



Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative  
*Professional Iowans Producing Solutions*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Iowa Soybean's Ag Urban Leadership Initiative alumni meet at Capitol**

URBANDALE, Iowa — The Ag Urban Leadership Initiative, a program begun by the Iowa Soybean Association in 2007, held its first alumni session on Tuesday, March 23. Eight participants of the Initiative met at the Iowa Statehouse on March 23. These leaders, representing Iowa's farmers, business community and elected officials, spent time discussing current legislative issues and making plans to work through the interim in contacting legislative leaders about issues the group has researched. In past years, the group has worked on educational ideas, water quality opportunities, land use discussions and economic development across rural and urban lines.

Karey Claghorn, Milo; Dennis Markway, Urbandale; Paul Kirpes, Cumming; Chris Gaesser, Corning; Kevin Krause, West Des Moines; Annette Sweeney, Alden; Linda Upmeyer, Garner; and Kevin Klommhaus, Mount Ayr, joined Carol Balvanz and Val Plagge of ISA in alumni activities planned to connect class members with legislative opportunities and allow them to network with class members from all three years of the Ag Urban Initiative. As Sweeney and Upmeyer both serve in the Iowa House of Representatives, they provided specific legislative information on several issues to the group during the morning meeting. The group discussed ways to work through the interim months to better prepare issues for next year's legislative session. Jill Altringer, lobbyist for the Iowa Soybean Association joined the group in discussions and strategy planning.

Following lunch and a guided tour of the statehouse, the group dispersed, with some returning to ISA headquarters for a tour of the new ISA office building.

Since its inception, more than 30 Iowa leaders representing agriculture, business and government have participated in the program. The goal of the program has always been to surface issues of interest (and sometimes conflict) to both rural and urban Iowans and research solutions that will make Iowa a better place to live.

The Ag Urban Leadership Initiative's next Alumni activity will be June 3-4 at the Isle in Waterloo. For more information, contact Carol Balvanz or Val Plagge at 515-251-8640.

To learn more about ISA, visit its Web site at [www.iasoybeans.com](http://www.iasoybeans.com).

*The Iowa Soybean Association develops policies and programs that help farmers expand profit opportunities while promoting environmentally sensitive production using the soybean checkoff and other resources. The Association is governed by an elected volunteer board of 21 farmers.*

*Partially funded by the soybean checkoff*