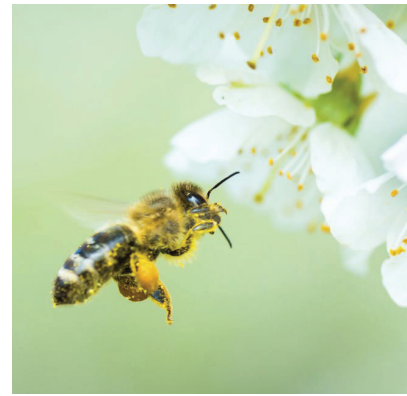


2026-2030

STRATEGIC PLAN





Fellow NASDA Members:

NASDA has always held a critical role as a connector of the state departments of agriculture, and in late 2025, members were invited to look inward at the organization and define its future. The result is a strategic plan that builds off the organization's historic success, but with even greater focus on member engagement, oversight and decision-making.

At its core, strategic planning is about answering four basic questions: Where are we now as an organization? Where do we want to be in the future? How will we get there? And, how will we know when we've arrived? To help answer these questions, we engaged a strategic planning partner, Nuffer, Smith, Tucker, to develop a robust and inclusive planning process rooted in member input (See Page 3).

With member direction at the center, a strategic planning working group helped shape a plan with a bold vision to make NASDA an indispensable champion for a thriving agriculture and food system in the United States. We reaffirmed that the organization will do this by focusing on four priority areas defined in our last strategic plan: government affairs; member engagement and education; partnerships; and public outreach. This work will be guided by a firm commitment to our values, which include member-driven decision making, engaging and collaborating with a diverse set of stakeholders and earning trust by acting with integrity and transparency.

As you review the plan in the pages that follow, I hope you see your voices reflected in it. It is a plan for *all* members, and that allows us to put our collective priorities front and center.

In addition, while the planning process was concluded in early 2026, the work toward our vision is just beginning, and I ask for your continued support in the months and years ahead. After all, NASDA is only as strong as the members who participate — and participation from all members is critical to NASDA's success in being able to best represent our collective states. By working together, and with support from our dedicated and talented NASDA staff, we can continue to strengthen U.S. agriculture and allied industries for decades to come.

Regards,

Commissioner Amanda Beal
NASDA Chair

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry



Strategic Planning Process

The NASDA strategic plan represents inputs from a variety of stakeholders, with member input prioritized. Members offered direction via virtual interviews and roundtables, a carefully selected strategic planning working group and an electronic survey that went out to the entire membership. Specifically, the strategic planning process included:

1. INTERVIEWS WITH WORKING GROUP, INFLUENCERS AND SELECT PARTNERS

NASDA developed a strategic planning working group designed to represent the diversity of the NASDA membership with representation from each region. These members — along with select influencers and partners — were interviewed about opportunities and threats, and to gather input on key elements of the plan, including the values, mission, vision and purpose of the organization. They also weighed in on potential courses of action for NASDA's future.

2. ELECTRONIC SURVEY OF NASDA MEMBERSHIP AND STAFF

NASDA sought to have all of its members' voices heard. For that reason, an electronic survey was developed and distributed to the entire membership and state staff. NASDA staff also received a similar survey.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING WITH WORKING GROUP

Input from the above two steps was used at the planning meeting as a starting point for discussion and to aid in the development of the plan. Working together, the group, which was comprised of members, reviewed all member input and laid out a draft plan, including values, mission, vision, purpose and key areas of focus for NASDA.

4. STAFF MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Following the meeting with the working group, an all-staff session was held in which they were briefed on the outcomes from the above steps. Using direction from the working group, staff then held breakout sessions to provide input on various elements of the draft plan. In addition, the staff session served as an opportunity to discuss internal operations, and ways to ensure the organization is set up for success as it aims to execute on the strategic plan. Following the in-person staff meeting, internal teams also had the opportunity to weigh in on actions and SMART objectives for each priority. Staff involvement is an important step in this process, as the internal team will drive implementation of the plan.

5. PLAN FINALIZED AND APPROVED BY NASDA WORKING GROUP AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The plan was then fine-tuned and presented back to the working group and board for final approval.

While these five steps represent key elements of strategic plan development, strategic planning is never done. Rather, the plan should continually be referenced to ensure all NASDA activities seek to achieve the objectives of the plan. In addition, key plan elements — values, mission, purpose, vision — should remain intact for the duration of the plan (2026-2030), while actions may be updated annually.

Members of the Strategic Planning Working Group

Kevin Atticks Secretary

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Amanda Beal Commissioner

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Paul Brierley Director

Arizona Department of Agriculture

Tyler Harper Commissioner

Georgia Department of Agriculture

Bryan Hurlburt Commissioner

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

Donald Lamb Director

Indiana Department of Agriculture

Mike Naig Secretary

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Ashley Randle Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Randy Romanski Secretary

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Derek Sandison Director

Washington State Department of Agriculture

Jillien Streit Director

Montana Department of Agriculture

Wes Ward Secretary

Arkansas Department of Agriculture

Strategic Plan at a Glance

Values (Principles to Drive Decisions):

State departments of agriculture provide public services and NASDA is their nonpartisan, united, member-driven voice. Together we:

- Advocate for U.S. agriculture, food systems and rural communities.
- Engage in dialogue and collaborate with a diverse set of stakeholders.
- Make decisions informed by sound, evidence-based science.
- Earn trust by acting with integrity and transparency.
- Rely on member-driven decision making.

Mission (Core Business):

Engage state departments of agriculture to strengthen U.S. agriculture and allied industries through policy, partnerships and public outreach.

Vision (Destination We Are Working Toward):

NASDA is an indispensable champion for a thriving agriculture and food system in the United States.

Purpose (End Benefit of U.S. Agriculture):

To sustain and enrich individuals and communities with essential food, feed, fuel and fiber.

Strategic Priorities (Areas of Focus to Achieve the Vision):

- 1. Government affairs:** NASDA represents state departments of agriculture on Capitol Hill and with federal agencies to positively shape policies affecting U.S. agriculture, food systems, farm viability and rural communities.
- 2. Member engagement and education:** NASDA prioritizes member engagement and education, with emphasis on fostering peer-to-peer connections to promote information sharing, networking and greater collective impact.
- 3. Partnerships:** NASDA grows partnerships — including those with federal and state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic entities, the private sector and more — in support of its vision, policy priorities and member value.
- 4. Public outreach:** NASDA serves as the trusted voice of state departments of agriculture nationally, amplifying their work and highlighting the impact of NASDA's policy priorities and cooperative agreements.

Ensuring NASDA is Set Up for Success

In order to successfully execute on the strategic plan, NASDA is committed to continuously examining internal operations with an aim on growing and developing talent, and increasing overall organizational effectiveness. During the 2026 strategic planning effort, NASDA leadership — working in concert with staff — has identified a need to examine the organization's use of technology; onboarding processes and training opportunities; internal communications; standard operating protocols; and more. These items will remain a focus for the organization for the duration of the plan to ensure the organization is set up to advance its vision as an indispensable champion for a thriving agriculture and food system in the United States.

Strategic Priority 1: Government Affairs

NASDA represents state departments of agriculture on Capitol Hill and with federal agencies to positively shape policies affecting U.S. agriculture, food systems, farm viability and rural communities.

- Strengthen and expand engagement with Congress and federal agencies through nonpartisan relationship building and advocating for NASDA's member-driven policies.
- Enhance member collaboration in government affairs to promote shared learnings and strengthen advocacy impact.
 - Optimize monthly all-member calls and policy committee meetings as a forum for information sharing between members and collaboration with NASDA on government affairs priorities.
 - Optimize the member center to summarize hot topics or policy action alerts for member engagement.
 - Promote consistent two-way debriefing between NASDA and its members on congressional and regulatory outreach.
 - Continue to utilize policy committees as means of gathering member input on policy priorities, while also looking at other built-in communication formats as ways to gather input or share best practices throughout the year.
 - Promote awareness to members of relevant legislation happening at the state level and provide a forum for collaboration on state-level model legislation.
 - Consider new formats or opportunities to connect NASDA members and states with emerging funding opportunities, and seek to include the NASDA Foundation where applicable and appropriate.



Strategic Priority 2: Member Engagement & Education

NASDA prioritizes member engagement and education, with emphasis on fostering peer-to-peer connections to promote information sharing, networking and greater collective impact.

- Provide intentional and consistent communication to members through multiple channels.
- Create mechanisms for greater collaboration between regions and NASDA. Consider:
 - Ensuring NASDA staff representation for each region.
 - Encouraging regional updates on all member calls, Winter Policy Conference and the Annual Meeting.
 - Including regional updates in the member update.
 - Urging members to visit other regional meetings.
- Continue to provide timely and topical education opportunities around areas of importance; ongoing areas of interest may be moved to committee-level support.
- Foster peer-to-peer engagements by:
 - Continuing to empower engaged members and the executive committee to serve as NASDA mentors to new and less engaged members.
 - Connecting members who share common issues.
- Consider the development of a training/education module for state and NASDA staff to get background on fundamental education and issues affecting U.S. agriculture and food systems.
- Optimize format and agendas for all member meetings with a focus on greater member value and learnings through advanced agenda sharing, elevating member experiences, sharing best practices and fostering increased collaboration.
- Reinvigorate meetings with senior state staff to continue to serve as a resource and facilitate collaboration between states.
- Strengthen relationships between affiliates and NASDA members.
- Provide a forum for candid and confidential conversations among members and senior state staff, possibly incorporated in the Member Center.



Strategic Priority 3: Partnerships

NASDA grows partnerships — including those with federal and state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic entities, the private sector and more — in support of its vision, policy priorities and member value.

- Explore NASDA-managed cooperative agreement models with federal partners with an aim to reduce the administrative burden on NASDA members. Potential partnerships should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, and funds should be awarded to states based on federal government allocations.
- Explore partnerships aligned with administration initiatives and NASDA priorities, particularly in areas or agencies where we lack depth.
- Continue to promote U.S. agriculture abroad through partnerships with the Foreign Agricultural Service, other cooperators and stakeholders by developing tangible, market-specific strategies.
- Leverage our network to continue driving the reliability of U.S. agricultural data through our partnership with USDA-NASS.



Strategic Priority 4: Public Outreach

NASDA serves as the trusted voice of state departments of agriculture nationally, amplifying their work and highlighting the impact of NASDA's policy priorities and cooperative agreements.

- Continue to implement a carefully selected and strategic news bureau of activities – including op-ed placements and proactive and reactive outreach to mainstream national media – of earned media coverage in alignment with NASDA's member-driven policy priorities and with an aim on showcasing members.
- Increase collaboration with members and COSDA through the development of shared news media materials, social media content, toolkits and other resources that allow departments to serve as amplifiers of NASDA's media relations efforts within their states and contributors to NASDA's voice on a national scale.
- Continue to collaborate with groups like the Ag CEO Council and other coalitions on shared communications objectives and uplifting major industry themes.
- Continue to seek speaking engagements for NASDA's leadership across departments, the NASDA Foundation and NASDA members, positioning the organization as a credible voice for the states, agriculture and food issues.
- Seek alignment in messaging across public outreach activities on behalf of all departments and foundation programs by utilizing NASDA key messages, NASDA tagline and NASDA message houses, among other strategies.
 - Conduct an audit to identify all of NASDA's target audiences for each department and the foundation to ensure current key messages and current communications deliverables are supporting their needs.
- Continue to build rapport and engagement with established relationships with news media and NASDA online followers.



SMART Objectives: Government Affairs

1. Establish a regular meeting cadence between NASDA members, senior state staff and communications professionals, as relevant. Meet with the following in the frequency outlined below:
 - a. Administration
 - i. USDA Secretary and/or Deputy Secretary: Bi-monthly
 - ii. USDA-AMS: Quarterly
 - iii. USDA-APHIS: Monthly
 - iv. USDA-FNS: Quarterly
 - v. EPA-OPP: Quarterly
 - vi. FDA: Semi-annual
 - b. Congressional
 - i. House Agriculture Committee: Semi-annual
 - ii. Senate Agriculture Committee: Semi-annual
2. Engage 100 agriculture policy influencers (congressional staff, committee staff, agency leads) annually in dialogue on NASDA's policy priorities.
 - a. Submit 50 letters, statements for the record, or comments annually on policy priorities.
 - b. Secure 4 opportunities for NASDA CEO or NASDA members to testify before a congressional committee.
3. Establish a regular meeting cadence of at least quarterly with 25% of NASDA affiliates and receive reports from at least 50% of NASDA affiliates annually.

SMART Objectives: Member Engagement

Member Communication:

1. Maintain an average 45% open rate and 10% click rate for the Member Update annually.

Expand Cross-Regional Collaboration Among Members:

1. By 2030, increase cross-regional collaboration by ensuring 100% of NASDA regions have a designated NASDA staff liaison and that one member of each regional leadership team has attended another region's summer meeting prior to hosting in their state.

Increase Participation in NASDA Educational Programming:

1. Launch the NASDA educational program for state and NASDA staff by 2028, with at least 20 participants in the year of launch.
2. Have 65% of educational session participants express that they gained knowledge for the betterment of their role in a state department of agriculture in the exit survey.

Strengthen Peer-to-Peer Member Connections:

1. By 2030, 100% of new members are successfully paired with mentors on the executive committee and in the NASDA general membership.
2. Maintain a 75% attendance rate of new NASDA members attending a NASDA Winter Policy Conference or Annual Meeting within their first year.

Meeting Improvement and Member Value:

1. By 2030, ensure that NASDA meetings maintain a 90% satisfaction rating from NASDA members, an 85% satisfaction rating from NASDA Partners and an 80% satisfaction rating from general attendees as measured through the NASDA post-meeting surveys.
2. Maintain having 80% of NASDA members at the NASDA meetings.
3. 100% of NASDA members receive a touchpoint with the NASDA CEO each calendar year.

SMART Objectives: Partnerships

NASDA-Managed Cooperative Agreements:

1. NASDA identifies and leads on 3-5 new cooperative agreements on behalf of its members in the next 3 years.

Explore Partnerships:

1. Generate \$1 million in private partnerships renewed annually.
2. Recruit a minimum of 3 new partner companies at \$35,000 or more.

Promote American Agriculture:

1. Achieve documented market access outcomes in a minimum of 60% of inbound or outbound international engagements annually, while identifying a minimum of 3 new or expanded market access pathways each year.
2. Increase projected export sales from NASDA trade shows by 2.5% year over year.
3. Add a minimum of one state per year to trade show programs.

USDA-NASS Partnership:

1. Improve survey response rates across all surveys, including improved engagement with NASDA members.
2. Expand the enumerator applicant pool by partnering with 2-year and 4-year agricultural programs in NASDA regions with a goal of maturing 12 or more new partnerships with academic institutions throughout 2026 and each year after.

SMART Objectives: Public Engagement

1. Increase press mentions of NASDA by 15% annually in media outlets (2026 –2,773) and achieve 40% positive (currently 32%) and 55% neutral (currently 65%) sentiment.
2. Secure four quarterly speaking engagements for NASDA leadership with organizations relevant to NASDA stakeholders in 2026 and increase those engagements by one event per quarter each year.
3. Secure 25,000 engagements across all NASDA social media platforms annually and achieve a cumulative 20% increase in followers across platforms annually.
4. Ensure the growth of NASDA's trade teams and Foundation social media and NASDA's monthly newsletter:
 - a. Secure 3,000 engagements across NASDA trade social media platforms annually and grow following by 10% across all platforms.
 - b. Secure 3,500 engagements across NASDA Foundation social media platforms annually and gain 150 new followers across all platforms.
 - c. Grow subscribers of NASDA News by 150 new subscribers annually and maintain an average open rate of 40%.
5. Grow website views of non-NASS enumerator pages by 10% annually.
6. Feature NASDA member voices and state spotlights in 25 pieces of content per year.