**The SCN Coalition - Final Report**

**Mission:**

The mission of the SCN Coalition is to develop an SCN Resistance Management and Awareness Campaign to educate growers and industry on the reality of SCN resistance development, to slow the development of highly aggressive SCN populations, and to minimize increasing levels of yield loss.

**Summary:**

In effort to increase the awareness of SCN management, the SCN Coalition conducted major media, trade show, partner and financial leveraging activities in FY2019. Major outreach/media efforts at trade shows included the Commodity Classic and Farm Progress Show in 2019. Since the launch in February 2018, The SCN Coalition has been mentioned in 429 online articles resulting in 18.2 million impressions in ag media; this represents 16.4% of the total share of online discussion on SCN. In FY2019, The SCN Coalition released seven news releases generating over 4.7 M online impressions. The SCN Coalition released the National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan and worked with media to publicize the impact of soybean checkoff funded research. Twitter and website activity continued to increase during this period, and the SCN Coalition developed two additional videos featuring a grower and scientist discussing SCN. In 2020, the SCN Coalition will execute two grower-education and media events called Tode Tour. Financial support for Tode Tour was secured in FY19/20 from private corporate partners ($120,000 to date) and the United Soybean Board ($164,122). Proposed additional activities in FY20/21 include state-specific Extension education events, market research and the next National SCN Conference. Current and prospective partners continue to be recruited for future activities.

**Structure and Funding:**

To accomplish our mission, we have leveraged funding received from the NCSRP to acquire funding from private corporate partners and the United Soybean Board. All funding is complementary and not codependent. Funding received from corporate private partners supports primarily national SCN Coalition activities. Funding support from USB supports primarily local Extension activities. Funding from the NCSRP directly supports communications, management, leadership and coordination of the SCN Coalition, specifically; 1) additional partner meetings, partner relations and recruitment 2) SCN Coalition management and 3) SCN Coalition communications. Since 2015, detailed funding information and the outputs they have supported have been illustrated on the attached/associated The SCN Coalition Timeline (Figure 1).

In FY19, private corporate partners fully funded events of the SCN Coalition at Commodity Classic ($75,000), and contributed to the SCN Coalition at the Farm Progress show. Estimated in-kind support (primarily advertising and social media amplification) contributed by the private partners in this time was $725,000. USB supported SCN Coalition activities in FY19 ($586,880), which was extended into FY20 through a no cost extension. In FY20, USB initially did not fund a $650,000 proposal, however, they have since pledged $164,122 to support Tode Tour activities in FY20.

**Commodity Classic 2019:**

Commodity Classic 2019 was held in Orlando, Florida from February 28 – March 2, 2019. Commodity Classic is one of the largest agricultural shows in the U.S., with 9,000+ attendees, of which approximately 4,500 of them farmers. It also is heavily trafficked by media throughout North America.

Six notable activities occurred at Commodity Classic; a Press Conference, a Learning Center Session, two preliminary visits to new partners (NuFarm and Valent), visits with two possible major media partners (DTN/Progressive Farmer and Farm Journal), media interviews with a reach exceeding 1 Million and release of the National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan.

*Press Conference at Commodity Classic:*

The Press Conference featured Dr. Melissa Mitchum, University of Missouri (now University of Georgia), introducing the National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan. Ten ag media representatives attended. Dr. Mitchum described cutting edge research, funded by the checkoff, to manage SCN. Dr. Mitchum was interviewed by two ag media representatives for nearly an hour after the scheduled press conference.

*Learning Center Session at Commodity Classic:*

Media personality Tyne Morgan, host of U.S. Farm Report, moderated a panel of three scientists and three growers from different regions of the country. This included Dr. Kathy Lawrence – Auburn, grower Kip Roberson – North Carolina, Albert Tenuta – Univ. of Guelph and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, grower Pat Duncanson – Minnesota, Dr. Greg Tylka - Iowa State University and grower Ron Heck – Iowa. Tyne Morgan navigated the panel through a very informative and light (humorous) hour-long session about managing SCN across North America. The role of checkoff funding was repeatedly discussed, and numerous media interviews followed.

*Partner Visits at Commodity Classic:*

Drs. Greg Tylka and Sam Markell met twice with Nufarm representatives from research and marketing. Nufarm indicated a strong willingness to become members of the SCN Coalition. Drs. Kaitlyn Bissonnette and Sam Markell met with a marketing representative from Valent, who expressed interest in meeting with the SCN Coalition. Follow-up visits with both companies led to both joining the SCN Coalition and both financially contributing to Tode Tour in 2020.

*Media interviews of SCN Coalition leaders at the Commodity Classic:*

* Duane Toews, Kansas radio KFRM
* Gregg Hillyer, DTN/Progressive Farmer
* Willie Vogt, Delta Farm Press
* Kyleen Scott, High Plains Journal
* Gil Gullickson, Successful Farming
* Nicole Heslip, Brownfield
* Sonja Begemann, AgWeb/Ag Professional
* Rhonda Brooks, Farm Journal
* Sabrina Hill/Rusty Halvorson, American Ag Network
* Michelle Rook, WNAX AM/Agweek TV
* Mike Adams, Adams on Ag radio
* Tyne Morgan, U.S. Farm Report
* Kyle Hill, Missouri radio, KRES
* Mick Kjar, North Dakota radio, KQLX

*Partner produced testimonial videos:*

SCN Coalition partner Bayer filmed videos that featured three nematologists and two growers at Commodity Classic; Dr. Melissa Mitchum, Mr. Pat Duncanson, Mr. Ron Heck, Dr. Kathy Lawrence and Dr. Greg Tylka.

*Checkoff support was leveraged to deliver the SCN Coalition.* Private corporate partners, specifically, BASF, Bayer and Syngenta*, fully funded* (with the exception of individual travel) the presence of the SCN Coalition at Commodity Classic. This included a 10x20 booth throughout the event, a Learning Center Session and a Press Conference. The checkoff funding supporting the SCN Coalition made this trip possible.

**National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan:**

The National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan was released via a national news release distributed in conjunction with the press conference during Commodity Classic. Ten media articles were published generating 673,090 potential impressions about the Strategic Plan.

**Farm Progress Show:**

*Media:* During the Farm Progress Show, Dr. Tylka and Dr. Kaitlyn Bissonnette, plant pathologist at the University of Missouri, were interviewed by 11 agricultural media outlets, including: AgriTalk, Adams on Ag, Farm Journal/AgWeb, DTN, Successful Farming/Agriculture.com, WYXY, WTAD, RFD Radio Network, WJBC, WHOW and Hoosier Ag Today. Interviews with Coalition experts also were conducted in September with Iowa Agribusiness Network and Brownfield Network. Topics included the importance of fall soil testing; what happened to SCN as a result of spring flooding, and checkoff-funded research underway to find new and improved SCN management options.

*Partner leveraging and support.* The SCN Coalition had a presence at Farm Progress Show August 27-29 in Decatur, Ill. Coalition leader Dr. Greg Tylka, nematologist at Iowa State University, was stationed in the Pioneer (Corteva) tent to interact with growers and answer questions. Pioneer is a SCN Coalition partner who has contributed $50,000 to our efforts to date. The Pioneer tent had a jumbo TV screen, and repeatedly played a Coalition video of Iowa farmer Ron Heck discussing how he manages SCN, and a Coalition animated video showing how the SCN resistance problem evolved.

**News releases:**

Cumulatively, since the launch in February 2018, The SCN Coalition has been mentioned in 429 online articles resulting in 18.2 million impressions in ag media. We currently have 16.4% of the total share of discussion on SCN. Specific news releases and associated reach in FY19 include:

* The SCN Coalition encourages piggybacking on fall fertility sampling – Distributed October 9, 2018. Garnered 13 articles and 201,886 potential impressions.
* The SCN Coalition recommends using soil test results to develop a management strategy – Distributed December 11, 2018. Garnered eight articles and 609,157 potential impressions.
* Checkoff-funded researchers finding solutions to SCN resistance – Distributed January 15, 2019. Garnered 27 articles and 269,176 potential impressions.
* Soybean checkoff organizations team up to tackle nematodes (National Soybean Nematode Strategic Plan) – Distributed February 28, 2019. Garnered 10 articles and 673,090 potential impressions.
* Have our SCN sorrows been drowned? – Distributed June 26, 2019. Garnered 24 articles and 586,233 impressions. In addition, the Coalition arranged ag media interviews for Dr. Tylka with AgriTalk, American Ag Network and Brownfield Network.
* Checkoff-funded soybean breeders improving several sources of SCN resistance – Distributed July 31, 2019. Garnered 50 articles and 1.104 million impressions. In concert with the release, the Coalition arranged ag radio interviews for Dr. Brian Diers, plant breeder at the University of Illinois, on the American Ag Network, KQLX, and WTAD.
* Use caution choosing cover crops for SCN-infested fields –Distributed September 10, 2019. Garnered 35 articles and 1.31M potential impressions. Coalition leader Dr. George Bird, nematologist at Michigan State University, has delivered radio interviews to: Brownfield Network, Farm to Fork/Northshore Productions and Michigan Ag Network.

**Twitter:**

308,921 impressions, 4,733 engagements and 780 link clicks (October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2019.)

**Website:**

* Total visits in FY19 (October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2019) were 7,301, with 4,537 total users, 4,492 new users, 18,117 page views and 2.48 page views per session.
* A new checkoff-funded research tab was added to TheSCNcoalition.com site in August. The information about SCN research studies is pulled directly from soybeanresearchinfo.com, and links back to both soybeanresearchinfo.com and the National Soybean Checkoff Research Database.
* A new SCN photo library was added to TheSCNCoalition.com in February 2020. The photo library contains downloadable, citable and verified (expert confirmed) photos for that can be used free of charge by any party, partner or media outlet to help illustrate SCN.

**Video:**

* Videos featuring soybean grower Kip Roberson, Robersonville, NC, shot on Roberson farm, August 2019. Two final videos are 1:00 (used in social media) and 2:27 (on TheSCNcoalition.com site).
* Video featuring Dr. Lindsay Thiessen, plant pathologist at North Carolina State University. Video shot on site at Sandhills Research Station, Jackson Springs, North Carolina and Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, August 2019. Two final videos are 1:00 (used in social media) and 2:26 (on TheSCNcoalition.com site).

**Partnership management and recruitment:**

Site visits to **Nufarm** (new partner), **BASF** (current partner) and **Syngenta** (current partner) were made from October 8-10, 2019, all have committed financially to Tode Tour. Additional visits to private corporate partners at the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) meeting in Chicago in December 2019. The Coalition leadership had several conference calls in August with **Valent**, who joined the SCN Coalition and committed financial support to Tode Tour. Dr. Greg Tylka was embedded with **Corteva** at the Farm Progress Show in August, and is currently sharing updates and planning with the company. Visits to **Bayer** (current partner) are being planned to introduce the SCN Coalition to seed divisions of the company; relationships with the seed care sector are already established. Communications with potential partner **CHS** are ongoing**.** Initial contacts with **AgReliant Genetics** and **Becks Hybrids** have been made**.** Update visits to partners **Winfield** and **Growmark** are in progress.

**Acknowledgements:**

We thank the NCSRP and all the growers they represent for their support and leadership of the SCN Coalition. We also thank the private corporate partners, USB all the QSSB’s and the land grant universities that are contributing to the mission and messaging.

**Figure 1. Timeline of the SCN Coalition, 2015-2021.**

