



# NAICC NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 No.1

January 1990

## The National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we start a new year, members of NAICC and others in our profession have many tasks to accomplish. The Board and the Executive Vice President will be relying on the members and committees more than ever.

Hopefully, you have received the new committee assignments. If there is a committee on which you would like to work but were not assigned, please let Madeline or me know so plans can be made for next year. The input from the committee questionnaire and the demographic survey was valuable in making these committee assignments. Volunteers are always needed.

You may have noticed that we have a number of new committees, which were formed after considerable deliberation. Concern was that we did not want so many committees as to be unwieldy, but we recognized that additional committees are needed to accomplish our goals.

In light of REAP and other developments, we must strengthen channels of communications with other professionals influencing agriculture. As a result, the liaison committees were formed to establish closer and more personal contact with other groups who share our interests and concerns. Contact with universities, government agencies, environmental groups, farm organizations and professional societies is very important for our future. We have many things in common with these groups and need to work more closely and cooperatively.

**A number of new committees were formed to help us accomplish our goals.**

Another area we need to strengthen is our relationship to federal and state governments. We must upgrade our ability to respond in a timely manner to developments in Congress and in state legislatures as well as in federal and state agencies. With the new farm bill being formulated, it is obvious that our profession is in jeopardy by those who make and interpret the rules. We must be more communicative with "the powers that be."

The USDA Integrated Crop Management plan is one such development, and was mentioned in this column

last month. Dave Harms and Bob Ascherman report that the Illinois and Indiana ASCS offices believe the Soil Conservation Service and Extension Service are the only groups capable of administering such a plan. It is obvious to NAICC that this is not the case and we are working with ARCPACS and ARPE to bring this point to the attention of the proper people with USDA. Members, encourage your state organizations to be active and work with NAICC in these matters.

**"It is obvious that our profession is in jeopardy by those who make and interpret the rules."**

Another potentially harmful development in agriculture is brewing in Washington at this time. This one, fortunately, does not involve NAICC members, but will reflect negatively on all of agriculture. This most recent issue is about cases of industry support of personal activities of extension specialists and university researchers. Some LISA advocates and supporters of organic farming are implying that free seminars and other activities sponsored by industry are compromising the objectivity of the extension specialists and university researchers who attend them. The Pro-LISA groups complain of a conflict of interest when the extension or research personnel then speak out on farm policy issues. But they only complain when they speak out against LISA. We all know that the educational activities sponsored by industry provide valuable information about product development and target pests. To avoid similar accusations directed at us, we must remember to conduct our affairs ethically, and do all we can to protect our most valued asset, our independence.

There is increasing awareness of independent crop consultants by other agricultural sectors. This should be pleased that others are recognizing our contributions, but this awareness presents us with new challenges. We must not allow outside interests to misuse our profession. They might be inclined to do so due to an incomplete understanding of our profession and, in addition, their aims might be different from our own. Obviously, they are looking after their own interests; we must not forget to look after ours.

Dan E. Bradshaw, CPAg/CS, NAICC President  
Crop Aid

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Highlights of Board of Directors Conference Call - 12/17/89

### Participants Included:

Dan Bradshaw, Madeline Mellinger, Richard Wildman, Harold Lambert, James Ladlie, Larry Emerson, Bruce Nowlin, Garry Raymond

### Treasurer's Report - Harold Lambert

Harold reported that the NAICC has been approved by the IRS for Tax Exempt 501(c)6 status. The board reviewed the organization's general financial statements and then discussed at length ideas relative to next year's efforts.

Total Convention Income (to date): \$38,774.00  
Total Convention Expenses (to date): \$36,286.01

### Newsletter Publishing

Madeline Mellinger reported on her research efforts regarding possibilities for enhancing the format of the NAICC Newsletter. Several options were discussed.

The board agreed that NAICC needs to continually strive to improve the content as well as the appearance of the newsletter as funds and ability permit. Toward that end, the editorial review committee is now active and will continue to help Garry edit text each month. The options for format enhancement of the newsletter will be further discussed at the January board meeting.

### Update on Consultant Certification

Deanna Marquart of Marquart Policy Analysis joined the conference call to report on her recent activities. Deanna is currently pursuing several avenues for grant funding. In addition to these direct funding requests, Deanna is developing ideas for the promotion of the REAP idea. Deanna reported that Dr. Charles Benbrook, the executive director of the Board of Agriculture, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, has replied favorably to the concept of certification of agricultural professionals. In addition, Deanna and Dan Bradshaw are co-authoring an article for Agrichemical Age.

### Education Fund

Garry Raymond reported that contributions to the educational fund are being received.

### NAICC Display

The board authorized the public relations committee to proceed with the construction of a display board to be used by the NAICC.

### Legislative and Policy Review Committee

Dan Bradshaw updated the board on the new USDA-ASCS Integrated Crop Management Program as well as current policy plans for chemical use reduction.

The board agreed that governmental policies will have a significant impact on consultants. It was proposed and approved that a new committee be established to review and respond to legislation and policies that impact crop consulting. It was stated that active involvement from the membership as well as the board will be essential.

### 1991 Convention

Several cities were discussed as possible sites, with Washington D.C. and Kansas City receiving the most interest. Convention bureaus for those cities are being contacted for specific information. Madeline was asked to serve as the convention chair.

### Upcoming Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be January 26-28 in Austin, TX. The board encourages any members who have a specific issue they would like to have discussed to contact any board member prior to the meeting.

Richard F. Wildman  
Agricultural Consulting Services, Inc  
NAICC Secretary

## NAICC MEMBER HONORED

Curtis Wilhelm has been selected as the Cotton Farming Magazine's Consultant of the Year for 1989. An editorial salute will appear in the January issue. The 1989 Cotton Consultant of the Year Award is sponsored by ICI Agricultural Products. Congratulations Curtis!



## NEW MEMBERS

Margaret Alms, B.S. (Horticulture)  
Voting Member  
Alms & Alms Consulting  
Route 2 Box 262  
Lake Crystal, MN 56055  
Office 507-947-3362  
Began business 1980

Lou Ann Bever, B.S. (Plant Pathology)  
Voting Member  
Cattail Marsh Consulting  
Rt. 2, Box 92A  
Kendall, WI 54638  
Office 608-427-3687  
Home 608-427-3687  
Began business 1983  
Services: Integrated pest management - consulting in general.  
Crops: Cranberries

Hal Martin Tucker, B.S. (Agronomy)  
Provisional Member  
CENTROL of Cottonwood  
Box 396  
Minneota, MN 56264  
Office 507-423-5423  
Home 507-872-6357  
Began business 1986  
Services: Soil testing and interpretation of results, seed recommendations, crop monitoring, IPM recommendations and field records.  
Crops: Corn, wheat, beans, edible beans.

Welcome

## WHAT'S DEANNA DOING FOR US?

Deanna J. Marquart of Marquart Policy Analysis Associates (MPAA) has been contracted to assist the NAICC with the REAP concept. The following are highlights of MPAA's activities to date:

Developed On Going Rapport with Board on Agriculture

Through correspondence and telephone contact, MPAA began and is continuing conversations with Charles

Benbrook, Executive Director of the Board on Agriculture, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Benbrook supports the REAP concept and is interested in having the Board manage a nationwide study of agricultural education and training currently available to support a transition into improved professional training for agricultural consultants. MPAA and the Board are cooperating in a search for support funds for such a study. Of three letters of inquiry sent to major foundations (Kellogg, Carnegie, and Rockefeller), two responses consisted of expressions of interest in the concept but decisions not to provide funds (MPAA has received no response to date from the Rockefeller Foundation).

### Proposal Development with Respect to Potential Funders for NAICC in Particular

MPAA has requested application packages from the eight foundations identified in materials prepared for NAICC prior to the Annual Conference in Las Vegas (plus a couple others we have identified since then). We have identified the data that is necessary for proposal development and are working with Dan Bradshaw to obtain data that is already be available and to develop methods to obtain data NAICC and other groups can generate.

### Article for HBJ Farm Publications

Len Richardson, Editor for Agrichemical Age and California Farmer, requested an article about REAP for his February issue. Dan Bradshaw and Deanna Marquart are co-authoring this article.

## HERE'S A SUGGESTION FOR A POSSIBLE NEW MONEY MAKING SERVICE

### Expert Witnessing: An Additional Service or a Headache?

Have you ever considered ways of expanding the scope of services offered in your consulting practice? Does the idea of being an expert witness appeal to you? Or do you shiver at the thought of being on the witness stand with an opposing lawyer asking you difficult or embarrassing questions? Until you've tried it, you'll never know whether it is as bad or as good as it seems. It's sort of like learning to swim; you can't really swim until you get into the water and get wet.

If you look upon expert witness work as an opportunity

## Expert Witnessing (cont.)

to utilize and market your skills as a practical field agronomist in an area where a lot of individuals need help, rather than as a nasty chore in addition to your regular work load, you may find that it is a satisfying and rewarding adjunct to your regular services. Although you can be quite sure that there will be some uncomfortable moments as an expert witness, you can also be assured that there is real satisfaction in helping your client get a fair interpretation of the facts. Your contribution may be in direct testimony, by expressing your professional opinion in deposition or court. More often, however, it is likely to be in critically reviewing all of the pertinent facts in the case and helping the client and/or his attorney arrive at a position or strategy based on what the real facts are (if they can be reasonably determined) and helping to decide how to proceed. Sometimes it's just a matter of "damage control". If your client is an ag chem applicator or manufacturer, he may be responsible for an alleged crop loss, but the claim may be much exaggerated or include losses from other causes. Often, a well prepared case permits your client and the other party to the lawsuit to each make a more realistic evaluation of their respective positions and, as a result, arrive at a mutually more acceptable settlement than going to trial.

Often, your principal contribution will be to help instruct your client's attorney in the basics of agronomy or general agriculture as they apply to the case. Likewise, you may be asked to prepare questions for your client's attorney to ask of the other party's expert witness. Sometimes, helping to determine what questions not to ask can also be fruitful.

Keep in mind that you certainly won't always be on the winning side in a lawsuit. Your testimony may sometimes not be allowed due to legal considerations. You may at times feel like a "hired gun", but remember that each party in a lawsuit has a right to be heard and your assignment may be to provide the best technical defense under the circumstances. Usually, there is a considerable difference of opinion about what the real facts are, or in the interpretation of the facts. Otherwise, in civil cases, you can expect that a settlement would have already been reached.

Sometimes, the farmer and the ag chem seed or farm implement company representative cannot "see the whole picture" or they "see the wrong picture" and get locked into a position due to personal involvement that prevents a negotiated settlement. Such cases might

have been resolved by an independent claims investigator prior to litigation if they had been properly handled from the beginning. Thus, claims investigation is a natural outgrowth of (or forerunner of) and a very valuable adjunct to expert witness testimony. Many cases could be resolved early and at low costs if given prompt and adequate attention rather than going to court three or four years later.

Here are six practical matters to consider before deciding if you want to pursue expert witness assignments.

1. Advanced degrees and/or certification in the discipline of testimony is very desirable but not essential.
2. Maturity, practical experience, confidence, and good judgement, as well as an objective and unbiased approach by the expert, is essential.
3. Demands on your time, to appear in court or in preparation for court, can become serious limitations for solo practitioners or consultants in small firms.
4. You will need access to good agricultural library services.
5. Trouble shooting or claims investigation may be the best practical experience to prepare you for expert witness assignments.
6. Some substantial non-compensated time may need to be committed to this endeavor in order to "get up to speed" before earning expert witness fees.

The bottom line is: If you are qualified or can become a qualified expert witness and have a hunch that you might like it, give it a try. If the thought of being faced by an opposing attorney causes you to lose sleep or have nightmares, leave it alone (and call me).

By Robert E. Ascheman, Ph.D. CPAg/CS  
Ascheman Associates Consulting

## IN THE NEWS

NAICC member, Robyn Quaid, and her husband, Allan, were included in the recently published book, Big Sugar, by Alec Wilkinson, a writer for The New Yorker. Alec spent two years preparing this portrayal of the life of the cane harvesters, the sugar companies who hire them, and several cane farmers whose cane they cut. During this period, Alec spent a lot of time with Robyn

## IN THE NEWS (cont.)

and Allan Quaid, getting information about growers, the Florida Sugar League, and Allan's Australian workers and their mechanical harvesters.

The book has been labeled by the sugar industry as a political, inflammatory piece which exaggerates the plight of the migrant hand cutters. Robyn says it is extremely well written and a very accurate cross-section of life and lives in sugarcane harvesting..."with great anecdotes!"

The December 1989 issue of Agrichemical Age contained an article entitled "Don't Forget Forage: Dealers and consultants often overlook the potentials in forage, but there's a lot of hay to be made out there." The article, by Jane Paul Metcalf, highlighted the importance of utilizing a professional crop consultant for the production of a profitable alfalfa crop. Metcalf emphasized the vital roles the crop consultant and constant crop monitoring play in producing high quality alfalfa.

### IOWA CONSULTANTS ORGANIZE

The Iowa crop consultants are in the process of forming a consulting organization. The nucleus of the group has been meeting informally for the past five years on an annual basis. Until recently, the level of interest and number of potential members in Iowa has not been considered adequate to form an official organization. On December 19, 1989, at an impromptu breakfast meeting, a commitment was made by the fifteen participants to formally organize an Iowa organization along NAICC guidelines. Jay Johnson, Brad Buchanan, and Bob Ascheman were appointed to serve as a committee to draft a proposed constitution and by-laws for the new organization.

Submitted by, Robert E. Ascheman, Ph.D.  
Ascheman Associates

### NAICC REPRESENTED

Harold Lambert, NAICC Treasurer, spoke at the annual meeting of the Illinois and Indiana Crop Consultants held recently in Champaign, IL. Harold submitted the following information about his talk:

Dinner address to the Professional Crop Consultants of Illinois and the Indiana Association of Professional Crop Consultants by Harold Lambert on behalf of NAICC, January 2, 1990, Champaign, IL.

The NAICC is the only representative voice of independent crop consultants in the United States. It has had in the past, but will have much more in the future, a response to various issues affecting our profession. All professionals active in the business of independent crop consulting should have an interest in and will be affected by what NAICC has planned for the future (educational fund) and therefore if they are not members yet - they should consider joining.

"Environmental cross-compliance" as set forth by the Extension Service Policy Center (College Station, TX) was discussed. The proposal concerns NAICC, especially the idea of Extension "certifying" independent crop consultants. Professional crop consultants should not be subservient to Extension. They should be and are, like defined in Louisiana, "equals among equals."

Another topic of discussion was the "SP-53" pilot program by ASCS for cost sharing of pesticide expenses if certain practices are adopted. This also is of great concern to NAICC. Private consultants are mentioned in the guideline, but qualifications for private consultants is not mentioned.

### NAICC and Member's Services Described to Thousands: Great Potential for Business

Charlie and Madeline Mellinger coordinated and presented the NAICC exhibit at the American Farm Bureau Federation's "Farm/Ranch Expo 90" in Orlando, FL February 6-9. The NAICC exhibited as a guest of Boeing and NASA, whose interest was to promote commercially agricultural applications resulting from their space research.

The meeting was attended by over 10,000 people from all over the country, including President Bush and Secretary of Agriculture Yeutter. The NAICC display included two sections: The first contained newsletter, promotional pamphlets and business cards which were distributed, as well as a directory, new convention notebook and a framed copy of our code of ethics. The

## NEW EFFORT (cont.)

second portion of the display contained "examples of members services" and was linked to the first portion by a field photo taken by NAICC member, Bill Barksdale, and incorporated into a large NAICC framed poster.

In order to promote the NAICC and consulting in general as well as individual businesses, literature from the following members was distributed: Bob Ascheman, Bill Barksdale, Michael Brubaker, Paul Groneberg, David Harms, Don Jameson, Dick Jensen, Daney Kepple, Jim Ladlie, Ed Lloyd, John Nordgaard, Vernon Meints, Mark Otto, Bruce Nowlin, B.B. Singh, Randy Van Haren, and Rich Wildman.

Information from the Texas Association of Agricultural Consultants, Professional Crop Consultants of Illinois and the Nebraska CCPA certification program was also distributed. Alternative Agriculture was displayed to highlight members' contribution.

Hundreds of pieces of literature were given to booth visitors, most of whom were surprisingly unfamiliar with NAICC. Responses to this information were uniformly positive and we were told by a number of people that there would be business follow-ups. The idea of this approach for our display was last minute, and it is our hope that this type of effort can be repeated at other meetings with representative information from even more members and state organizations.

We are very excited about this approach to NAICC and individual members publicity. It could become the most important form of showcasing we have. Please let us know if you would be interested in participating in future efforts.

## EDUCATIONAL FUND SUPPORT GROWING

Our educational fund is seed money toward obtaining additional monetary support through foundation grants. To date there has been \$4,661.00 donated to the NAICC Educational Fund. We are nearing the half-way mark to our \$10,000 goal which was set at the convention. These monies are currently being used to fund Deanna Marquart's efforts toward certification, the education and curriculum development programs, and implementation of the REAP certification program. Specifics of these activities to date are reviewed in this newsletter.

Please help make this a truly united effort. If we all give a little nobody has to give a lot in order to get this important job accomplished. Send your contributions today to:

NAICC  
Harold C. Lambert, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 947  
Innis, LA 70747

## THAT'S NOT MY JOB

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done, and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

The above was found in Ann Landers' Column and was submitted by:

Dan E. Bradshaw, CPAg/CS  
Crop Aid  
NAICC President

## ETHICS

The following paragraph about ETHICS has now become a portion of the letter from President Bradshaw to new NAICC members. We thought you might like to see it.

ETHICS is a very special concern of the NAICC membership. Enclosed is a copy of the Code of ETHICS of the NAICC (suitable for framing). Please study it carefully and refer to it often and whenever in doubt about your relationship with clients, etc. If you have any questions regarding ETHICS or interpretation of the code, contact your regional NAICC representative (name, address, and phone) or members of the ETHICS committee for assistance. Your future in crop consulting and the reputation of NAICC rests upon you and each member to provide

## ETHICS (cont.)

ETHICAL Service to clients in a competent and professional manner.

Submitted by,  
Robert E. Ascheman, Ph.D.  
Ascheman Associates  
NAICC Ethics Committee Chairperson

## REMINDERS

Alliance Builders Campaign forms were included in the last issue of the NAICC Newsletter. Please complete the form and return as soon as possible.

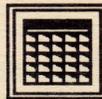
Pay your dues now so you can be included in our directory! All dues should be forwarded to Harold Lambert before February 1, 1990, to insure inclusion in this year's membership directory. If you did not receive your dues invoice give Garry Raymond a call at (708) 739-1017.

Send us news! The newsletter committee continues to encourage NAICC members to submit material for the newsletter. Examples include meeting reports, state activities, local information, and general interest articles.

## MEETINGS



The NAICC Board of Directors has added a Meetings Calendar section to the monthly newsletter. You are encouraged to submit information for this new section. Please include date, title of event, location, contact, and telephone number. The information should be sent to Garry Raymond, at 401 Liberty Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois, 60439, or you can FAX it to (708) 739-1018.



## Calendar

January 26-28, NAICC Board of Directors Meeting, Austin, TX, Wyndham Southpark Hotel. Contact: Dan Bradshaw, (409) 543-3416

January 28-30, Texas Association of Agricultural Consultants Meeting, Austin, TX, Wyndham Southpark Hotel. Contact: Joe McCullough (512) 454-8626

February 2-3, Agricultural Management Consulting Symposium, Irving, TX, Holiday Inn. Contact: American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers (303) 758-3513

February 3-7, Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Southern Branch of American Society of Agronomy, Little Rock, AR, Riverfront Hilton. Contact: John Kimbrough (601) 834-3430 \*

February 12-14, Mississippi Agricultural Consultants Association Annual Meeting, Greenwood, MS, Greenwood Leflore Civic Center. Contact: Jeff North (601) 825-6670

February 19-21, Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association, Holiday Inn, Alexandria, LA. Contact: Calvin Viator (504) 447-3393

April 23-25, North Central Regional Water Quality Conference, Clarion Hotel, St. Louis, MO. Contact: Gary Jackson, (608) 262-1916

\* A "Practicing Agronomists" workshop to be held on February 7 as a part of this meeting is being cosponsored by NAICC.

**1990 NAICC OFFICERS**

**NEXT ISSUE TOPICS**

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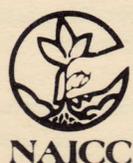
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Pledge Update  
Highlights of the  
Board of Directors  
Meeting  
New Members  
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National Alliance of  
Independent Crop  
Consultants



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"The Voice of the Professional Crop Consultant"