

National Soybean Research Laboratory



Research, Outreach and Education

Supporting soy production and nutrition



National Soybean Research Laboratory

The National Soybean Research Laboratory (NSRL) at the University of Illinois, leads the way in developing innovative processing and marketing techniques involving soy. We educate society on the advantages of a soy enriched diet along with promoting the health benefits of eating soy. We engage in soybean production research that benefits producers.

We also explore the genetics of soybeans, respond to marketplace challenges and assist in expanding the scope and size of the soybean industry and the profitability of soybean farmers. Our research efforts include production, nutrition and finding ways to overcome malnutrition through the use of soy in our international development programs.

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University of Illinois
1101 W. Peabody Drive
Urbana, IL 61801
nsrl.illinois.edu

PRODUCTION

NSRL is involved with over 100 researchers on soybean related topics. Every year U.S. soybean harvests are reduced by a host of known and emerging soybean diseases, insects and pests. The National Soybean Research Laboratory in collaboration with university researchers and the Illinois Soybean Association, provide growers with information about increasing yields, reducing insects, pests and diseases and improving production along with general soybean information that will enhance efficiencies.

The Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS) is an interactive information system and decision-support tool designed to make it easy to identify varieties best suited for any Illinois fields. vipsoybeans.org

Soybean Disease Biotechnology Center (SDBC) works to protect the U.S. soybean crop. SDBC is involved in research ranging from bioinformatics to genetic analysis tools to cell and tissue culture facilities.

NSRL is capable of producing biodiesel from soybeans. We offer training sessions, production and processing expertise, guidebooks and a biodiesel curriculum for high schools along with a laboratory kit to produce biodiesel.

NUTRITION

We are also concerned with obesity among youth in Illinois and are working to find ways to put soy on the lunch menu in Illinois schools. The Illinois Center for Soy Foods (ICSF) promotes the benefits of soy foods. ICSF promotes soy foods to the food service industry and participates in consumer education activities. Recipe development, sensory evaluations, consumer acceptance and food related research are just a few of the soy activities in which NSRL is involved.

Increasing the demand for soy foods and discovering innovative applications involving processing and utilization are other NSRL projects.

INTERNATIONAL

International programs and activities involve over twelve countries and range from developing soy based products that can be used in early childhood nutrition efforts to identifying new opportunities to use soy ingredients in school lunches and mid-day meals in countries who battle malnutrition. NSRL strives to provide essential nutrition education and training to the millions of people affected by HIV/AIDS with the addition of high-quality, soy-based foods. Increasing the economic power of people at the bottom of the pyramid by providing knowledge, technology and skills to successfully develop soy food microenterprises is another soy endeavor of NSRL. We also provide technical assistance in the areas of soy processing and utilization and conducts training workshops about soy nutrition, soy dairy production in countries around the world.

FUNDING

NSRL is funded by local, state and national organizations with an interest in soybeans. Illinois farmers support NSRL through check off dollars and NSRL is headquartered at the University of Illinois in Urbana – Champaign.