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# A Call to Farmers to Assist with Soybean Yield Gap Project

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# A Call to Farmers to Assist with Soybean Yield Gap Project

## **Abstract**

Soybean production is expected to rise to satisfy the increasing demand for food, biodiesel and livestock feed, both in the United States and globally. It is critical to reduce the yield gap, which is the difference between the attainable crop yield, as determined by the interactive effects of weather, soils and genetics, and the actual crop yield attained by the producer.

## **Keywords**

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## **Disciplines**

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## A Call to Farmers to Assist with Soybean Yield Gap Project

*February 1, 2016*

Soybean production is expected to rise to satisfy the increasing demand for food, biodiesel and livestock feed, both in the United States and globally. It is critical to reduce the yield gap, which is the difference between the attainable crop yield, as determined by the interactive effects of weather, soils and genetics, and the actual crop yield attained by the producer.

To help decrease this yield gap, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach specialists, Daren Mueller, extension plant pathologist, and Mark Licht, cropping systems agronomist, are asking soybean farmers to provide yield and agronomic data specific to their soybean production fields by **March 1, 2016** for a three-year project to identify key factors that prohibit soybean farmers from obtaining yields that are potentially attainable on their respective farms.

"We will conduct an in-depth analysis of what factors might be causing a yield gap from the data we receive," said Licht. "We intend to provide annual reports to all soybean farmers based on our analysis of the data collected from farms across Iowa and major soybean growing areas of the Midwest."

The "Soybean Yield Benchmarking Project" is a collaborative effort and is funded by soybean checkoff funds through the North Central Soybean Research Program (NCSRP). The 12 states in the North Central region of the United States produced 81% of total U.S. soybean production and acreage from 2010-2014. During this time, the average soybean yield for the region was 43 bushels/acre, but some producers have consistently reached soybean yields near or greater than 80 bushels/acre.

"This large gap between an average state yield and the very high yield obtained by some producers in that state needs to be explored and better understood," said Licht.

The project will benchmark current yield and management practices in producer fields across each participating state to identify key management factors that can be used by individual producers to increase soybean yield on their farms with input-use efficiency that will improve bottom-line net profit.

"Once those factors are identified, both the producer and the university research or extension specialist can focus on how to close the yield gap for that individual producers and others like them," said Mueller. "The project objective is to use the supplied data to help farmers reach the potential soybean yields possible by providing information to them about what production system factors might be holding back their current yields."

Click [here](#) for the fillable PDF to submit your soybean yield and agronomic data. All data submissions will be kept strictly confidential. Farmer name, mailing address, and email address are asked only to provide summary results back to the survey participants. Identifying information will not be associated with the individual field survey information. If you still want to omit your name, address and email, that is acceptable, as well.

To submit your field information, you can email the [fillable PDF](#) to [lichtma@iastate.edu](mailto:lichtma@iastate.edu) or mail it in to:

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\*The North Central USA region includes: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

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