



**GREAT LAKES ALLIANCE FOR
SUSTAINABLE SHIPPING
SECOND ANNUAL MEETING**

DECEMBER 3RD - 4TH

AMWAY GRAND PLAZA
187 MONROE AVE NW, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

Wednesday, December 3rd | 12:00 PM – 5:55 PM

Amway Grand Plaza, Gerald R. Ford Ballroom

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM

Registration (Registration will be ongoing throughout the event.)

12:00 PM – 12:45 PM

Lunch Buffet

12:45 PM – 1:05 PM

Welcome & Opening Remarks – Ben Steyer, Michigan Soybean Committee & Association CEO

2025 Working Group Presentations

- 1:05 PM – 1:25 PM: Great Lakes Biodiesel Exploration
- 1:25 PM – 1:45 PM: Midwest Ag Export Information
- 1:45 PM – 2:05 PM: Infrastructure Survey
- 2:05 PM – 2:25 PM: Shipping Price Visibility

Agricultural Perspectives & Insights

- 2:25 PM – 3:05 PM: Midwest Farmer Panel

Midwest farmers share industry insights, current challenges, and an inside look at the innovations shaping their farms today.

- 3:05 PM – 3:25 PM: Agricultural shipping system overview

Mike Steenhoek, Executive Director of the Soy Transportation Coalition, will connect the dots across the agricultural transportation and logistics system from farm to end user discussing how the industry works together to move products efficiently and economically.

3:25 PM – 3:40 PM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

3:40 PM – 3:55 PM

Bathroom & Coffee Break

Trade & Agricultural Product Movement

- 3:55 PM – 4:30 PM: Soybean Trade & Market Access Update

Brianna Metts, Industry Affairs Manager for the U.S. Soybean Export Council will discuss soy trade, export markets and updates of market access issues affecting U.S. soy, and how U.S. soy is positioning itself to meet demand.

- 4:30 PM – 5:05 PM: Midwest Grain and Ag Product Panel

Leaders from across the grain shipping and agricultural supply sectors will explore the flow of ag products, taking a closer look at the routes, systems, and logistics that get goods to their end users.

Biofuel Basics

- 5:05 PM – 5:40 PM: Biofuels 101

Bailey Arnold, Sustainability and Outreach Director Michigan Advanced Biofuels Coalition, will give a comprehensive introduction to biofuels (biodiesel, renewable and sustainable aviation fuel), outlining fuel chemistry, sustainability advantages, and market dynamics affecting both transportation and on-farm decisions.

5:40 PM – 5:55 PM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

Dinner will be on your own

Thursday, December 4th | 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Amway Grand Plaza, Gerald R. Ford Ballroom

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast Buffet

Biofuels Deep Dive

- 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM: Fuel Quality and Original Engine Manufacturer Update

Dr. Courtney Videchak, Diesel Engine and Low Carbon Fuels Integration Specialist for Marc IV and Clean Fuels Alliance America, will provide an overview of the status and future vision of the biodiesel industry in the U.S. as well as fuel quality and specification efforts for higher blends. Dr. Videchak will review the technical considerations for use of biodiesel including higher blends up to pure biodiesel (B100) in fleets, vessels, and other equipment as well as the status of OEM support and approvals.

Great Lakes Maritime Systems & Strategy

- 8:30 AM – 8:55 AM: Great Lakes Marine Shipping Today

Eric Oberhart, Program Director for the Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers will give an overview of regional maritime system, including volumes, regional maritime issues, and GSGP's maritime initiative.

- 8:55 AM – 9:15 AM: Container Shipping Updates on the Great Lakes

Great Lakes Ports will give an update on the development of container ports over the last year.

- 9:15 AM – 9:40 AM: Michigan Maritime Strategy Overview

Dr. Thomas McKenney, Associate Professor of Engineering Practice for the University of Michigan will give an update on the Michigan Maritime Strategy.

9:40 AM – 9:55 AM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

9:55 AM – 10:15 AM

Bathroom Break / Hotel Checkout

Rail's Role in Agricultural Shipping

- 10:15 AM – 10:45 AM: Midwest Railroad Overview

Julie Eddy, Divisional Vice President of our Upper Midwest Railroads for Genesee & Wyoming, Inc., will give an overview of the Midwest rail industry.

- 10:45 AM – 11:30 AM: The Intersection of Rail & Ag Panel

Short line railroads and rail users will discuss moving agricultural products throughout the Midwest including industry headwinds and the current shipping environment.

- Kyle Hnatiuk - Director of Business Development - Adrian & Blissfield Railroad Company
- Sarah Pawlanta - AVP, Sales & Marketing - Genesee & Wyoming, Inc.

11:30 AM – 11:45 PM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM

Lunch Buffet

On the Road with Ag Freight

- 12:45 PM – 1:10 PM: Midwest Trucking Update

A Midwest trucking company will give an update from the trucking industry and speak to daily best practices, industry headwinds, and the general movement of agricultural freight.

- 1:10 PM – 1:35 PM: Hauling Liquid and Perishable Agricultural Products

Neil Bendixen of the Great Lakes Milk Transporters will share insights on current industry practices, safety standards, and regulations shaping the movement of dairy from farm to processor and beyond.

- 1:35 PM – 2:00 PM: What does it take to move livestock?

A livestock trucking company will give an update from the livestock trucking industry and speak to the intricacies of moving live animals.

- 2:00 PM – 2:10 PM: Preparing for Emergencies

Michigan State University Extension will give an overview of the Emergency Response to Accidents Involving Livestock (ERAIL) Program.

2:10 PM – 2:25 PM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

Charting Forward Progress

- 2:25 PM – 2:40 PM: GSGP Sustainable Agriculture Initiative

Cailyn Andrews, Program Manager for the Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers will share about the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, which was recently launched at the Governors' and Premiers' Leadership Summit in October and discuss the impetus for the initiative, resolution, and planned work for the first year of the initiative.

- 2:40 PM – 3:05 PM: Innovations in Rail

Harry Zander, Chief Commercial Officer for Intramotev, will speak to their battery-electric railcars that offer can a fast and flexible solution for many operations.

- 3:05 PM – 3:30 PM: Innovations in Marine

Rob Quartel (Chief Executive Officer) and Spenser Tessmann (BD & Commercial Lead) of Zeus will discuss their U.S. built ships that give middle-mile flexibility and resilience to supply chains.

- 3:30 PM – 4:00 PM: Intermodal Initiatives in the Great Lakes Region

Libby Ogard, President of Prime Focus LLC will give background on intramodal projects in the Great Lakes region and discuss how key collaborative projects can make a big shift in the transportation industry.

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM

Table Discussion & Group Polling Session

4:15 PM – 4:25 PM

Restroom Break

4:25 PM – 5:00 PM

- Group Discussion to chart a path for 2026, led by Mike Steenhoek of the Soy Transportation Coalition.

* Agenda subject to change.*

Event sponsorships are available! Email hcampbell@michigansoybean.org for more information.