

## Ag PAC dollars on the rise in 2018 election cycle

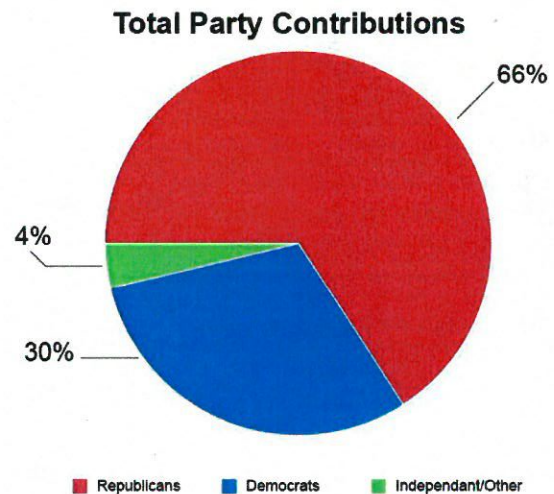
The 2018 midterms were notable for a variety of reasons — shifting Washington to divided government and a bipartisan wave of new faces coming to town, to name a few — and ag, food, and select energy political action committees reached deeper into their pockets than ever before to edge their way into the conversation.

According to a study of contributions from 238 PACs collected by the Center for Responsive Politics and analyzed by *Agri-Pulse*, American ag interests donated over \$38.5 million in the 2018 election cycle, with the majority of giving headed toward the Republican Party. The top names include some of the most familiar names in farm policy, and a closer look at some of the trends shows a few races didn't quite go the way the ag money may have hoped.

**The top individual recipient was Texas Republican Mike Conaway, pulling in just under \$600,000.** At the time of the election, Conaway chaired the House Agriculture Committee and was in the process of drafting what would become the 2018 farm bill with the lead negotiators from the House and Senate ag panels.

One of those lead negotiators, **Senate Ag Committee Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., was the top recipient in the Senate.** Stabenow, who was up for reelection in the 2018 cycle, collected a little over \$461,000 in contributions.

Both Stabenow and Conaway were also the lead recipients in the *Agri-Pulse* analysis of [contributions to that point in June](#), but both added a sizable amount of money — Conaway an



Source: Center for Responsive Politics data analyzed by Agri-Pulse.

officer. Kadavy will now oversee strategic development, innovation, supply chain and all day-to-day commercial operations for Darigold. He has 15 years' experience with Cargill, last serving as president of Cargill America.

**Matt Helms** has been named the new vice president of marketing at NewLeaf Symbiotics. Before this position, Helms worked 18 years for Monsanto Company (now Bayer Crop Science), most recently serving as vice president of global ag productivity technology but also as vice president of global business development and vice president of global crop protection marketing. NewLeaf Symbiotics is a company focused on the implementation of sustainable agriculture by exploring naturally occurring microbes known as M-trophs.

**Linda Arnold Whaley** was named head of marketing communications for Syngenta, a newly created position. Whaley's previous experience includes working for Monsanto, Bayer Crop Science, and BASF.

**Kate LaTour** left Sen. Tammy Baldwin's, D-Wis., office to take a new position with the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International as their government relations manager. LaTour was formerly a legislative aide; Baldwin's office has not yet announced her replacement.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, and current president of the World Food Prize, **Kenneth Quinn**, will be recognized by the Aegis Trust of Great Britain, as the recipient of the Steven Krulis Champion of Humanity Distinguished Service Award. The award recognizes those who work to confront and prevent genocide while also promoting the values of humanity. Quinn is known as the first person to report in 1974 the genocidal policies of Pol Pot and Khmer Rouge, the worst genocidal, mass-murdering, terrorist organization of the second half of the 20th century. He continued to speak out and help provide services to Cambodians and then raised the alarm two years ago before the start of the genocide starting in Cambodia. He then worked to develop an ingenious way to eradicate the perpetrators of the mass murder. Quinn becomes the second individual to receive the award behind **L Gen Romeo Dallaire** of Canada in 2002.

**David Bailey** joined the Sand County Foundation to manage the Leopold Conservation Award program. Bailey will oversee the award program in California, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota and Utah. The award, currently offered in 14 states, recognizes farmers, ranchers and foresters for their outstanding conservation achievements on working land. Bailey previously worked as a relationship manager of commercial and agribusiness accounts for Zions Bank and as the Utah Farm Bureau Federation's Vice President of Organization, managing the Young Farmer and Rancher program.

Foster Farms has a new CEO: **Dan Huber**. He joined the company in 1996, where he rose to the position of COO. Huber held sales and management positions at Oscar Mayer and Kraft Foods before joining Foster Farms. He replaces **Laura Flanagan**, who resigned from the CEO position.

Defenders of Wildlife named **Thu Pham** to serve as chief of staff. Pham has been secretary to the board of directors, where she manages the day-to-day operations of the president's office and helps advance the president's agenda and priorities.

The U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) board of directors elected new officers to serve for the 2019-20 fiscal year. **Doug Goyings** will serve as chairman, **Darren Padget** will serve as vice