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When you are speaking about USB or our checkoff, and there are no other brand guidelines to follow.
Quick Reference Guide Overview

Our checkoff is represented by many people, across many organizations. To quickly assist anyone who is writing and communicating on behalf of the checkoff we have compiled the key visual elements of the brand into this Quick Reference Guide.

Further usage examples and rationale for each element can be found deeper in this Brand Guideline. We highly recommend that you familiarize yourself with the full guidelines before using the Quick Reference Guide.

We speak in first person about the soy checkoff and the United Soybean Board.
LOGO
DON'T

Do not skew mark

Do not alter mark arrangement

Do not use 100% black on color

Transition to one color mark

Not approved color

Avoid placing logo over busy background

Avoid adding to the logo
TAGLINE

Innovation Beyond the Bushel is our tagline and is developed to communicate our positioning easily and succinctly.

The tagline can be used as a visual element (service mark) and also as copy to communicate the overall position of the soy checkoff. The service mark is not a logo and should not be used alone to represent USB or the soy checkoff. Usage of the tagline in copy does not require any special formatting nor does it receive a service mark [SM].
**TONE**

1. **ASSURED, BUT NOT ARROGANT**

2. **DIRECT, LIKE IN HOW FARMERS TALK ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS.**

3. **CONVEY LEADERSHIP AND A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF OUR BUSINESS AND THE OUTPUTS OF OUR LABOR.**

4. **WE SPEAK IN FIRST PERSON ABOUT THE SOY CHECKOFF AND THE UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD.**
BRAND CHECKLIST

The following is a short checklist that you can use against your communication and marketing element to assure that you are “on brand.” Please be familiar with the brand standards to make sure you have a good understanding of the checkoff as a brand and how it should be represented. This checklist is just the essentials; it doesn’t address specifics. If you have any challenges beyond those listed below, please contact Laura Smith at laura.smith@osbornbarr.com or (314) 236-6916.

LOGO
• Are you using the correct logo?
• Are you following the clear space regulations?
• Are you following the guidelines around the logo don’ts?

For more details, pg. 28–36

TYPEFACE
• Are you using
  — Din Open Type?
  — Merriweather?
  — Calibri?
  — Cambria?

For more details, pg. 24–27

COLOR PALETTE
• Are the checkoff’s primary colors the hero of the communication/marketing element?
• Have you used the accent colors properly?

For more details, pg. 39–44

PHOTOGRAPHY
• Are you using photography that is inline with the stated brand style: Proud, heroic, progressive, confident and dramatic depth of field?
• Do you have the rights to the photo and the people in the photography?

For more details, pg. 45–50

IDENTITY
• Innovative, Experienced, Strategic, Focused, Optimistic.

For more details, pg. 17–21

TONE
• Forward-Thinking, Motivating, Confident, Direct, Engaging.

For more details, pg. 22
All marketing communications must be reviewed and approved by USDA-AMS before distribution except internal board communications and non-marketing communications.

- Internal Board Communications: Communications to board members (excluding board meeting presentations and supporting materials), USB staff and USB primary contractors are not required to be sent to AMS for review and approval because those parties are part of USB’s organizational structure, as established by the Act and Order, or agents acting on behalf of USB. In contrast, QSSBs are not “internal” to USB because they are not part of USB’s organizational structure and USB does not control QSSB marketing activities.

- Non-Marketing Communications: Only “marketing communications” require AMS approval — not all communications. Marketing is defined as “[t]he process or technique of promotion, selling, and distribution of a product or service.” Communications not involving “marketing” do not need to be submitted to AMS for review and approval before distribution. For example, USB compliance presentations to QSSB staff would not require approval, nor would information sharing to QSSBs about USB’s promotional activities, provided those QSSBs are not the target audience of USB’s promotional activities.

If created with checkoff funding, the following materials require approval by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service:

- Research communications
- Advertising
- Board meeting presentations
- Public relations materials
- Press releases
- Marketing communications to farmers, consumers, influencers, end users, industry stakeholders and government officials
- Educational materials
- Articles for publication (e.g., magazines, magazine inserts)
- External newsletters
- Digital content (websites, social media, blogs, etc.)
- Brochures and fact sheets
- Program flyers
- External speeches
- Op-ed pieces
- USB-funded ASA sponsorship materials
- Video scripts (scripts will be tentatively approved; final approval will come upon seeing the finished video to ensure it matches the script)
- Talking points
- Media alerts
- Trade show premiums (e.g., bags, pens, drinkware, novelty items)
- QSSB marketing communication requests paid for with USB funds
- Marketing communications used by third parties that contain USB’s logo
ABOUT BRANDS

Our checkoff brand is much more than a logo. Our brand is the reputation we have built since 1991. It’s the culmination of all the characteristics – tangible and intangible – that makes the checkoff unique. Our brand is our messages, the look and feel of our marketing materials and how we each represent the soy farmers across the country. Every action you perform on behalf of the checkoff continually shapes our audiences’ perceptions – that’s why representing the brand consistently and properly is so important.

Our brand is the reputation we have built since 1991.
OUR BRAND IDENTITY

Our brand identity is the face and personality we present publicly. Our identity is the totality of the checkoff logo, website, publication, brochures, newsletters, stationery – everything we produce, no matter the author. By consistently putting forth a unified image to the public, we bring value, prominence and clarity to the checkoff.

By consistently putting forth a unified image to the public, we bring value, prominence and clarity to the checkoff.
These guidelines provide the understanding and specifications needed to communicate with integrity and consistency. This will ensure that our reputation remains strong and that potential customers view the checkoff as a leader and a trusted partner.

The guidelines within this document are designed to be used by all who produce checkoff communications. These standards do not cover every design application but do provide guidance to solve most corporate identity problems. Your thoughtful consideration of good design principles, effective communication practices and consistency across brand communicators as a whole, should augment the application of these guidelines.

These standards do not cover every design application but do provide guidance to solve most corporate identity problems.
POSITIONING

Our checkoff is represented by many different people who are all working hard to improve the market for U.S. soy. Our position will set the tone for our brand among three critical groups: U.S. soybean farmers, staff/contractors/directors as well as potential customers. Positioning sets the tone for the brand. Internally it acts as a compass for how the brand and company should be communicated. Externally it differentiates the brand from others in the market. The checkoff has a new positioning because the market landscape has changed. We ask that you thoroughly read and understand this brand guideline so that you can represent the brand in a consistent manner along with everyone else who will be communicating on behalf of the checkoff and soybean farmers across the nation.

Positioning Statement: Farmers and partners trust the soy checkoff to have the right vision for the future.

Our checkoff is represented by many different people who are all working hard to improve the market for U.S. soy.
IMPORTANCE TO FARMERS

Our brand constituency is important to us. We want farmers to trust that we are spending their contributions in a meaningful and industry-building way. Today, soy production is high, prices are low – U.S. soybean farmers need to attract new buyers in a new way for the new market. The U. S. soy checkoff works on behalf of the U.S. soybean farmer, and it is important to position the organization as being a leader and thinking about opportunities that will benefit soybean farmers across the country. The checkoff will continue to have multiple programs each year, but aligning these under one common approach will demonstrate cohesion and leadership to the constituency.

We represent U.S. soybean farmers; it is important that they trust that we have their best interest in mind – always.

Today, soy production is high, prices are low – U.S. soybean farmers need to attract new buyers in a new way for the new market.
IMPORTANCE TO STAFF/CONTRACTORS/DIRECTORS

There are many representative voices of the checkoff. Over 78 directors, plus the USB staff and the contractors that work on behalf of USB - meaning, there are many potential voices for one critical brand - the checkoff. A unified position aligns all of the brand champions into one cohesive voice. It also unites the brand so that everyone understands how his or her role will impact the big picture of the organization. This is about unity over uniformity.

We are many individual voices, but we speak as one brand.

A unified position aligns all of the brand champions into one cohesive voice.
IMPORTANCE TO INDUSTRY

As a brand evolves, it is critical that the potential markets for the products are aware of the evolution. Some customers will see the evolution first-hand, meaning that they can already feel the changes taking place in the U.S. soy industry. However, many more potential customers have only heard of the “old” checkoff and are not aware of the leadership role that the organization wishes to present. To enable growth for U.S. soybean farmers as a whole, new opportunities need to be uncovered. The checkoff has made a conscious decision to increase its focus on demand drivers. To attract these new customers, the knowledge and leadership of the organization must be clearly communicated.

No one knows the benefits of U.S. soy better than the members of the checkoff – we need to confidently communicate the benefits in terms that resonate with future customers.

The checkoff has made a conscious decision to increase its focus on demand drivers.
LADDERING MESSAGES UP TO A SINGLE FOCUS

Our position implies one consistent message point. We have many reasons to believe, but they should all ladder up to the same positioning to build understanding in the checkoff’s role. All checkoff communication elements will speak in depth about one (or more) of the reasons to believe (the nine Long-Range Strategic Plan goals). Clearly showing how these reasons to believe support the single-focused message by the checkoff will be the key in delivering on clarity – which will lead to perceived focus – which will lead to deeper understanding and following.

We have many reasons to believe, but they should all ladder up to the same positioning to build understanding in the checkoff’s role.
TONE

The tone is important, as there are so many individual voices that represent the checkoff. With so many people representing the brand we have set forth a brand tone to help unify the voices to all sound like they are coming from the same brand.

The checkoff is assured, but not arrogant. The style is direct, like in how farmers talk about their business. Puffery is limited, as are overly descriptive adjectives. We aim to convey leadership and a deep knowledge of our business and the outputs of our labor. We speak in first person about our checkoff and the United Soybean Board.

We speak in first person about our checkoff and the United Soybean Board.
Legibility is important when communicating with farmers. Legibility stems from typeface style, color and size. We are mindful to have contrast in our typeface from the background and to choose a typeface that does not strain the reader.

• **DO:** Pay particular attention to the size of the font, a minimum font size of 12 points should be strictly adhered to. Place smaller fonts on white or light backgrounds so that reversing the font color is not necessary as this is harder to read.

• **DON’T:** Add additional colors to the typeface or add additional typefaces.

**Approved Fonts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LICENSED</th>
<th>FREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Din Open Type</td>
<td>Calibri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merriweather</td>
<td>Cambria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HISTORY OF SOY

The soya bean plant is native to China, where it has been cultivated for well over 13,000 years. It was an essential crop for the ancient Chinese who regarded it a necessity for life. Soya beans were introduced into other regions of Asia centuries later and it wasn’t until the early 20th century that it began to be used for more than animal feed in the West. The soya bean is now the most widely grown and utilized legume worldwide.
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**Calibri**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
123456789
.,;/[]\=-()*&^%$#@!
!~`<>?:”{}|+-_

Light, Regular & *Italic*,
Bold & *Italic*

**Usage Guideline:** Calibri is an acceptable substitute for FF DIN OT when that font is not accessible. The DIN font must be purchased to use, so when that is not feasible, the Calibri typeface can be used as a suitable non-serif replacement.

**Cambria**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
123456789
.,;/[]\=-()*&^%$#@!
!~`<>?:”{}|+-_

Regular & *Italic*,
Bold & *Italic*

**Usage Guideline:** Cambria is an acceptable substitute for Merriweather when that font is not accessible. The Merriweather font is free, but must be downloaded, so when that is not feasible, the Cambria typeface can be used as a suitable serif replacement.
Our logo is the key visual identifier of the United Soybean Board. It is a valuable asset that should be respected and treated as such. The checkmark and bean lock-up are used in many instances from state checkoffs to our service mark for the checkoff tagline. It is important that the USB logo not only incorporates the checkmark and bean, but also clearly designates the acronym – USB – or full name of the brand – UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD.

The USB logo should be used when communicating to any audiences outside of soybean farmers.

When communicating to farmers, it is understood that they may not be familiar with the United Soybean Board, instead they are familiar with the soy checkoff. For these instances only, it is acceptable to use the checkmark and bean paired with the OUR SOY CHECKOFF as a logo that represents the soy checkoff to farmers.

It is acceptable to use only the checkmark and bean lockup as a visual element in communications, but it should not be used alone to represent USB or the soy checkoff. It should be used as an accompanying creative element, not a logo.

We have simplified all logos to be one-color to aid in their usage. Please begin to phase out the multi-colored USB logo on all communication elements and adapt the mono-color version as your projects and budgets permit.
The United Soybean Board logo is unchanged. There are two logo options to better communicate the brand.

**BRAND LOGO**

**Full**
To be used with non-farmer audiences, or when font size legibility is not an issue.

**Preferred**
To be used with new and non-farmer audiences, or when font size legibility is an issue.

**Minimum Width**
- **Full**: 1.5 Inches
- **Preferred**: .875 Inches
BRAND LOGO
Our soy checkoff

To be used with our farmer audience.
PRIMARY LOGO COLOR OPTIONS

PREFERRED OPTION

ALSO ACCEPTABLE
Some Preferred Pairings (applicable for all marks)

- United Soybean Board
- United Soybean Board
- United Soybean Board

Some Unacceptable Pairings (applicable for all marks)

- United Soybean Board
- United Soybean Board
- United Soybean Board

Keep logo colors in same hue as background
Contrast between the background/mark is too low
All marks should always be one color
Keep to the colors within our color system
All marks should be solid colors, not stroke
All marks should be solid colors, not gradients

When placing marks over an image, make sure the logo pops by using the right color and placement
Wrong color selection for placing over this image.
LOGO
REstrictions

- Do not skew mark
- Do not alter mark arrangement
- Do not use 100% black on color
- Transition to one color mark
- Not approved color
- Avoid placing logo over busy background
- Avoid adding to the logo

**United Soybean Board Brand Guidelines | VISUAL IDENTITY**
TAGLINE

Innovation Beyond the Bushel is our tagline and is developed to communicate our positioning easily and succinctly.

The tagline can be used as a visual element (service mark) and also as copy to communicate the overall position of the soy checkoff. The service mark is not a logo and should not be used alone to represent USB or the soy checkoff. Usage of the tagline in copy does not require any special formatting nor does it receive a service mark [SM].
SERVICE MARK

Service marks are used to bring visual representation to a key point. Our service mark accentuates our tagline of Innovation Beyond the Bushel. While this tagline should be used often in the body copy, at times it elevates the point to show it as a visual element.

It is not a logo that represents the USB or the soy checkoff. It should be used similarly to a trademark element.
Our brand colors help convey our leadership tone and do so in a warm, yet informed manner. Our colors are developed to work well with our photography standards (following pages).

UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD COLOR SYSTEM

USB color system allows flexibility to stretch to the far reaches of USB while remaining visually consistent and connected. Twenty-one PMS Coated and Uncoated, CMYK, RGB and Hex codes are all available to ensure a precise brand experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color Code</th>
<th>Hex Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMS 106C</td>
<td>#FCE444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 108C</td>
<td>#FFD800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 105C</td>
<td>#8B7A27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 455C</td>
<td>#6C5A23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS Black 2C</td>
<td>#342E1F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Code</td>
<td>Hex Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 631C</td>
<td>#3BB0C9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 632C</td>
<td>#0091B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 633C</td>
<td>#007297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 634C</td>
<td>#005D83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conversion Details:**
- **CMYK**
  - PMS 631C: CMYK 69, 10, 18, 0
  - PMS 632C: CMYK 92, 24, 23, 0
  - PMS 633C: CMYK 100, 42, 29, 5
  - PMS 634C: CMYK 100, 55, 33, 13
- **RGB**
  - PMS 631C: RGB 59, 176, 201
  - PMS 632C: RGB 0, 145, 179
  - PMS 633C: RGB 0, 114, 151
  - PMS 634C: RGB 0, 93, 131

**Note:**
- PMS 631U, PMS 632U, PMS 633U, and PMS 634U are not provided in the table above.
PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography cues are important to portraying the brand in the right light.

Photography does not encompass in-story images that are captured to help build the story.
Capture people in their working environments. Look for candid moments.

Avoid forced, heavily directed shots. Wipe all logos visible in the shot.
Interesting angles with the subject or area of focus placed at the edge of the first 1/3 section produces visually appealing shots.

Avoid adding heavy HDR contrast, keep the images warm and saturated when appropriate.
Again, wipe all logos on products and on clothes. If brandless apparel is available, use that instead.

To capture authentic shots, feature people working or active. Avoiding engagement with the camera is preferred.
Capture micro details for texture and strong dose of color. High depth of field produces focus while keeping space available for copy.

Avoid unhealthy-looking subject matter.
Capture wide landscape shots with morning or evening light.

*Avoid flat, high noon lighting and empty horizons.*
LRSP Icons

The checkoff has nine goals that create its Long-Range Strategic Plan (LSRP). Icons are used to identify each of these nine goals as a stand-alone goal and reason to believe in the brand position. Our icons should be supported by long-form copy that explains each goal in the first usage of the logo when possible. Subsequent usage of the icons can simply use the single word identifier that accompanies the icon.

The icons can be used individually, in small groups of LRSP icons or as part of the entire set of nine icons. Our icons are meant to bring simplification to the goals of the LRSP, so they should be used in conjunction with other LRSP logos only. The colors of the icons add additional grouping of families within the icons. When showing how icons relate to one another, the provided colors should be adhered to exclusively.

Our icons are meant to bring simplification to the goals of the LRSP.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Supply</strong></th>
<th><strong>Marketplace</strong></th>
<th><strong>Demand</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Soybean producers use improved seed varieties and the latest production techniques to maximize profit opportunities while meeting the standards of the U.S. Soybean Sustainability Assurance Protocol.

### TECHNOLOGY

Farmers use big data and technological advances to maximize their profit opportunities.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Potential partners and influencers use new information to communicate to appropriate target audiences why improvements to the transportation infrastructure are needed.

### VALUE

The soy value chain is using an accurate definition of the U.S. soy advantage and bringing that value back to farmers.

### MEAL

Animal and aquaculture producers seek meal made from U.S. soybeans in their feed rations because of the superior component value.

### OIL

End users recognize, use and communicate the advantage of both conventional and high oleic U.S. soy oil.

### INDUSTRIAL USES

Manufacturers of high value or high volume industrial products prefer U.S. soybean oil or meal as a feedstock/ingredient.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Buyers and end users recognize U.S. soy as a sustainable and responsible choice for food, feed and industrial applications.

### FOOD EXPORTS

Targeted food manufacturers in export markets prefer U.S. soy protein.
ICONS, GRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Our visual brand identity is tied together through our icons, graphs and illustrations. These elements need to reflect innovation, experience, focus and have an optimistic feel.

We strive to be modern without being too trendy or abstract. The icons, graphs and illustrations should help build the story — they are not intended to be the story.
ICON GUIDES
Build in 1”x1” squares with a stroke width of 3 pt.
Abstract icons must be placed with copy. Literal icons, in correct context, can be placed without accompanied copy.

**Book** = Research, Study, Resource...etc.
**Liquid in Bottle** = Oil, Liquid...etc.
**Abstract Mark** = Navigation, In-Field Sensors, Technology...etc.
**Sustainability** = No-Till, Sustainable Farming...etc.

**Scale** = Justice, Laws...etc.
**Abstract Mark** = Soy Energy, Ideation...etc.
**Bull Horn** = Statements, Announcement...etc.
**Abstract Mark** = Measurement, Yield, Tilling...etc.
**Bell** = Assistance, Service...etc.

**Beaker** = Measurement, Scientific Results...etc.
**Abstract Mark** = Shield, Defense...etc.
**Pig** = Meal, Animal...etc.
**Microscope** = Measurement, Research, Detail...etc.
**Abstract Mark** = Sustainability, Waterway...etc.
ILLUSTRATION GUIDES

Build to any scale. Use color tints to create shading and dimension. Illustration objects should be clearly identifiable, modern and built with clean lines.
GRAPH GUIDES

Build graphs, pie charts, bar charts or any other visualization form for data in a similar vein as icons and illustrations. Use multi-colored visuals with contrast to illustrate difference between values or subject matter.
PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The following pages are visual examples of how all of the elements work together for specific examples of communication. These examples are available as lock-up templates, and they also serve as directional templates for communication elements that we have not addressed. As we stressed upfront in this guide – you are expected to employ thoughtful consideration of good design principles, effective communication practices and consistency across brand communication elements that follow these usage guidelines.

If you have questions about usage of any of the checkoff branding elements, we expect you to first consult this section in its entirety. If questions remain, we encourage you to contact Laura Smith at laura.smith@osbornbarr.com or (314) 236-6916 for resolution.

The number one objective for all who communicate on behalf of the checkoff is unity around the position that farmers and partners trust the soy checkoff to have the right vision for the future. Remaining true to that one positioning statement and adhering to the brand guidelines will improve the understanding and perceptions of the brand by all who encounter it.
Delivering a consistency across business communications is as important as it is to our marketing communications. A Microsoft Word template has been created for use in all business letters. The letterhead can also be used for meeting agendas with internal and external participants.
BUSINESS CARD

Color and photography have both been added to the checkoff business cards to further communicate our commitment to U.S. soy. The “front” of the cards addresses the parent company (United Soybean Board) where the “back” of the card connects the checkoff to USB. The purpose of this alignment is so that the card can be used for audiences that know of either brand, or both brands…and it links the two brands together in a simple fashion.
FACT SHEETS

FARMERS SELLS BEANS TO ELEVATORS, PROCESSORS AND GRAIN DEALERS

½ of 1% of the total selling price goes to the state soybean board

1/2

50% of those funds stay with Missouri

CHECKOFF MATH

National Checkoff*

Half goes to the National Checkoff*

Source: Texas A&M 2014

THE NATIONAL CHECKOFF IS LED BY 70 VOLUNTEER SOYBEAN FARMERS, THE UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD (USB) INVESTS AND LEVERAGES SOY CHECKOFF DOLLARS TO MAXIMIZE PROFIT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL U.S. SOYBEAN FARMERS.
IMPORTANCE OF LINKAGE TO U.S. SOY

There are many branded programs that exist within the checkoff, and there are others that exist in partnership with the checkoff. These brand guidelines are not meant to overshadow those unique brand languages. Those branded programs all have their unique visual styles as well as tones. Instead, the checkoff should be used as a unifier of all of these programs as a “Master Brand.”

A Master Brand means that it is visibly connected to the checkoff, but not overpowering the program branding. Unifying the branded programs with a common Master Brand identifier will add strength to the checkoff brand and will communicate to the audiences that these programs are part of the bigger, focused picture of the checkoff.

A Master Brand means that it is visibly connected to the checkoff, but not overpowering the program branding.