

insights

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET March 16, 2020 | TTR not mapped yet | Steven M. Ritchey

Thompson Coburn supports opening of Center for Soybean Innovation

On March 5, the Missouri Soybean Association (MSA) and Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council (MSMC) officially opened the completed Center for Soybean Innovation to the public, a project [supported by Thompson Coburn](#) since its conception in 2017.

Intellectual Property partner [Steve Ritchey](#) attended the event in Jefferson City on behalf of Thompson Coburn. The Center features the Thompson Coburn Community Room, named in honor of the Firm's financial support of the facilities' construction. Also in attendance were Missouri Governor **Mike Parson** and Lieutenant Governor **Mike Kehoe**.

The Center serves as the new home of Firm clients MSA and MSMC, along with the Biodiesel Coalition of Missouri, the Foundation for Soy Innovation, the Missouri Farmers Care group and the Ag Education on the Move program. The building itself incorporates soy-based products in nearly all of its construction, including insulation, paint, the fuel in its furnace, carpet and countertops. Along with office spaces, the Center includes educational exhibits showcasing soybeans and their use.

Thompson Coburn has represented MSMC in corporate, litigation, and intellectual property matters for more than five years. Beginning in 2015, the Firm helped MSMC patent and market a high-oleic (HO) soybean trait, an even healthier version of what is widely regarded as a food providing high amounts of protein and little saturated fat. HO soybeans are currently in high demand; the food industry wants the healthy, shelf-stable oil properties of HO soybeans. Farmers are also big fans of the strong yield and healthful traits: The first two commercially available conventional HO soybean varieties were released in 2018 in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Michigan.

Thompson Coburn also helped MSMC achieve a [significant court victory](#) in litigation with a former MSMC executive and alleged licensee who profited from suspect contracts for valuable soybean technologies.

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