



Connecting the World's Best Specialty Grains Producers with the World's Best Customers

7500 Flying Cloud Drive, Suite 900 ■ Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Phone: +1 952.253.6231 ■ Fax: 952.835.4774

www.midwestshippers.com

Dear Specialty Grains Industry Supporters:

Plans and arrangements are rapidly coming together for the upcoming 2009 Midwest Specialty Grains Conference and Trade Show. We have an outstanding program in the works, and our venue and tours this year promise to be the best ever.

We invite to be a sponsor of this important conference -- which showcases the very best of the identity-preserved, specialty grains industry in the U.S to world markets.

This will be the sixth annual Midwest Specialty Grains Conference and Trade Show, hosted by the Midwest Shippers' Association, a cooperative regional trade association made up of growers, processors, traders, suppliers and exporters of identity preserved (IP) specialty grains from the Upper Midwest region. It is the only international trade show in the five-state Midwest region we serve devoted to this important field of value-added agriculture.

This year's conference will be held September 1-3, 2009 at the Sioux Falls Sheraton and the Sioux Falls Convention Center. The conference has been averaging some 300 participants and attendees from more than a dozen countries and more than 25 states and provinces in North America. Each year this event features expert speakers, government and business leaders from each of the critical facets of the specialty grains industry – global trade policy, international grain market sectors, ocean and rail shipping and transportation, seed industry development, IP grain quality control, and more. The exhibitors and participants at this trade show and conference include some of the most important entrepreneurs serving Midwest agriculture and Midwest farmers.

I have included for you a tentative, working agenda for the conference this year. While it is a draft agenda that will evolve, already we have confirmed several high impact sessions. Among them:

- Francis "Frank" Mulvey, the new chairman of the U.S. Surface Transportation Board - the nation's railroad regulatory agency—will speak on "Railroad Service and Rate Regulation Reform – Is It Time to Retool the STB?"
- Ocean intermodal shipping's latest trends and the impact of the global recession will be covered by Peter Friedmann, head of the national Agricultural Transportation Coalition, and an invited leading international steamship line representative to be confirmed.
- A panel of three of the top IP seed industry experts in the country will cover "The Future of Soybean Seed Varieties, and the Renewed Interest in Conventional Traits in Breeding".
- Presentations are planned on "DDGS – the New Value-Added Feed", new "Opportunities in Food Grade Corn", and IP Wheat and Small Grains, and more.
- International trade delegations are expected from Japan and Taiwan, and others are being pursued. We'll hear presentations on Japanese food grade soybean markets and feed grain markets in Taiwan, as well as other international markets.
- Exporters will hear presentations on "How to Manage Secure International Financial Transactions in Today's Uncertain Global Economy" by Michael Howard of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, and Jan Hay, VP of Global trade Services for U.S. Bank.
- Congressional representatives and top officials from USDA are invited.

Yet, as you know, the costs of putting on an international conference and trade show are huge for a non-profit trade association like Midwest Shippers. The financial support of sponsors is very important for enabling us to continue to put on an event of this stature at an affordable price for attendees. We invite you to join us as a partner and be featured as a sponsor of this important event.

There are several different levels of sponsorship being offered, in addition to sponsorship of a post conference tour. The options we'd like you to consider are as follows:

❖ Platinum Sponsor (\$5,000 minimum)

-Each Platinum Sponsor receives: three complimentary conference registrations; two complimentary tour registrations; reference as a co-sponsor on pre-conference promotional ads; reference in the conference program (with company logo); signage on-site; an opportunity to provide a moderator for one of the sessions; a 30% discount on a "guaranteed" booth in the conference trade show; and a complimentary banner ad on the conference website (www.grainconference.com).

❖ Gold Sponsor (\$2,500 minimum)

-Each Gold Sponsor receives: two complimentary conference registrations; reference in the conference program (with company logo); signage on-site; a 25% discount on a booth in the conference trade show; and, a 20% discount to run a banner ad on the conference website (www.grainconference.com)

❖ Silver Sponsor (\$1,000 minimum)

Each Silver Sponsor receives: one complimentary conference registration; reference in the conference program; signage on-site; a 20% discount on a booth in the conference trade show; and, a 15% discount to run a banner ad on the conference website (www.grainconference.com)

❖ Bronze Sponsor (\$500 minimum)

Each Bronze Sponsor receives: a 25% per person discount on conference registration; reference in the conference program; a 15% discount on a booth in the conference trade show; and, a 10% discount to run a banner ad on the conference website (www.grainconference.com)

❖ Post-Conference Tour Sponsor (Thursday, September 3) @ \$750

Sponsorship includes one complimentary tour registration, reference on-site and in the conference program and the funds will be used to underwrite the tour registration, which is being offered below cost.

- Plans for this tour tentatively include stops at a state-of-the-art Poet ethanol plant, South Dakota State University research facilities, other IP grain and agricultural processing and production operations.

❖ Registration Badge "Lanyard" Sponsor @ \$500 – Lanyards for holding registration badges would be made available at registration. Each lanyard would have the name of the sponsor printed on it in color.

❖ Registration Badge Sponsor @ \$500 – Your firm name would appear on the back of each registration badge.
NOTE: previous year's sponsors would have priority as tour, lanyard and badge sponsors.

We are grateful for your consideration of this sponsorship request. The deadline to be in receipt of a sponsorship request is Friday, May 20, 2008 to ensure proper credit is given to sponsors in all conference promotional materials. However, sponsorships and donations will gladly be accepted after that date! With your help, we know that this sixth annual Midwest Specialty Grains Conference will continue to establish itself as "the" premier networking opportunity for global IP specialty grain buyers, sellers, producers, suppliers and partner organizations. Go to www.grainconference.com to follow the latest news. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Best regards,

Bruce Abbe, Executive Director

Midwest Shippers Association

And please check out our new Midwest Specialty Grains Web Portal at www.midwestshippers.com