



Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) Project Report to the Board of Directors March 2025

National Grain and Feed Digital Solutions (NGFDS) – is the separate corporation formed to develop and administer the Barge Digital Transformation (BDT) platform – a massive undertaking to provide the industry a digital alternative to the time-consuming, inefficient, and costly delays inherent in the paperwork-intensive processes formerly common in the barge trade.

It was over four years ago that BDT officially launched for southbound corn on the Mississippi in November 2020 – after two years of prototyping, testing and development with the tech provider, ICE Digital Trade (formerly essDOCS). BDT now provides for trading in all the target commodities including corn, wheat, soybeans, DDGS and soybean meal. Approximately 90% of all bills of lading for southbound Mississippi River flows are digitized on the BDT platform.

Ongoing and future activities

- In addition to providing to NGFA member companies the services of the BDT platform, NGFDS expects in December 2025 – for the fifth consecutive year – to pay to NGFA an annual administrative fee of \$50,000.
- NGFDS has a current balance of \$205,700. Transactional volumes are steady and financial projections are positive.
- Extensive work continues on platform improvements and enhancements, involving the specially assigned task force, ICE and the NGFDS directors and officers toward a consensus moving through the identified priority tasks. The first round of improvements and enhancements were released late in 2023. NGFDS has identified a second round of improvements and enhancements, and it expects to complete testing and development on those toward the end of Q1/beginning of Q2 2025.
- In September 2024, NGFDS renewed its contract with ICE that governs administration of the platform for a three-year term and an allocation of \$3.50 to ICE from the \$10 transactional fee.
- A question has been raised about potential inconsistencies when applying barges between what is indicated in the BDT platform and outside communications among the parties. The consensus of the NGFDS Board was that the terms in the BDT system would likely control, but the Board determined that the BDT best practices task force should consider the issues and potentially revise the best practices document.
- General promotion, education, and outreach efforts continue in full swing, particularly including recruiting efforts. BDT has largely come to dominate its marketplace with the significant participating companies signed on, yet companies continue to join, and it's recognized that other sectors (e.g., DDGS) could also benefit from employment of the BDT system.

- NGFDS continues to explore areas for additional efficiencies, such as activities by FGIS involving certificates and inspection data and the potential for integrating this digitally with the BDT system.
- In September 2024, a new Chairman, John Kopina (Louis Dreyfus); and a new Vice Chairman, Jessica Stephan (Bunge), were elected to the NGFA Board.
- Also currently serving on the NGFDS Board are Julie Bradford (ADM); Steve Burbrink (CGB); Charlie Delacruz (NGFA); Jordan Garcia (Zen-Noh); Andrew Luttrell (Ingram Barge); Rich McCarty (ACBL); Tyler Rongitsch (Cargill); and Greg Sippl (CHS). Also currently serving as NGFDS officers are Brittany Batz (Bunge), Project Manager; Charlie Delacruz (NGFA), Executive Director; and Mary Hitchcock (NGFA), Secretary-Treasurer.
- NGFDS officers and directors continue to meet on a quarterly basis.
- We have 72 companies signed up for the BDT platform (55 shippers, 17 barge Lines). Although approximately 90% of the trade is already digitized on the BDT platform – NGFDS continues to enlist new participants. Two new companies have signed up since the last report [*in bold print below*].

Shippers: Agrex, Inc | AGRIServices of Brunswick LLC | Alabama Farmers Cooperative, Inc. | Alto Nutrients | Archer Daniels Midland Company | Avere Commodities Corp. | Benson Hill Inc. | Bunge North America, Inc | Cargill, Inc. | Central Missouri AGRIService LLC | CHS Inc. | Clarkson Grain Co. | COFCO International Grains US LLC | COFCO Growmark LLC | Consolidated Grain and Barge Co. | **Ervin Feed & Grain** | ETG Trading Inc. | Farmers Grain Terminal, Inc. | Grain Processing Corporation | Greenfield Commodities | Hansen-Mueller Co. | Hawkeye Gold LLC | Heartland Co-op | Heritage Cooperative | Hopkinsville Elevator Company | J.D. Heiskell & Company, Inc. | **Lakeside Grain Trading, LLC** | Livestock Nutrition Center | Leland Farmers Company | Louis Dreyfus Company | Marquis Trading, LLC | Oakley Grain, Inc. | Obion Grain Co. Inc. | Olam Americas, Inc. | Owensboro Grain Co. | Perdue AgriBusiness Grain LLC | Pilgrims Pride Corporation | Poinsett Rice and Grain Company, Inc. | Prairie Creek Grain Company | Red Wing Grain LLC | StoneX Commodity Solutions, LLC | The Andersons Inc. | The DeLong Co., Inc. | The Scoular Company | Toyota Tsusho America, Inc. | Tyson Shared Services, Inc. | Ursa Farmers Cooperative Company | Valero Marketing and Supply Company | Valley Park Elevator, Inc. | Viserion Grain LLC | Viterro USA Ag Holdings, LLC | Viterro USA LLC | Western Milling LLC | Woodall Grain Company | Zen-Noh Grain Corporation

Carriers: American Commercial Barge Line LLC | American River Transportation Company | Campbell Transportation, Inc. | Cargo Carriers, a business of Cargill, Inc. | Ceres Consulting LLC | Cooper Marine & Timberlands | Eastside River Transportation | Florida Marine Transporters, LLC | Heartland Barge Management LLC | Ingram Barge Company LLC | LMR Freight, LLC | Oakley Barge Line | Parker Towing Company, Inc. | Robert B. Miller and Associates, Inc. | ROI Logistics & Marine Services LLC | RTI Barge Management, Inc. | SCF Marine Inc.