

SUCCESS WITH COMMODITY GROUP SPONSORED FIELD DAYS. Brady F. Kappler, Weed Science Educator. University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0910

For the past seven years the University of Nebraska has been successfully working with the Nebraska Soybean Board to deliver field days orientated towards producers. This program is a “turn-key” program for the Nebraska Soybean Board in which they contract with the University of Nebraska to handle all of the logistics of the field day event from marketing, to catering, to program delivery. Each year the field days known as Soybean Management Field Days (SMFD) have been held in 4 locations throughout the state of Nebraska. The 4 locations are all held on consecutive days in August. The program, which is conducted on actual producers’ fields, is formatted into four 1 hour presentations throughout each day with the attendees rotating through each stop. Each stop typically has a tent for formal presentations and also a field plot area in which the presenters are able to demonstrate principles discussed in the formal presentation. The topics typically include crop production, economics and marketing, one or two pest management topics and / or a tillage/irrigation topic. The program has been very successful with over 3,328 producers attending these meetings since 1999. Less than 1% of those in the attendance were not satisfied with the program. Each year at least 87% of the participants have reported that they probably or definitely will make changes in their operation based on what they learned at the SMFD event. Overall, the program on average has impacted over 500,000 acres per year and the participants report a value of the program of over \$3.5 million per year. The model of utilizing funds from a commodity organization combined with a strong extension team has been quite successful in Nebraska.