Iowa Grain Quality Initiative has funded projects to assess Iowa’s processing capacity for corn and soybeans and determine the effect of increased local processing on distribution patterns and storage requirements for these grains, products and co-products. Reports were based on information gathered from interviews with managers of ethanol and soybean processing plants and from industry publications and USDA NASS. A database is being maintained by Extension Value Added Agriculture Program to characterize the types of corn and soy processing available in Iowa and to estimate the amount of grain they require annually. Also, a map is being constructed to display the location of these plants. Understanding the delivery needs of ethanol, biodiesel, and other production has supported the creation of software by IGQI to assist farmers and grain handlers in determining whether to build additional storage facilities.

Rapid expansion of ethanol and biodiesel production continues to have a dramatic effect on corn and soybean demand in Iowa and across the US. These changes in US agriculture have been seen by some as a threat to food security and the environment as the food vs. fuel debate continues. IGQI’s role at this time is to maintain accurate information about local processing, to support ANR in delivering current information that reflects Iowa’s agricultural practices, and to support the development of measurement systems needed by processors and users of products and co-products.

Objectives for FY2009

1. Update databases and map to include all corn and soybean processors.
2. Keep current written report of processing capacity, grain use, relationship of current processing capacity to soybeans and corn moving into food/feed industries
3. Provide support and guidance to companies who wish to develop rapid internal testing methods on new materials and/or with new technologies.

FY2009 Expected Outputs

1. Current databases for corn and soybean usage; map showing location of processing plants in Iowa.
2. Written report and Power Point presentation updated quarterly to reflect current status of corn and soybean processing in Iowa.
3. New NIR calibration development with at least 3 Iowa companies for quality measurement of grain or processed products.