

# **South Dakota Department of Agriculture**

**Long-term Highway  
Needs and DOT  
Agency Review  
Committee Hearing  
August 20, 2009**

**Bill Even  
SD Secretary of  
Agriculture**



# Local Road Needs for Ag and Rural Development

- SD Dept of Agriculture
- SD County  
Commissioner's Assn
- SD Assn of Towns and  
Townships
- SD Dept of Tourism and  
State Development
- SD Dept of  
Transportation



Dakota Ethanol Plant at Wentworth, SD

# **Our Goals for Today:**

1. Follow up on the Local Roads Needs Study.
2. Highlight the importance of agriculture to South Dakota's economic success.
3. Frame the issues.
4. Answer Questions.

## **Goals for the October Meeting:**

1. Present possible solutions.

# Importance of Agriculture

- Agriculture is **BIG BUSINESS** in SD.
- \$21.3 billion dollar annual economic impact.
- That is 1/3 of South Dakota's entire economy!



# The Numbers . . .

- Agriculture industries employ 173,101 South Dakotans.
- That is 40% of all the jobs in our state.
- Agriculture industries generate \$645 million in tax revenues.
- That is approximately 50% of South Dakota's total tax collections.

# South Dakota's Investment in our Farm to Market Road Infrastructure

- 7,841 Miles of State Highways
- 23,630 Miles of County Roads
- 11,680 Miles of County Secondary Roads
- 31,637 Miles of Township Roads
- 74,788 Total Miles

*These investments have made the USA the envy of the world and given us a historical competitive advantage.*



# Today's Competition . . . Brazil.

- Alysso Paolinelli
  - 2006 World Food Prize Laureate
  - Brazil's Minister of Agriculture, 1974 - 1979
- In developing Brazil's agriculture industry, he copied **two** American ideas: **Land Grant Universities** and **rural infrastructure** (roads, bridges, railroads, etc.).



**Agriculture has changed dramatically over the past 80 years.**



**From this . . .**





... to this ...





... to this.

# Our Harvesting Methods Have Changed.



**And so have the means  
of transporting our crop  
to market.**



**From 200 bushel gravity box wagons  
that needed no license and paid no  
wheel tax . . .**



**. . . to 300 bushel single axle trucks . . .**





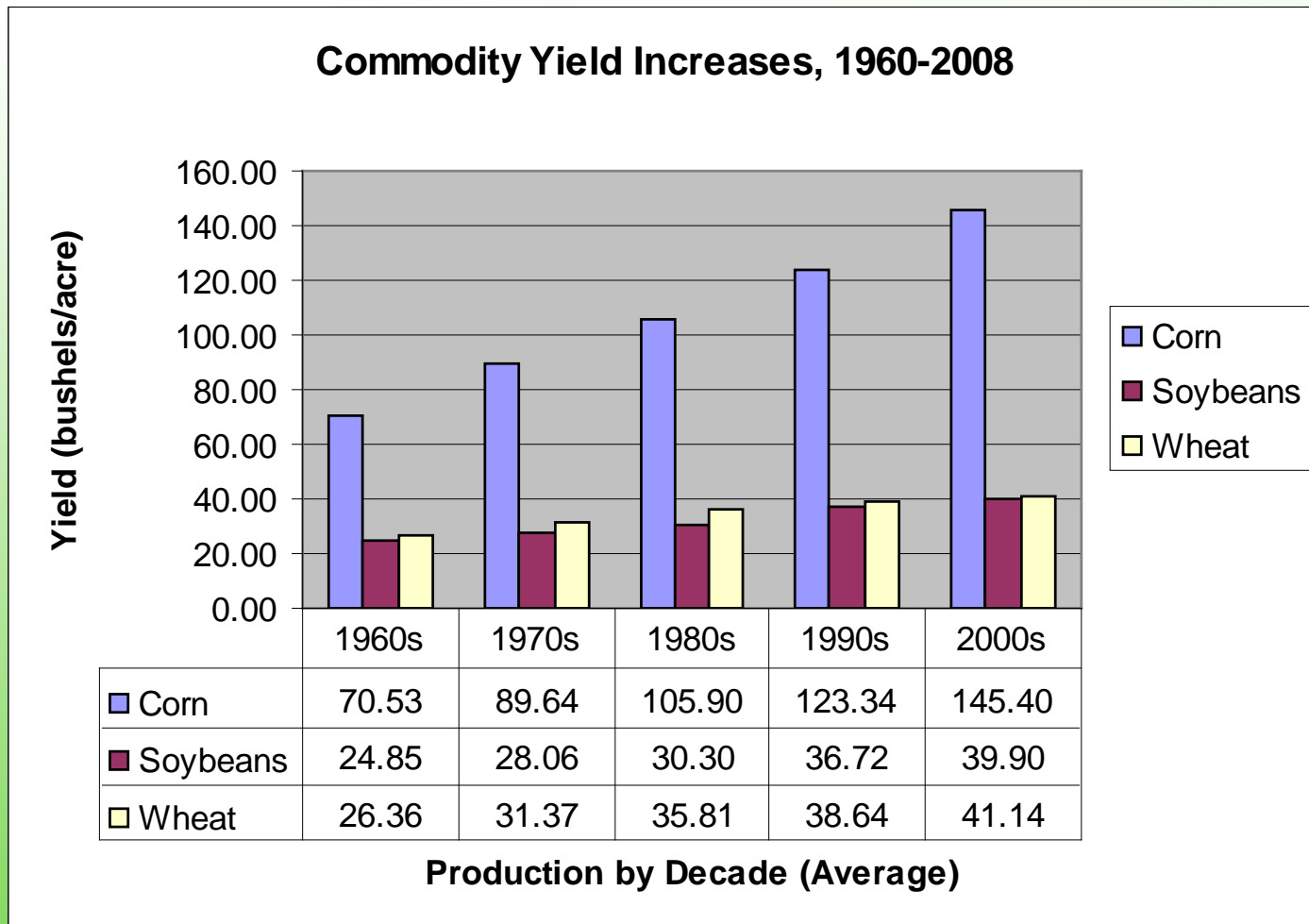
**. . . to 600 bushel tandem axle, twin  
screw diesels . . .**



**. . . to today's semi tractors with pups capable of hauling more than 1300 bushels.**



**South Dakota's agricultural productivity has soared dramatically on the same amount of land and the same roads built by our grandfathers.**



Source: USDA NASS South Dakota Historical  
Yield Data



**21<sup>st</sup> Century field-to-farm-to-market roads will be crucial to our state's economic future.**



# Framing the Issue

- What this issue is:
- This is bigger than just agriculture's needs.
  - Rural residents
  - City workers who commute from farms, small towns and rural acreages
  - Value-added ag businesses
  - Rural businesses
  - Production agriculture
- They all use county and township roads.
- 25% of SD farmers commute more than 200 days per year to city jobs.
- 42% of SD farmers work at least part-time off-farm.
- Cities and towns need this workforce.



# Framing the Issue

- Who owns the vehicle and what is in the vehicle **does not matter**.
- These are questions of:
  - Vehicle weight, frequency of use, and time of use;
  - Road and bridge age, safety, design, maintenance, repair and upgrades;
  - Strategic rural economic development investments; and
  - Multi-jurisdictional leadership, vision, options, cost-benefit analysis, planning, timing and funding.

# Framing the Issue

- What this issue is not:
  - A condemnation of ag and rural development.
  - Class warfare: big vs. little, city vs. farm, livestock vs. grain, hunters vs. rural residences
  - A laundry list of specific, isolated road problems; the needs are **statewide**.
  - Something that can be handled completely with zoning ordinances.

# Framing the Issue

- Today's farms, ranches and city businesses operate in a **global** environment that transcends township, county, city and state jurisdictional and political boundaries.
- Our rural road needs transcend the same boundaries.
- Band-Aids may help relieve specific pressure points short-term, but South Dakota roads require a **comprehensive, long-term** solution that recognizes 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs and costs.

# Ownership = Responsibility



**Even Farm – Homesteaded 1883**

# Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.



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- SD County Commissioner's Association
- SD Association of Towns and Townships
- SD Dept of Tourism and State Development
- SD Dept of Transportation