



2025

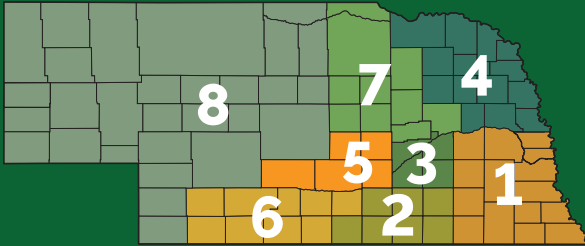
ANNUAL REVIEW

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION AND THE NEBRASKA CORN BOARD



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A Welcome to the 2025 Annual Review

Hello Nebraska corn farmers,

I know how important it is to get the most out of every acre, every seed and every drop of water. That's why return on investment, or ROI, is more than just a buzzword to me. It's a guiding principle that helps me make informed decisions, maximize profits and ensure I'm a good steward of the land I've been entrusted with.



At the Nebraska Corn Board, we're committed to the same values. We're working hard to deliver a strong return on investment for Nebraska's corn farmers through our research, market development, promotion and education initiatives. We aim to ensure that every dollar invested in our programs yields tangible benefits for our farmers and the agriculture community. I'm proud to say that our efforts are driven by the voices, ideas and expertise of farmers like you and me. I'm grateful for farmer leadership and commitment to our shared goals.

As you read this newsletter, you'll discover some of the key successes we've achieved over the past year, alongside our partners at the Nebraska Corn Growers Association. From driving innovation through cutting-edge research to expanding market opportunities and promotional campaigns that showcase Nebraska corn, we've worked tirelessly to advance the interests of Nebraska's farmers.

Each program and project are carefully selected by farmer directors, ensuring the return on investment is strong for your farm and mine. Read through and let us know what you think, we'd love to hear from you.



Brandon Hunnicutt, Chair
Nebraska Corn Board

My fellow corn growers,

As our 2024 fiscal year ends, I am excited for this edition of the newsletter to highlight the year's accomplishments and to showcase the work of the Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA) through our local associations, advocacy efforts and our leadership development programming.



With the addition of the Cass-Otoe local association and more growers participating in the NeCGA and National Corn Growers Association leadership programs, NeCGA has had a great year of growth and engagement. Using our strategic plan as guidance, our staff, board members and grower leaders continue to raise awareness about NeCGA and the benefits of becoming a member of the association.

I hope you enjoy learning more about our successful 2024 in this newsletter and stay safe during this growing season. As we head into the 2025 fiscal year, I know NeCGA will continue to grow and advocate for what is best for all corn growers in Nebraska.

I look forward to seeing many of you at local events this summer and to welcome aboard our new Panhandle local association!



Michael Dibbern, President
Nebraska Corn Growers Association



The Nebraska Corn Board is funded through a producer checkoff investment of 1-cent-per-bushel checkoff on all corn marketed in the state and is managed by nine farmer directors. The mission of the Nebraska Corn Board is to increase the value and sustainability of Nebraska corn through promotion, market development and research.



The Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA) is a grassroots commodity organization that works to enhance the profitability of corn producers. NeCGA has more than 2,500 dues-paying members in Nebraska. NeCGA is affiliated with the National Corn Growers Association, which has more than 40,000 dues-paying members nationwide.

A Message from the Executive Director

Kelly Brunkhorst



Similar to your view out of the tractor cab, progress happens when you look forward, but you also need to look back to review what you have accomplished. Welcome to Nebraska Corn's annual review to you, our investors in the checkoff and members of the association.

What you will find throughout this annual review is our accomplishments, working on your behalf. The programs align with several key strategies that guide your separate boards in their efforts. Those include our mission statements:

Advancing Nebraska corn farmers through leadership, policy and education.

(Nebraska Corn Growers Association)

Increasing the value and sustainability of Nebraska corn through promotion, market development and research.

(Nebraska Corn Board)

The strategies of our strategic plan also assist the board's investment in projects and include:

- ▶ Increase producer engagement
- ▶ Collaborate to grow
- ▶ Strengthen corn reputation
- ▶ Talent development

Enjoy the "view" out the back window as we highlight accomplishments on your behalf. Whether those include increased engagement and outreach opportunities, growth in membership, increased demand from livestock, advocacy efforts or investments in research. Reviewing our efforts from 2024, remind us to continue looking ahead and paving new ways for all Nebraska corn farmers.

Corn by the Numbers

Nebraska Corn Production 2024



Acres Planted	10 million acres	+ 1%
Acres Harvested	9.5 million	+ 0.94%
Yield	188 bushels/acre	+3.1%
Total Production	1.8 billion bushels	

National Corn Production 2024



Acres planted	90.6 million	- 4.3%
Acres harvested	86.5 million	
Yield	179.3 bushels/acre	+ 1.1%
Total Production	14.9 billion bushels	- 3.1%

Nebraska's Top 3 Markets



Ethanol

- ▶ 24 ethanol plants in Nebraska
- ▶ 2.3 billion gallons of ethanol
- ▶ Blender Pump Grant Program: *12 stations awarded grant money in Nebraska and*
- ▶ California Ethanol Infrastructure: *33 stations funded to add E85 in California*



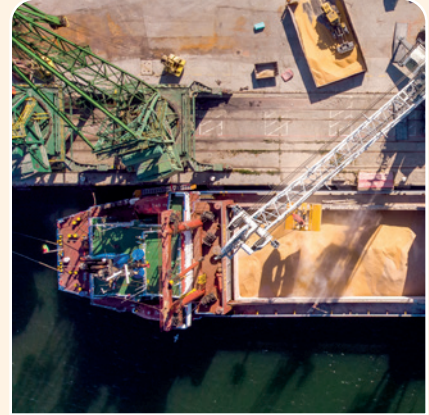
36 million bushels sent to California in the form of E85

- ▶ 4,975 jobs contributing to economic growth
- ▶ \$6 billion dollars in economic impact in the state of Nebraska



Livestock

- ▶ Over 260 million bushels are used directly to feed livestock
- ▶ Partnering with AFAN created 1.7 million bushels of more corn demand in 2024
- ▶ #1 National Processing State for Red Meat
- ▶ #2 in Beef Exports
- ▶ #2 in Cattle on Feed
- ▶ #6 in Swine Production
- ▶ Opening of Blackshirt Feeders in Haigler, NE
- ▶ Lincoln Premium Poultry continues to look towards expansion
- ▶ Expansion of Actus Nutrition (Milk Specialties) in Norfolk, NE which can handle 3 million lbs. of milk per day



Trade/Exports

- ▶ Top 5 Export Countries for Nebraska Corn: Mexico, Japan, Colombia, China, & South Korea



Red meat Exports add **\$.87** to the value of a bushel of corn

- ▶ Top 5 International export countries for U.S. Corn: Mexico, Japan, Colombia, China, & Canada
- ▶ Top domestic export state for Nebraska Corn: California
- ▶ Beef & Pork exports account for \$343.8 million of Nebraska Corn use

Our Cooperators

National Corn Growers Association (NCGA)

NCGA represents more than 36,000 dues-paying corn growers in 48 states, and the interests of more than 300,000 farmers who contribute through corn checkoff programs in their states. NCGA and its affiliated associations in 28 states work together to help drive demand for U.S. corn and corn products and protect U.S. corn farmers' profitability and ability to operate.

Grassroots Support

In 2024, NCGA's grassroots team activated growers to contact their members of congress. Over 1,600 Nebraska advocates updated their profiles and sent nearly 150 messages on important issues. Due to this grassroots activity, Congress passed an extension of the Farm Bill, the White House heard agriculture's concern about short-sighted priorities in energy and economic aid and disaster assistance were included in the 2024 Continuing Resolution.

✓ **Farm Bill**
NOV. 2024 - AUG. 2024
Goal: 6,000 messages
Result: **9,449 messages**
3,100 advocates messaged 272 MOCs.

✓ **Letter to White House on Electric Vehicles**
JAN. 23 - FEB. 2, 2024
Goal: 2,000 signatures
Result: **3,466 signatures**
3,466 advocates from 41 states took action.

✓ **Corn Grower Priorities in the Continuing Resolution**
DEC. 19-23, 2024
Goal: 200 calls
Result: **333 calls**
306 advocates from 24 states took action.

Leadership Programs

Nebraska Corn Growers' members are also active leaders in the national organization. Three of our NCGA's board members, Jason Lewis, Dan Nerud and Dan Wesely are Nebraska farmers and 13 Nebraskans serve on Action Teams. There were also three Nebraska leaders who participated in our Leadership Academy, Jason Lewis, Andy Groskopf and John Krohn and three more Amy Novak Harsch, Jan TenBensel and Joe Ruskamp who completed our Advocating for Corn Effectively (ACE) Series.

Collaboration to Build SAF Market

NCGA and state experts also worked in lockstep on the 45Z tax credit, part of the Inflation Reduction Act, to clear the way for long-term demand for sustainable aviation fuel and combat restrictive standards that limit choice for corn growers. NCGA analysis quantified the qualifying acreage for the precursor 40B tax credit, which required bundled practices. NCGA submitted two rounds of public comments and served as a conduit for state groups to get a handle on CI scoring tools.



U.S. Grains Council (USGC)

The U.S. Grains Council (USGC) develops export markets for U.S. barley, corn, sorghum, distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS) and ethanol. With full-time presence in 28 locations, the Council operates programs in more than 50 countries and the European Union.

USGC 2024 Wins

In 2024, the U.S. Grains Council held a series of conferences bringing together U.S. producers and international grain purchasers and end-users to promote global agricultural trade.

The Council hosted buyers and sellers conferences in Bangladesh, Mexico, Senegal, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam. These conferences created an opportunity for conversations with sellers in both mature and potential markets, which plays an important role in developing commercial relationships. The conference in Senegal was partially supported by the Nebraska Corn Growers Association.

 **\$21**
ROI on trade efforts per \$1 invested



The Council conducted its second Buyers' and Sellers' Conference in Dakar, Senegal, that brought nearly 70 African buyers together with U.S. farmers and export companies. This event was possible with the support of the Nebraska Corn Growers Association.



The first Buyers and Sellers Conference in the South Asia region was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh. More than 100 local buyers had the opportunity to interact with U.S. agribusiness representatives.



Distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS) were the most popular commodity, with 472,230 MT purchased by companies during or immediately after the event. Corn was close behind with 363,900 MT traded between attendees and sorghum sales totaled 10,500 MT. Pictured, attendees speak with a representative from U.S. Grains Council member POET about its products and services.

"Balancing one-on-one meetings gave our customers a solid base to understand the benefits of U.S. feed grains and allow them to ask relevant questions to sellers as they look to incorporate U.S. origin products in their portfolios," said Alexander Grabois, USGC manager of global strategies and trade.

Stateside, nearly 500 international buyers and end-users of coarse grains and co-products from more than 50 countries gathered in Fort Worth, TX in October for Export Exchange, the Council's flagship event.

Export Exchange is a major trade conference jointly hosted every other year by the Council, Growth Energy and the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA). A post-event survey showed 968,030 metric tons (MT) of U.S. corn, sorghum and their co-products worth \$242 million were sold as a direct result of Export Exchange's networking opportunities.

Nebraska Corn leaders in USGC

At the Council's 64th Annual Board of Delegates meeting in July 2024, Jay Reiners was elected to serve as the Council's secretary-treasurer.

Reiners grew corn and soybeans with his wife Deb near Juanita, Nebraska, and he retired from farming after the 2024 growing season. Reiners became an at-large director for the Nebraska Corn Board in 2017 and currently serves on the market development committee. He also previously served as the chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board.



U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF)

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) works to increase the value and profit opportunities for the U.S. beef, pork and lamb industries by enhancing demand in export markets through a coordinated and collaborative partnership of all stakeholders.

U.S. Latin American Buyers Attend Processing Seminar in Nebraska

USMEF brought importers from Mexico and Central and South America to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for a global meat processing seminar, where they learned about the attributes of U.S. pork and beef. They also examined meat and livestock production trends, new techniques for processing, packaging and merchandising, and safeguards for ensuring product safety. Pictured: Dave Bruntz, farmer and rancher from Friend, Neb., former chair of Nebraska Corn Board and current vice chair of USMEF, welcomed the group to the seminar.

U.S. Red Meat Symposium Provides Deep Dive into Mexican Market

With U.S. red meat exports hitting record levels in Mexico, USMEF held its inaugural U.S. Red Meat Symposium in Mexico City for U.S. suppliers and the Mexican trade to examine Mexico's economic and political climate, highlight the market's continued growth potential and explore emerging opportunities for U.S. red meat. USMEF Vice Chair Dave Bruntz, U.S. agricultural leaders, U.S. producers and several USMEF exporter members participated to demonstrate the red meat industry's commitment to this critical market.



Local Association Highlight

2024 was a year of growth for the Nebraska Corn Growers local associations. The Cass-Otoe local association was established by the NeCGA board in June 2024 and a group of growers in the Panhandle region came together to recruit new members and begin the process of forming a new local association in early 2025. Both new locals provide a resource and an opportunity for regional growers to have their voices heard on policy issues that directly impact their area and operations.

Fellowship and community engagement can always be found at winter and summer local events, regardless of the year. With local agribusiness participation, growers are provided with educational opportunities to learn about the industry within their region and what policy issues could use their support and attention.

Remaining community focused, local associations awarded a record number of scholarships totaling over \$13,000 to high school seniors across the state. Many locals continue to sponsor local FFA and 4-H chapter contests in their area and invite the students to attend winter and summer events to learn more about what the Nebraska Corn Growers Association does for farmers across the state.

To learn more about the local associations and their upcoming summer events, visit necga.org.



29

local events
in 2024



1

new local
association
established

\$13,000+



awarded in
scholarships
from local
associations



Local President, Shane Hennessy, welcomes new members to the first Cass-Otoe winter banquet.



Dawson County Corn Growers toured the KinnanFab stalk roller facility in Cozad, NE.

Return on Investment

Nebraska Corn Board's Internship Program

The Nebraska Corn Board's (NCB) internship program has been a success, yielding a strong return on investment (ROI) for both the students and the organization. For 35 years, NCB has provided undergraduate students with immersive, hands-on experiences working with key cooperators in the corn industry. This program has not only equipped students with valuable skills and knowledge but also launched many into successful careers.

In 2025, NCB has partnered to host an intern with the Nebraska Rural Radio Association (NRRRA) which will focus on agriculture broadcasting and digital communications. Continued growth in opportunity is important to NCB as young leaders are the future of the industry.

Many past interns have gone on to secure full-time positions within agriculture, and occasionally with cooperator partners. NCB's cooperator partners include the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA), NRRRA, U.S. Grains Council (USGC), U.S. Meat Export Federation

(USMEF) and the Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA).

ROI Breakdown

The ROI of NCB's internship program can be measured in several ways:

- ▶ Talent retention: Many past interns have gone on to work with NCB's cooperator partners, reducing recruitment costs and ensuring that the industry retains talented professionals.
- ▶ Skill development: The program equips students with valuable skills and knowledge, increasing their productivity and contribution to the industry. Students must have one major project they see from start to finish successfully, write blogs for NCB and develop professional mentorships with farmer directors during their internship; an opportunity for growth in professional skills.
- ▶ Industry growth: By developing talented and experienced interns, NCB's internship program contributes to the growth and success of the corn industry.

NCB's internship program has demonstrated a significant return on investment, providing a talented pipeline of professionals, developing valuable skills and contributing to the growth and success of the corn industry. As the program continues to evolve and expand, it is likely to yield even greater returns for the students and the organization.



Value of Voices

Communications Programs



Unleaded 88

With over 70% of the U.S. population identifying as sports fans, NCB leverages sports marketing to reach a broad audience with Unleaded 88 messaging.

In 2024, NCB revamped its 30-second commercial which features four experts - an economist, mechanic, environmentalist and farmer - explaining why Unleaded 88 is the best choice.

2024-2025 Sports Season:

- ▶ Over 56 million consumers reached with ethanol messaging on the Big Ten Network
- ▶ Over 3.2 million social media impressions on the Big Ten Network
- ▶ Over 1.29 million listeners reached on the Husker Radio Streaming
- ▶ 551 commercials for Husker Radio



Del & Ed

Del and Ed aim to bridge the gap between rural and urban communities by sharing the story of agriculture and NCB's work. Through their entertaining and educational commercial spots, they showcase the impact of Nebraska's corn industry such as Nebraska farmers' 56% reduction in water usage and 18% increase in corn production since 2000, thanks to GPS technology.

- ▶ Media including commercials, radio ads, social media and more
- ▶ Del & Ed reached over 14.2 million views in 2024



I'm a Nebraska Corn Farmer

The truth is, farming isn't just a job or a career - it's a calling. It's a way of life that's deeply rooted in the land, in tradition and in community. Nebraska's corn farmers are the guardians of our state's rich agricultural heritage and natural resources, and the backbone of the economy.

In the spring of 2025, the Board launched the "I'm a Nebraska Corn Farmer" campaign, showcasing the work of farmers through print ads, billboards, social media, newspaper inserts, a website landing page and videos. The campaign aims to highlight not only their farming operations but also their contributions to their communities.

This is only the start of the campaign. While metrics will be tracked, the stories shared, posters hung and thank you's written on newspaper inserts have already begun to speak volumes.

More details can be found at IAmNebraskaCorn.com.

Research and Stewardship

Developing new markets for corn and corn byproducts is a top priority for the Nebraska Corn Board (NCB). This past year, Nebraska Corn NCB and nine other state corn organizations pooled their efforts to kick off the Radicle Corn Value Chain Challenge. The Radicle Challenge attracted more than 130 applications, with a “Shark Tank”-style pitch day held during the fall of 2024 to determine the winning technologies. The first-place winner, Lakril Technologies, produces acrylic acid from ethanol. The acrylic acid market is valued at \$11 billion and growing. If the entire market utilized ethanol, it would equate to 700 million bushels of additional corn demand annually. In second place, New Iridium produces bio-acetic acid and ethyl acetate. If the entire global market converts to bio-acetic acid and ethyl acetate, it is equal to 2.2 billion bushels per year of additional demand. Another Radicle Corn Challenge is in the works for 2026.



Judges for the Radicle Corn Pitch Event ask questions of the top contenders in San Francisco, CA.

What's Good for Livestock is Good for Corn

It is well understood that DDGs (dried distillers grains) offer livestock producers a quality feed option, but just how good is it? Dr. Galen Erickson of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's research suggests feeding DDGs has a feeding value of 113.4% as compared to whole corn, with WDGs (wet distillers grains) offering a value of 129.3% and MDGs offering a value of 119.5%. The value of distillers is clear, but what about the reliability of supply? Recent research (Figure 1) strongly supports that varied inclusion of MDGs (modified distillers grains) has little to no detriment on average daily gain when compared to a constant inclusion. What is clear is average daily gain decreases when distillers are not included in the ration.



\$10.8 M
in knowledge
value gained
from UNL
on-farm research

100+
on-farm trials
completed



2M+
acres impacted with
NCB research initiatives

Policy and Advocacy

The Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA) leadership and staff is committed to engaging with lawmakers and other industry stakeholders to promote the corn industry and advocate for priority legislative issues on a state and federal level.



Federal



Congressman Don Bacon hosted an Ag Round table attended by Dan Wesley and Michael Dibbern where NeCGA leaders had the opportunity to discuss important issues facing the agriculture industry and relay our policy priorities.



Attended a **PAC** luncheon in tandem with Congressman Adrian Smith's office



Nebraska Corn Growers Association has engaged lawmakers on future opportunities for permanent year-round E15, supporting a new **Farm Bill** and bolstering farm safety nets and defending trade and monitoring tariffs.



2025 109th Legislative Session

- ▶ Tracked 101 bills
- ▶ Took position and action on 54 bills
- ▶ Two growers testified on bills, Michael Dibbern and Steve Ebke.
- ▶ Testified on LB343 which was later included in a committee priority package.
- ▶ NeCGA, along with other members of the Ag Leaders working group, have semi weekly meetings with the governor's staff to relay messages about key legislation that is impacting agriculture.
- ▶ Passed a balanced budget which was the top focus for Senators this legislative session.

2024 Legislative Session

- ▶ Tracked 91 bills
- ▶ Took position and action on 45 bills

2024 Special Session

- ▶ Tracked 16 bills

Market Development

Expanding the Reach of Nebraska-Grown Corn

The Nebraska Corn Board (NCB) has been engaged in many opportunities to establish markets for Nebraska corn including ethanol, livestock and trade expansion.

Ethanol

Ethanol continues to be a great driver for corn. In 2024, NCB redeveloped a grant program for incentivizing Nebraskan retailers to add higher blends of ethanol to their product line at the pump. In 2024, NCB awarded 12 locations with a grant to add higher blend fuels to their station. This ensures corn-grown fuel has an expanded avenue for use in-state.

Outside of Nebraska, NCB continues to ensure that California remains a key market for Nebraska corn, helping flex-fuel drivers save money at the pump. California sold 120 million gallons of E85 in 2024, with around 66% of those gallons imported from Nebraska ethanol, representing 36 million bushels of corn.

Livestock

Livestock expansion in Nebraska continues across all sectors of the agricultural industry.

In partnership with the Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska (AFAN), conversations and expansion decisions have occurred statewide to impact the growth of Nebraska's livestock industry since 2024.

- ▶ Lincoln Premium Poultry continues to thrive and is eyeing another expansion in the poultry sector with the hope of adding an additional 500 barns, a processing facility and another feed mill.
- ▶ Blackshirt Feeders opened their doors in Haigler, Neb. and are already looking to increase their capacity from 50,000 to 150,000 head of cattle on feed.
- ▶ Actus Nutrition, a milk processing plant in Norfolk, Neb., has expanded their processing capacity from 400,000 pounds of milk to 3 million pounds per day. This has the ability to attract new dairies to Nebraska while also expanding those already in the state to meet the demands of Actus.

The ideal centralized location of Nebraska corn farmers in the country allows corn to have several avenues of demand, from ethanol to livestock to exporting. Success takes work, but 2025 already appears to be as prosperous for corn grind as the year before.

Trade

Beyond Nebraska, California continues to be a top destination for Nebraska corn. California's livestock industry, led by poultry and dairy, along with Nebraska elevators having access to two major railroads, leads to consistent demand for Nebraska corn farmers.

Internationally, Nebraska corn flows into Mexico and the Asia markets such as Japan and Vietnam. Through our cooperation with the U.S. Grains Council, Nebraska Corn hosted five trade teams this past year, whose combined markets are worth over a billion dollars to corn farmers. Hosting the trade teams, along with traveling to California, allow Nebraska corn farmers to highlight the consistent quality product that is destined to destinations in the U.S. and around the world.



55%

increase of
E85 in CA



\$110 M

of investment
across the state for
livestock projects



5

trade
teams

Membership


Our members provide the focus and direction of the Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA), of which we are grateful for their continued support. As the Association grows in members and engagement, NeCGA continues to look for new opportunities for leadership development programming within the state and with our national cooperators.

Following our strategic plan initiative, *increase producer engagement*, growers from across the state participated in several programs hosted by the National Corn Growers Association including Advocating for Corn Effectively (ACE), Leadership Academy and Leadership At Its Best. Even more growers participated in NeCGA's programs from the annual D.C. Leadership Mission and PRIME.

Giving back to our members, NeCGA awarded \$15,000 in scholarships between two programs. Those participating in the Corn and Soy Ambassadors, who completed their required work, received \$1,000 scholarships. The FLAGship scholarship program honors high school seniors and collegiate freshmen continuing their educational journey. The 2024-2025 recipients included both agriculturally based and non-agricultural-based majors.

For programmatic updates and application deadlines please visit necga.org or contact Katherine Byrne at kbyrne@necga.org.

over
1,400
 memberships
processed
in 2024

\$15,000
 awarded in
scholarships
from NeCGA
in 2024

24
members
participated
in NeCGA
leadership
programs



6
members
participated in
National Corn
Growers Association
leadership programs



PRIME Class VIII toured Ward Laboratories in Kearney, NE during their second session



2024 Nebraska participants for NCGA's Leadership Academy



Nebraska Corn Growers Association
245 Fallbrook Blvd, Suite 204
Lincoln, NE 68521

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
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