



## ACGF Statement on Passing of ACGF Chairman Gale Lush

*For Immediate Release*

Dan McGuire

**WILCOX, NEB – September 14, 2025** –ACGF Officers Mark Lounsbery, Vice Chairman; Dennis Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer and Policy Director Dan McGuire sadly report the loss of ACGF Chairman Gale Lush who passed away on September 13, 2025. It has been a distinct honor to have been Gale's friend and colleague all these years and to have worked with a national farm policy

leader and man of Gale's high caliber and integrity.

## Gale Lush Eulogy by Dan McGuire

This is Dan McGuire, Policy Director of the American Corn Growers Foundation speaking from Kennebunk, Maine where I live now. I wish I could be there today in person. Gale Lush was the Foundation (ACGF) Chairman for nearly its entire history. ACGF officers Mark Lounsbery and Dennis Mitchell, both from South Dakota, join me in expressing our sincere condolences to Laurie, Alex, Sarah, the entire Lush family and all Gale's friends and neighbors for their loss. Foundation officers Mark, Dennis and I, along with my son, Colin were fortunate to see Gale, Laurie, Sarah and Tom, along with Tom and Sarah's children in May of this year in South Sioux City at our ACGF board meeting.

At that meeting the board and officers presented Gale with the **35-Year Chairman Leadership Award** recognizing his impressive record of dedicated state and national leadership and service to rural America. Gale can add that award to his many others including American Corn Growers **Hero of Ag** award. Gale was a leader on multiple, impactful issues that benefit the entire rural sector. Here's just a few.

- Economic development policy leadership with state legislatures and the U.S. Congress
- The biofuels renewable fuel standard (RFS), especially for ethanol. Gale advocated the RFS for many years. It was finally passed by Congress in 2005 and updated in 2007. That policy is now responsible for 5.5 billion bushels of annual domestic corn demand and utilization. That's 33% of the entire estimated 2025 corn crop. Imagine how low the price of corn would be without ethanol. Gale had a lot to do with that success story. Just think of all the good rural jobs that also resulted.
- Gale was a leader in other renewable energy policies. Under Gale's leadership the ACGF created the **Wealth from the Wind** economic development program. Gale and I went to Pipestone, MN in 2003 and met with international wind energy pioneer Dan Juhl, the creator of community-based energy development or CBED that prioritizes local ownership of wind energy projects. Given Gale's sharp business acumen he quickly saw the economic development potential for rural Nebraska. We took multiple Nebraska officials up to Dan Juhl's wind farm on the Buffalo Ridge to give them first-hand knowledge. Gale convinced Dan Juhl to come to Nebraska to inform and educate Nebraska officials on the economic benefits of wind energy. As a result, the Nebraska Legislature passed a CBED law in 2007. Gale was there at the Capitol when the Governor signed the law. Thanks to Gale's leadership working with Nebraska public power on wind and solar energy development Nebraska has new renewable sources of energy and lower energy prices.

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- Gale led on state and national farm and trade policy. He testified many times at the Nebraska Legislature's hearings on bills that impact rural Nebraska. I'm sure Laurie can attest to the fact that Gale traveled to Washington, DC too many times to remember and lobbied Congress on farm bills and other important policies. Gale did that for the benefit of his neighbors, all farmers and the entire rural economy. That's leadership.

I first met Gale in the mid 1970's when we were both attending the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Gale had just gotten accepted into the UNL Law College and was celebrating with some of his ag fraternity brothers. My friends and I were sitting at the next table, so we briefly met. I'm sure that law degree was beneficial over the years for Gale's farm business and the farm organizations that Gale led and served. Gale and I met again in the 1980's when I led the Nebraska Wheat Board and Gale was on the Nebraska Corn Board. Then in the 1990's Gale served on the Interstate Grain Commission board when I was its Executive Director. Gale cut a wide policy swath on key issues ranging from grain quality to farm and trade policy.

On a personal note, I have to say that I've never known a more dedicated family man and community leader than Gale Lush. I can speak for ACGF Officers Mark Lounsbury, Dennis Mitchell and myself in saying that it's been a great pleasure and a distinct honor to have been Gale's friend these years and to have known a man of Gale's high caliber and integrity. Rest well my friend. Thank you.

## Obituary of Gale E. Lush

Gale E. Lush, 73, of rural Wilcox, passed peacefully in his home on September 13th, 2025. Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 20, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Hildreth with Rev. Caroline Schenk officiating. The service will be streamed to the church's YouTube page. Private family interment will be held at Moline Cemetery. Visitation with family present will be held from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 19, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Hildreth. In lieu of flowers, memorials in Gale's honor are kindly suggested to Trinity Lutheran Church in Hildreth or to the Wilcox Volunteer Fire Department. Arrangements are under the care of Craig Funeral Home in Minden.

Gale Edward Lush was born on March 13, 1952, in Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, Nebraska. He was the first born of eight to Verlie and Phyllis (Caspers) Lush. He grew up on the family farm seven miles south and two miles east of Wilcox, Nebraska. Gale took Angus cattle to the Franklin County Fair for two years in 4-H and another two years as a member of FFA. He received purple and blue ribbons for showmanship and for his Angus breeding heifer and cow & calf entries. Gale and his brother Ron bought their first piece of farmland in 1972 just before President Nixon devalued the dollar twice to get reelected. President Nixon was impeached, land prices soared.

Gale graduated from Wilcox High School in May of 1970 as the class Salutatorian. He then went to the University of Nebraska on a Regents Scholarship and majored in Agricultural Economics. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1974. In his freshman year, he saw President Richard Nixon give Bob Devaney the trophy for Nebraska being National Football Champions in 1970-71. Gale missed out on the SDS marching on the Military and Naval Science Building after the massacre of the students at Kent State in 1969. He did participate in a giant snowball fight on 16th Street that is talked about even to this day. Gale was a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon during his last two years as an undergraduate. He kept his clothes on during the streaking fad that swept through the nation during the Spring of 1974.

In 1974 Gale applied to Law School at the University of Nebraska. Out of 1200 applicants, 180 were accepted. In 1977 he graduated from Law School with a Juris Doctor degree. He passed the bar in April of 1978 and was admitted to practice before the Nebraska Supreme Court and the Federal District Court.

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Gale did not hang out his shingle. He went back to Wilcox and the farm, where he works "just for the family" to this day.

In 1982 Gale was selected to be one of 30 Fellows in the Leadership Education Action Development LEAD II group. The program consisted of attending 14 three-day seminars about various state, national and international issues over a two-year period. Two weeks of domestic travel and study and three weeks of international travel and study were involved. Gale was able to travel in Latin America and enjoyed all the people and countries he traveled in. He nearly bought a soybean farm in Paraguay.

In 1991 Governor Nelson appointed Gale to the Nebraska Corn Board where he represented the economic interests of all those Nebraska corn farmers that paid the corn check-off. He also served in 1996 as the Governor appointee on the Interstate Grain Commission, a 5-state entity. The Commission worked to successfully improve federal grain standards and export high quality, identity-preserved grain to quality conscious buyers in Europe.

In 1995 Gale was elected to the Board of the Nebraska Farmers Union. He enjoyed flying to Washington D.C. and lobbying on various farm issues of the day. He was in Washington on September 11, 2001, when the Pentagon was hit by Osama Bin Laden. In 1995 he became Chairman of the American Corn Growers Foundation. As Chairman Gale enjoyed initiating programs promoting renewal energy such as ethanol and wind energy development in Nebraska and surrounding states. Gale was very proud of helping pass L.B. 629 the Community Based Energy Development law that enabled Nebraskans to develop wind farms in a 100% Public Power State.

Gale and Laurie met in 1985, were married in 1986 and started their family. Son Alexander Edward was born on October 14th, 1986. The arrival of Sarah Jane on September 1, 1988, made their family complete.

Gale was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Hildreth, having served in leadership roles and on committees in the church.

Gale enjoyed attending his grandchildren's activities and bragging about their achievements. After six grandsons, Gale was delighted to welcome a granddaughter to the family in December 2024.

In March 2024 Gale was diagnosed with end stage liver failure due to primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC). He made the most of his time left by visiting old friends, attending musicals and concerts, spending time with family, and driving countless miles around his farm ground.

Gale is survived by his wife, Laurie Lush; son, Alexander (Elise) Lush; daughter, Sarah Lush (Thomas Wanek); grandchildren, Luke Lush, Rylan Lush, Henry Lush, Jasper Lush, Everett Lush, Isaac Wanek and Audrey Wanek; brother, John (Roxanne) Lush; sisters, Linda Brummer, Rhonda (Greg) Roberts, Ramona (Mark) Wilder, Trish (Galen) Kronhofman, and Shirley (Bruce) Steinkruger; sisters-in-law, Shirley A. Lush and Gwen Hoylman; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, extended relatives and close friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Ronald Lush; parents-in-law, James (Faye) Hill; grandmother, Margaret Casper; brothers-in-law, Wayne Brummer and Allen Hoylman.

Tributes and memories can be shared with the family at [www.craigfunerals.com](http://www.craigfunerals.com).

To send flowers or a memorial gift to the family of Gale E. Lush please visit our [Sympathy Store](#)

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