

# Soybean History

By 1940, the U.S. soybean crop had grown to 78 million bushels, and the United States was a net exporter of soybeans and soybean products. That year, Henry Ford took an ax to a car trunk made with soybean plastic to demonstrate its durability. The publicity increased the soybean's popularity.

WORLD WAR II



The 1940s were a major turning point for soybeans in the United States. American farmers and soybean processors were ready to fill the gap when revolution in China and World War II disrupted soybean production and put traditional sources of protein and edible oils in short supply.

In the early 1950s, soybean meal became available as a low-cost, high-protein feed ingredient, triggering an explosion in U.S. livestock and poultry production and assuring a vast and continuing market for soybean farmers' output.



In 1956, the American Soybean Association began to promote U.S. soybeans in Japan, opening its first international office there.

In 2001, U.S. farmers surpassed a milestone in agricultural history by exporting more than 1 billion bushels of soybeans.

Today, farmers in more than 30 states grow soybeans, making soybeans the United States' second largest crop in cash sales and the No. 1 value crop export.

