity, Boll serves as member of the organization's 15-person board of directors.

Boll has been farming for 20 years, and has a farm in Newburg, North Dakota. There he produces 5,500 acres of spring wheat, barley, canola and soybeans. He received a bachelor's degree in Ag Systems Management from North Dakota State.

He has been a Council delegate for six months and is a member of the North Dakota Barley Council.

General Session Speakers

Matt Booth

Motivational Speaker



Matt Booth is the ATTITUDE EXPERT. Matt is an engaging speaker and author who encourages people to chase their dreams. He is direct, thought-provoking, and inspiring. To achieve personal satisfaction and professional success, Matt's philosophy is simple: You must be yourself and improve yourself.

General Session Speakers

Mackenzie Boubin

Director of Global Ethanol Export Development

U.S. Grains Council



Mackenzie Boubin serves as the director of global ethanol export development for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that operates globally to promote the use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol. In this capacity, Mackenzie oversees development and execution of the Council's global ethanol program including strategy development, program implementation, public affairs, and strategic partnerships.

Prior to joining the Council, Boubin was the biofuels and industry relations director at the Minnesota Corn Growers Association and has already established connections with Council members during her time in that role. Boubin also worked as a refined fuels sales account representative at CHS and the Minnesota Bio-Fuels Association, as well

as serving as a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Boubin holds a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Minnesota.

General Session Speakers

Brent Boydston

Chairman

U.S. Grains Council



Brent Boydston serves as the chairman of the U.S. Grains Council (USGC), a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In this capacity, Boydston serves as member of the organization's 15-person board of directors.

Boydston has a farm located in Centerville, Kansas, and has been farming with his family his entire life, but increased operations when his father passed away in 2020. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Kansas State University and a Master of Business Administration from Colorado State University.

Boydston has been a Council delegate for five years and is the industry affairs lead at Bayer Crop Science. He previously worked for Senator Norm Coleman, Rep. Steve King and with the Colorado Farm Bureau.

General Session Speakers

Jake Burtenshaw

Founder

Mountain Malt



Jake Burtenshaw is the owner of Burtenshaw Farms near Idaho Falls, Idaho where he owns 2,800 acres of farmland and runs between 3,000 and 5,000 acres annually, primarily growing malting barley. He was one of the first farmers in the U.S. growing low Glycosidic Nitriles barley with Genie and now grows Odyssey, as well as Voyager and other varieties.

Jake also founded Mountain Malt, located in Idaho Falls, 10 years ago which he is currently expanding, and is a member of the American Malt Barley Association (AMBA) and the Craft Maltsters Guild. In addition, Jake is involved in local water issues and serves on the board of directors for the Burgess Canal & Irrigation Company.

General Session Speakers

Ankit Chandra

Senior Manager of Global Ethanol Market Development

U.S. Grains Council



Ankit Chandra serves as the senior manager of global ethanol market development for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains and solubles (DDGS). In this role, Chandra will contribute to planning and implementing promotional programs and market analysis to advance U.S. ethanol exports across transportation and off-road applications, including sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), maritime, and other bio-based sectors.

Chandra joins the Council with vast experience in agricultural trade, previously holding positions as an Agricultural Specialist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agriculture Service and other major agricultural organizations.

Chandra recently earned a master's degree in public administration with a specialization in agriculture, energy, and the environment from Columbia University.

General Session Speakers

Lloyd Day

Deputy Director General

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture



Lloyd C. Day assumed his position as Deputy Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) on July 1, 2012.

He started his career with the Governor of California eventually becoming the Deputy Secretary of International Trade and Investment for California. Then he moved to Washington, D.C., to serve as Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service., after which he served as Head of Federal Government Affairs at Syngenta.

Day has received a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Stanford University and the University of Glasgow.

General Session Speakers

Jace Hefner

Manager of Global Trade

U.S. Grains Council



Jace Hefner serves as the manager of global trade for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In this capacity, he provides trade servicing expertise to the Council and strengthens the Council's relationships with U.S. and global traders and end users worldwide.

Prior to joining the Council, Hefner worked as the director of political programs at Oracle and has nearly two years of legislative experience in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Hefner holds a bachelor's degree in global studies from Baylor University.

General Session Speakers

Matt Horlacher

CEO

Coldstream Malt



Matt Horlacher is the co-owner and CEO of Coldstream Malt and Grain, located in the Palouse region of Washington State. It consists of two family farms that specialize in providing farm-direct malts grown in the dry land of the Pacific Northwest to brewers and distillers on the West Coast of the United States.

The company's partnership between Clearwater Farms in Nez Perce, Idaho, and Horlacher Farms in Latah, Washington, combine to make Coldstream Malt and Grain. It offers single-varietal malts that are identity-preserved and traceable throughout the supply chain. The company's barley and wheat are grown to the specifications of the brewer or distiller and are sometimes certified to their standards through partnerships with conservation groups.

Coldstream Malt and Grains' location provides excellent accessibility to both the field and malthouse while being close to export markets through access to both the Port of Tacoma and the Port of Seattle by container freight. The company offers five distinct varieties of barley from two states. While maintaining robust quality and flavor, Coldstream Malt and Grain's strategy is to provide distinct, one-of-a-kind malts to customers while connecting consumers to the land and people who grow the grains.

General Session Speakers

Norma Ritz Johnson

Executive Director

United Sorghum Checkoff Program



Norma Ritz Johnson is the executive director of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP). Johnson returned to the sorghum industry as the Sorghum Checkoff's third executive director in January 2021.

From 1998 to 2004, Johnson served as Communications Director for National Sorghum Producers (NSP) where she led the organization's media and public relations efforts and was part of an issues management team that was instrumental in sorghum making significant strides in the 2002 Farm Bill.

Prior to returning to the sorghum industry, Johnson was Executive Vice President of the 5-Star Accredited Lubbock Chamber of Commerce leading business advocacy and legislative affairs as well as communications and community development efforts there. During her tenure there, she and the Chamber team implemented programs that resulted in twice being awarded the national Chamber of the Year.

Before that, Johnson's role centered on economic and agribusiness development and promotion of Texas food and fiber products as West Texas Chief of Marketing & Agribusiness Development at the Texas Department of Agriculture.

She is an alumnus of Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) Class V, Leadership Lubbock and Leadership Texas 2011. She was an Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) Talent and Workforce Education Fellow and in 2011 earned the Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) professional designation from the ACCE going on to serve as Chair-Elect of the CCE Commission.

She currently serves on the Texas Workforce Commission Tri-Agency Workforce Council and has served on the Texas Tech Davis College of Agricultural Sciences Advisory Board, Collaborative Sorghum Improvement Program Board of Directors, Breedlove Foods Board of Directors, was a board member of the ACCE Foundation, was a member of the Revolving Loan Review Committee of the Caprock Business Finance Corporation and served on the Executive Committee of the Texas Association of Business, the State Chamber of Texas. Johnson was a 2021 recipient of the Lubbock YWCA Women of Excellence Award. She has been recipient of a "Top Twenty Under 40" award by the Young Professionals of Lubbock and was named a "Top Twenty Hispanic" in Lubbock by Latino Lubbock Magazine.

General Session Speakers

Greg Kessel

Partner

Two Track Malting



Greg Kessel is a lifelong resident of Belfield, North Dakota where he and his wife, Stacey, have raised their 4 children. Greg started out his career in the oilfield, while simultaneously starting his first generation farm. The family farm has evolved into a local seed business, while Greg started several other agricultural businesses throughout the years. Greg continues to be involved in his community, serving the local cooperative for 25+ years, as well as serving on many agricultural boards.

Greg is a partner in Two Track Malting, a craft malting company based in Bismarck, ND that supplies specialty malts to the brewing industry. He has served as chairman for the North Dakota Barley Council, National Barley Growers Association, Northern Crops Council, and the National Barley Foods Council. He has also participated in barley promotion missions to Japan and Mexico with the U.S. Grains Council. Greg was elected to the North Dakota State Senate in 2023, where he continues to greatly influence North Dakota and US congressional delegates regarding agricultural policy development, farm programs, promotion of international market development, and environmental regulation impacting farmers.

General Session Speakers

Heather L. King

Editor-in-Chief

Park City Home Magazine



Heather King is a professional restaurant critic and food and travel writer, having been published in publications throughout the United States. She's the editor-in-chief for Park City Home magazine and Park City Adventure Guides where she enjoys sharing her passion for Utah's talented artisans and producers.

Heather is regularly quoted as a dining expert in the state and was recently awarded the 2024 Excellence in Food Reporting recognition by the Utah Restaurant Association. She has also been nominated and won several other accolades recognizing excellence in food journalism. She's constantly searching out hidden gems and hot spots at home and abroad.

For the past two years, she's been honored to serve as a James Beard Awards judge and helps recognize exceptional talent in the culinary world. She believes that food isn't just about taste and flavors but also about the impact on the environment and the community.

During the pandemic, her wine cellar grew exponentially, and she learned the art of sabrage (Champagne sabering) with her wine club: Utah Women & Wine. She's honored to saber champagne bottles as part of the Utah MS Society's annual fundraising luncheon.

Heather lives in Salt Lake City with her husband, Robert, and their 2 Great Danes, Nali and Teddy. A fan of flower gardening in her "urban oasis," she also enjoys downhill skiing, golfing, and the natural beauty that Utah's four seasons provide. You'll find her in Chicago for much of the summer at Cubs baseball games!

General Session Speakers

Ryan LeGrand

President and CEO

U.S. Grains Council



Ryan LeGrand serves as the President and CEO for the U.S. Grains Council (USGC), a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS).

LeGrand joined the Council in 2015 as the assistant director and then director of the Council's Mexico office where he identified and addressed all relevant trade, technical and policy-related factors relevant to building and maintaining the market for U.S. grains and co-products in Mexico. Before joining the Council, LeGrand worked for Gavilon as the director of ingredients, located in Guadalajara, Mexico. In this capacity, he managed the company's feed ingredients trading, import and distribution throughout Mexico. LeGrand also served as the

director of exports for Hawkeye Gold, LLC where he exported DDGS to Latin America and Asia, and he began his career as an export merchandiser with Garvey International. LeGrand currently serves as the Vice Chairman of USDA's Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) and a member of USTR's Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations (ACTPN).

LeGrand earned a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University in international business.

General Session Speakers

Mike Mower

Senior Advisor of Community Outreach and Intergovernmental Affairs

Utah Governor's Office



Mike Mower serves as Senior Advisor of Community Outreach and Intergovernmental Affairs. Mower will also oversee constituent services, boards and commissions, and local government outreach. Mower served as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Communications Director for Gov. Jon Huntsman and Gov. Gary Herbert as well as State Planning Coordinator. Mower is a graduate of Brigham Young University and the S. J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah. He also attended Utah Valley University, where he later served as a member of the Board of Trustees. He is a former aide to Provo Mayor Lewis Billings, Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt and Congressmen Howard Nielson and Chris Cannon. He is currently the longest serving senior staff member in any Governor's Office in the United States.

Mower was raised in Ferron, Utah, where he worked for several years milking cows for Lemon's Dairy. He and his wife, Liz, are the parents of a combined seven children and reside in Holladay.

General Session Speakers

Ted Nelson

Risk Management Consultant

StoneX Financial Inc.



Ted Nelson is a Risk Management Consultant for StoneX Financial Inc. - FCM Division, specializing in grain/products market analysis and risk management. Nelson has been advising clients since 2012, helping them navigate change and risk in a rapidly changing and dynamic global marketplace. He works directly with customers, helping them to stabilize their supply chain and optimize profitability. Nelson also provides daily and extended market commentary and analysis of both the futures and cash markets.

StoneX Financial Inc. – FCM Division provides full-service, 24-hour futures and options brokerage, advisory, clearing and execution services on commodity exchanges worldwide. StoneX Financial Inc. – FCM Division is part of StoneX Group Inc., connecting clients to the global

financial markets via a full suite of services including institutional-grade platforms, end-to-end clearing and execution, post trade settlement, market intelligence and local expertise. A Fortune 100 company with a century-long track record, StoneX Group Inc. (NASDAQ: SNEX) and its 4,000+ employees serve our 54,000 commercial, institutional and payments clients, along with over 400,000 retail accounts, from over 80 offices across six continents.

General Session Speakers

Linda Schmid

Senior Manager of Global Ethanol Market Development

U.S. Grains Council



Linda Schmid serves as the manager of ethanol policy and sustainability for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains and solubles (DDGS). In this role, Schmid interfaces with global industry and governmental leaders and develops strategies for ethanol market development efforts.

Schmid previously served in long-term overseas trade assignments, including Jerusalem as trade component leader under the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Investment Climate Improvement Project; in Geneva as trade-in-services officer at the International Trade Centre a subsidiary body of the United Nations; and in Barbados as the trade director of the USAID Trade and Competitiveness Program.

She began her career in trade advocacy at the U.S. Coalition of Services Industries concentrating on bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade negotiations and investment issues for banking, insurance, and information technology firms.

Schmid holds a graduate degree in international management from the University of Maryland Global Campus, and a bachelor's degree in government from the University of Maryland.

General Session Speakers

Kurt Shultz

Senior Director of Global Strategies

U.S. Grains Council



Kurt Shultz is the senior director of global strategies for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS).

In this role, Shultz is responsible for the development of long-term planning in support of the Council's domestic and international operations. He oversees strategic planning, program evaluation and special projects, among other assignments.

Shultz joined the Council in 1999 at the headquarters in Washington, D.C., as the manager of international operations for the offices based in Latin America, Africa and the Mediterranean and the Middle East. In addition, he managed the Council's Latin America marketing program activities upon the closure of the regional office in 2001.

In 2003, Shultz assumed the position of regional director for the Council's office in Africa and the Mediterranean, based in Tunis, Tunisia. Shultz later served as the regional director of the Americas, based in Panama, where he was responsible for carrying out market development and trade activities in the Western Hemisphere on behalf of the feed grains and export community.

Prior to joining the Council, Shultz was a senior environmental health and safety specialist with the University of Florida; a senior agricultural research technician with the University of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Research Station; and a Peace Corps volunteer in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he was a freshwater fisheries extension agent. Shultz has a bachelor's degree in animal science and a master's in business administration.

General Session Speakers

Cary Sifferath

Vice President

U.S. Grains Council



Cary Sifferath serves as the vice president for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In this capacity, Sifferath is responsible for oversight of the Council's 10 international offices and all worldwide programs.

Sifferath has held various positions within the Council since joining in 1993. From 1993 to 1995, Sifferath was the manager of international operations-Asia at the Council's Washington, D.C., office. He was responsible for managing all programs within the Asia region.

He was promoted in 1995 to assistant director for the Southeast Asia office, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and in 1997 was promoted again to regional director for Southeast Asia. In that capacity, he was responsible for market development activities throughout the Southeast Asia region. From 2001 to 2008, Sifferath served as the senior director in the Council's Tokyo, Japan, office and carried out market development and trade activities in Japan. From 2008 to 2010 he was the senior director in the Council's Beijing, China, office. During this time, he managed the Council's market development programs and office operations in China. From 2010 to 2015 he served as the regional director of Europe, the Middle East and Africa in the Council's regional office in Tunis, Tunisia. From 2015 to 2022, Sifferath was the senior director of global programs at the Council's headquarters in Washington. Before joining the Council in 1993, Sifferath was a district sales manager for Kent Feeds, Inc., of Muscatine, Iowa.

For 30 plus years, Sifferath has lived and traveled extensively in and outside of the U.S. collecting information and firsthand knowledge of world grain supply and demand from regular contacts with local feed grain importers, processors, end-users, governments and various agricultural agencies.

Sifferath earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, in agricultural economics and animal science.

General Session Speakers

Kenneth Smith Ramos

Partner

AGON



Ken specializes in international trade and advises clients on aspects related to the implementation of the various Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to which Mexico is a party. In particular, he focuses on supporting clients to identify export, import, or foreign direct investment opportunities offered by new generation FTAs such as the CPTPP, TLCUEM, and the Mexico-US-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Likewise, he advises clients who face tariff barriers or technical obstacles to trade, whether in Mexico or abroad, with the aim of developing strategies that allow them to enter the various international markets in which Mexico enjoys preferential access.

Ken Smith Ramos has a long career in the Government of Mexico, with extensive experience in international trade negotiations. He has been an integral part of Mexico's negotiating team from different government institutions and began his career as part of the team that negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

He recently served as head of Mexico's Technical Negotiation for the modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

As Representative of the U.S. Ministry of Economy at the Mexican Embassy in Washington D.C. (2013-2017) he led efforts to promote and defend Mexican commercial interests in the United States, and served as liaison for the Secretary of Economy with representatives of the US public, academic and private sectors.

Smith Ramos' negotiating experience has been consolidated through almost three decades in public service. Before heading the Representation of the Ministry of Economy in Washington, he was General Coordinator of International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture (SAGARPA—2010-2013) where he was responsible for agricultural trade negotiations and international cooperation in agri-food matters. He was General Director for International Affairs and Liaison at the Federal Competition Commission (COFECO—2007-2010), and General Director of North America at the Ministry of Economy where he operated as NAFTA coordinator for Mexico (2002-2007).

Smith Ramos received a BA in International Relations and Economics from Georgetown University, and a MA in International Economics from Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

General Session Speakers

Carlos F. Suarez

Director of Global Sustainability

U.S. Grains Council



Carlos F. Suárez Isaacs serves as the director of global sustainability for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products worldwide.

Suárez previously served as a regional ethanol trade specialist in Latin America, working with strategic public and private stakeholders across Latin America to help them achieve policy goals and capture value through fuel ethanol in the current global energy transition. He transitioned to the trade policy department as its manager of sustainability, policy and innovation in 2022 and assumed his current role in July 2024.

Before working with the Council, Suárez served as the Associate Director for Business Development in Latin America with The Nature Conservancy, where he engaged in fundraising and the structuring of projects around water security, healthy agricultural systems and sustainable infrastructure.

Suárez also worked as a specialist for the U.S. Commercial Service for three years, and as an Economic Specialist for the U.S. Department of State in Colombia for four years. He has broad experience in developing strategies for market penetration projects in the franchising, finance, information technologies, consumer electronics, telecommunications and professional services sectors.

Suárez holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from Universidad del Rosario in Colombia, a master's degree in global risk management from Francisco de Vitoria University in Spain and a master's degree in business administration from HEC Montreal.

General Session Speakers

Verity Ulibarri

Vice Chairwoman

U.S. Grains Council



Verity Ulibarri serves as vice chairwoman of the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the global use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products including ethanol and distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS). In this capacity, Ulibarri serves as member of the organization's 15-person board of directors.

Ulibarri has been involved in farming her entire life, first on her family's farm and then with her husband in their own operation since 2011. Their farm is located in Melrose, New Mexico, where they grow grain sorghum, wheat and forage crops.

She has been a Council delegate for two years and is a member of United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP).

Ulibarri has owned and operated her farm business for more than 10 years and has been a board member of USCP for six years, serving as chair for two years and treasurer for two more. She previously worked for Farm Credit of New Mexico for 13 years while serving as a vice president, credit manager and in a product development and training role.

Ulibarri holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and finance, an agricultural lending certificate, a US AgBank appraisal certificate and has completed an executive leadership program.