



NAICC NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 No. 5

The National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants

May/June 1990

"The Voice of the Professional Crop Consultant"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dan Bradshaw, CPAg/CS

When it comes to turning out sequels of money makers, few systems are as efficient as ours in the United States. The movie, Rocky, was hardly cool from its first run showing when Rocky II appeared. The same was true with oat bran. It did not take long before the oat bran version was available in almost any of our favorite foods from breakfast cereals to crackers.

So it is with Integrated Crop Management. The SP53 pilot program is not even past the preliminary paper work stage with ASCS. Now ICM terminology is appearing in the 1990 Farm Bill.

"Leadership involves finding a parade and getting in front of it."

This is terrific!! The public and policy makers are recognizing the merits of what we have been practicing for many years. An informed approach at total crop management is the best means of producing a profitable crop in an efficient manner. At the same time, water and environmental quality are protected. A safe, abundant, attractive supply of food is assured.

Easy to see why everyone--farmers, policy makers, agribusiness people, environmentalists--are all jumping on the ICM bandwagon. Its like Naisbitt said in Megatrends, "Leadership involves finding a parade and getting in front of it."

NAICC members have been in front of ICM for years, but few others have realized this fact. Sure, some in agriculture might have known, but often the importance of that fact might have been taken for granted.

"The public and policy makers are recognizing the merits of what we have been practicing for years."

Now, even before the ASCS SP53 pilot demonstration program of cost sharing for Integrated Crop Management is implemented, ICM is showing up in legislation proposed for the Farm Bill. HB 4509, introduced by Representative Stangeland from Minnesota's 7th

(Cont. page 2)

NAICC STORMS WASHINGTON

Daney Kepple

Our nation's capital is under siege. This time the invaders aren't angry protesters or political action committees but a mild-mannered group of NAICC leaders. President Dan Bradshaw and President-Elect Madeline Mellinger spent four days in Washington recently and came away with results they hadn't dared to dream of prior to the trip, (Professionalism/Certification Committee Chairman John Kimbrough accompanied the two officers on this mission. For a report of Kimbrough's activities, see page 3)

"The purpose of the trip was to present the Alliance's educational proposal to the Board on Agriculture, who had invited us there for that purpose," Mellinger explains. "I'm happy to report that that meeting went very well. The Board expressed its approval of the REAP concept and authorized their executive director, Charles Benbrook, to continue investigating appropriate measures for its involvement." Perhaps more importantly, the Board authorized the expenditure of \$12,000 -- \$15,000 to allow REAP consultant Deanna Marquart to continue her work.

"They now see crop consultants as agriculture's unsung heroes, the group who's actively out there doing what everybody wants done."

"This means that the work of the education fund is going well," Mellinger adds. "The paper was presented and initial funding obtained. That's quite a compliment to the hard work of so many people. The paper outlined the long-term plan for education of current and future crop consultants. It goes into certification and future direction of our profession. Those who have contributed time and money to this effort are to be congratulated."

As exciting as that news is, it may have to take a back seat to some of the other accomplishments of the visit. Calling on previous contacts such as Keith Bjerke, Administrator of ASCS, and Frank Frazier of the American Society of Crop Consultants, the NAICC group met with many of the high and mighty in Washington. Bjerke, a former client of NAICC past president Ed

(Cont. page 3)

President's Message

Cont. from page 1

District, is one such bill. Known as the Sustainable Agriculture and Clean Water Act of 1990, it is rather unique in that it was referred to both the Agriculture and the Public Works & Transportation Committees.

The purpose of the bill was stated as "To promote sustainable agriculture, integrated crop management, and best management practices systems that will increase farm profitability, strengthen efforts to protect surface and ground water quality and other natural resources, and for other purposes." Integrated Crop Management, Integrated Pest Management, Agronomic Best Management Practices, Nutrient Management Systems and other terms are defined. Under the definition of Off-Farm Inputs, managerial assistance services are mentioned.

The problem with this bill is that it does not recognize the complexity of management systems that are necessary for our modern agriculture. There is too much tendency towards giving the Secretary of Agriculture authority to "establish integrated crop management agricultural production system technical guides to provide general direction to producers developing plans to adopt the farming practices."

Unfortunately, the only ones mentioned to establish these plans are ASCS, SCS and the Extension Service. Sound familiar?

After our experience with SP53, I don't feel that this is some type of conspiracy. Instead, it is probably just a matter of too many outside of agriculture not being familiar with independent crop consultants.

Visiting with people over the past few months, it is obvious that they have no concept of the involvement and importance of the private sector in providing unbiased, technical information to farmers.

To correct this situation, all our members should become acquainted with our elected representatives and their assistants. They are going to have a great deal of influence over the destiny of our profession. **Most will be extremely supportive of independent crop consultants, once they understand more about us.**

Point out that what we do makes economic sense to farmers. We pay our own way by improving the profitability of our clients. By being trained, experienced and unbiased, we help insure that disruptions to the environment are at a minimum, consistent with sound farming practices. Food and water quality are protected because we only want to do what is necessary and beneficial for our farmer. We have no incentive to do more than necessary for both the long term as well as short term interests of our clients.

Crop consultants do need several things from government: first is recognition that we exist and that we are doing a good job; much more multidisciplinary,

integrated research is needed, education programs for future practitioners should be strengthened, and in addition government should not impose any unnecessary restrictions or subsidized competition.

If they will do those things, we can continue to do our jobs, with little, if any, cost to the government. Sounds too reasonable? Maybe so, but it seems to be gaining acceptance.

NAICC made a lot of progress in changing the direction of SP53. Similar changes are being made in proposals for the 1990 Farm Bill.

Senate Bill 2487, the Agricultural Water Quality Incentive Act of 1990, introduced by Senator Harkin includes a portion that says technical assistance for developing and carrying out "plans will be provided by the Soil Conservation Service, the Extension Service, and where determined appropriate by USDA, private agricultural consultants." The portion of the bill naming "private agricultural consultants" was made possible by one of our friends in Washington.

Just think what our loyal, dedicated members are able to do now and how much more could be accomplished if there were more of us. If you have met your earlier goal of signing up one or two new members, don't stop there. Continue to contact new potential members. See if you can get that many more by convention time. **Numbers are very important when we are playing the Washington game.**

All our members can and should take part in these activities that are so important to our profession. Since it looks like ICM is growing up much past SP53, we should help insure that the sequel is as good or better than the original. With the efforts of all our members working together, it will be a much easier job.

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NAICC Storms Washington

Cont. from page 1

Lloyd, had been helpful during the "SP53 crisis," and he and Frazier set up many of the group's appointments.

Bradshaw says, "I wish every NAICC member could have been there to see the kind of reception we had. It was very exciting to see these people's response to what we had to say. A good example was our meeting with the Deputy Assistant to the Secretary for Science and Education, USDA. Dr. Mussman is a veterinarian, so he was very sympathetic to our explanation of the need for a national certification program. Before that meeting was over, he was helping us devise our strategy!"

The meeting with Charles Moseley, agricultural consultant to the EPA, was equally successful. A former who employs an ag consultant himself, Moseley was in tune with the need for a national certification program and was receptive to the idea that EPA should provide the funding necessary to establish such a program. "He gave us a very positive indication that that might be possible," Mellinger says, noting that Moseley is considered a leading contender for the position of Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources, USDA. "I got the definite idea that they would prefer that we regulate ourselves. That way certification will be more sensibly constructed and can be in place much faster."

Their meeting with Dr. Johnsrud, Administrator of the Extension Service, was frank and open, and the outcome equally encouraging. The NAICC delegation explained, Mellinger says, that there is no need for conflict between consultants and Extension personnel. "We presented ourselves as helpmates in agriculture. **We're all out there to help the grower, but we have different roles to play under that umbrella.** He asked us if there are problems now, and we mentioned the existence of some Extension programs that begin as three-year projects but never die. We suggested that private consultants could take over many of those areas, and he agreed."

Besides a friendly and polite reception, the NAICC members believe that more concrete results were achieved. Senator Leahy's aide invited NAICC to mark up S 2334, an agricultural bill currently making its way through the Senate. "Although we may be too late to affect the outcome of that bill, this gives us a golden opportunity to present the Alliance's point of view," Bradshaw says. "We also have every reason now to expect that the term "private agricultural consultant" will show up in the language of the 1990 Farm Bill."

A greater understanding with Extension and the EPA was achieved, and the Alliance now has powerful friends in high places. "As a result of this visit, I believe these people understand that the goals of safe pesticide use can be achieved without the need for further legislation or regulation," Bradshaw says.

"They now see crop consultants as agriculture's unsung heroes, the group who's actively out there doing

what everyone wants done," Mellinger adds. "All they have to do is nurture us or at the very least not get in our way. The people we talked to in Washington truly understand and support that. They got so excited, every single one of them had at least one more person he wanted us to meet. We could have stayed another two weeks except we were paying our own expenses, and we were all absent from our businesses back home. If we can come up with the time and money, I believe there is no limit to what can be accomplished in Washington."

The most obvious conclusion of the visit, according to Kimbrough, Bradshaw, and Mellinger, is that the NAICC membership is so pitifully small. "They are concerned that there are too few of us to do what needs to be done, so they are turning to Extension to fill in the gaps," Mellinger says. "It's clear that a lot more will come to us -- or at the very least a lot less will be taken away -- if we have the power of numbers behind what we're saying."

KIMBROUGH KO'S CONGRESSIONAL CONTACTS

In Mississippi, babies cut their teeth on politics and children grow up eating watermelon at political rallies. During a recent visit to Washington, John Kimbrough, NAICC Government Relations Committee Chairman, called on some of that native political savvy.

While President Dan Bradshaw and President-Elect Madeline Mellinger made the rounds of the powerful halls of the Executive Branch (see page 1), Kimbrough headed for Capital Hill and snagged appointments with several powerful Senators and Congressmen. If the great ones themselves were engaged, he spent time with their influential agricultural aides.

During the four-day campaign, Kimbrough bent the ears of one Senator (Thad Cochran of Mississippi), two Congressmen (Mike Espy and Sonny Montgomery, both also of his native state), and several aides: Mark Keenum, who has a direct line to Senator Cochran, Cindy James, who handles ag duties for Congressman Espy; and Sue Sutter, agricultural aide to Congressman Greg Laughlin.

"I was very encouraged by those meetings," Kimbrough reports. "We tried to introduce the concept of **plant health and prescription chemical use as an alternative to cancelling registrations.** When you relate the plant's needs to the needs of humans and compare crop chemicals to medicine, the concept seems to be much more palatable.

"We also asked them to call on crop consultants as a source of information about what's actually happening in the field. They all seemed to appreciate that and the fact that we aren't making any particular and immediate demands."

There are Senators and Congressmen in every state. Isn't it time you got to know yours?

NEW MEMBERS

Voting

Charles E. Denver, M.S. (Entomology)

Denver Crop Consulting & Research
P.O. Box 137
Pickens, AK 71662
Office 501-382-5628 Home 501-644-3893
Began business 1962
Services: Soil sampling, fertility recommendations,
weed, insect & disease control.
Crops: Cotton, rice, soybeans, milo, corn.

Scott R. Edgar, B.S. (Soils)

North Star Ag. Services, Inc.
Box 171
Warren, MN 56762
Office 218-745-4432 Home 218-745-4432
Began business 1986
Services: Soil testing, crop consulting, farm planning.
Crops: Sugar beets, potatoes, dry beans, wheat,
barley, sunflowers.

Daniel A. Filbert, B.S. (Crop Protection)

Crop Management, Inc.
Rt. 1, Box 85
Seward, KS 67577
Office 316-982-4506 Home 316-982-4506
Began business 1981
Services: Irrigation scheduling, soil testing, fertility,
recommendations, tissue testing, equipment
calibration, varietal recommendations, insect, weed,
and disease management.
Crops: Field corn, sweet corn, popcorn, soybeans,
pinto beans, wheat, barley, alfalfa, grain sorghum,
sunflowers, watermelon, pumpkin, cantelope,
cucumber, tomato.

Mark A. Leitner, B.S. (Agri-Business)

Flatland Ag Consulting
Rt. 1, Box 27
Atwood, KS 67730
Office 913-626-3948 Home 913-626-3948
Began business 1986
Services: Soil samples and interpretation, crop
planning, field inspections, pest management,
irrigation scheduling, contract research.
Crops: Corn, soybeans, sunflowers, milo, wheat.

Douglas L. Mayhugh, B.S. (Agronomy)

M & M Consulting, Inc.
P.O. Box 71
Warrenton, VA 22186
Office 703-347-3103 Home 703-754-8596
Began business 1978
Services: Soil testing & recommendations, manure
analysis, water analysis, tissue analysis, herbicide
residue, forage & grain testing, nutrition: (dairy, beef,
equine).
Crops: Corn, soybeans, small grains, alfalfa, pastures,
turf.

Bryce Milam, B.S. (Entomology)

Plains Consulting
P.O. Box 8
Dalhart, TX 79022
Office 806-249-2545 Home 806-249-4015
Began business 1976
Services: Soil sampling - fertility recommendations,
insect, disease, irrigation management.
Crops: Corn, wheat, soybeans, dry beans, potatoes,
blue corn, cotton, squash, cucumbers, cantaloupes, bell
pepper, alfalfa.

Raymond C. Ward, Ph.D. (Plant Science)

Ward Laboratories, Inc.
P.O. Box 788
Kearney, NE 68848
Office 308-234-2418 Home 308-236-6228
Began business 1983
Services: Diagnostic crop performance, crop damages,
fertility problems.
Crops: Corn, milo, soybeans, dry beans, wheat,
alfalfa.

Affiliate

James J. Penney, M.S. (Agronomy-Soil Fertility)

Heart of Iowa Coop
Box 308
Roland, IA 50010
Office 515-388-4341 Home 515-232-5277
FAX Number 515-388-4657
Began business 1981
Services: Crop scouting and consulting.
Crops: Corn, soybeans and alfalfa.

ABC DEADLINE

1990 Campaign Concluding

Don Jameson, Chairperson - Membership Committee, advises all members that the Alliance Builder's Campaign is about to come to an end for this year. Please submit any forms to the NAICC office by June 15.

National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants

Dan E. Bradshaw, CPAg
President

With Deanna's help the following letter was
composed and sent to Senator Leahy
representing NAICC viewpoints.

2806 Western Acres
El Campo, TX 77437
(409) 543-3416

Hon. Patrick Leahy
U. S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

The National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC) strongly supports research and education activities related to sustainable agriculture. Our members can make contributions in research and education in sustainable agriculture and integrated crop management. In addition, they recognize their own need for improved educational opportunities, therefore we are writing to ask you to consider amendments to S.2334 that would make it easier for private agricultural consultants to benefit from your bill.

As practitioners of the integrated systems approach known as "sustainable agriculture," NAICC members consider in a scientific and informed manner the many interrelated factors involved in real world, farm level, practical decision making. Environmental protection, food safety, and economic consequences represent significant elements in the recommendations we make to our farmer-clients. At no cost to taxpayers, private agricultural consultants are today America's leading practitioners of the integrated systems approaches you have advocated in S.2334.

In general, we are asking for two changes in S.2334. First, we ask that you substitute the more generic term "implementation" for "extension" throughout the bill. Use of "extension" implies that agents of the Extension Service will be primarily responsible for new technology transfer related to sustainable agriculture. Studies show that farmers pay to private practitioners annually a minimum of \$400 million in fees for plant health and production services. This is similar to fees paid a veterinarian for animal health services. The same studies show that farmers receive returns several times greater than their payments of private consultants' fees. Consequently, current growth trends in private agricultural consulting are expected to continue. Under these circumstances, we would hope that legislation authorizing research and education for sustainable agriculture would clarify the role that private agricultural consultants are to play in implementation of research findings.

Secondly, we ask for recognition of "private agricultural consultants," by name, in indicated places throughout S.2334. Our proposed use of this term would be consistent with its inclusion in Senator Harkin's S.2487 (Agricultural Water Quality Incentive Act of 1990, as proposed).

The following definition of private agricultural consultants has been adapted from USDA-ASCS SP-53 Integrated Crop Management (ICM) pilot program. It might be inserted as (3) under SEC.302 of S.2334.

(3) PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANTS. - The term "Private Agricultural Consultants" shall include practitioners in non-government service providing trained, unbiased advice on technical matters to farmers and others involved in the agricultural production and management system. They shall not be affiliated with or have a vested interest in the sales of agricultural chemicals or agricultural products that could produce personal financial gain from the practices they might recommend.

Finally, although we are not prepared to offer a counterproposal at this time, we would like to know the rationale for requiring organizations to have a 501(c)(3) designation in order to be defined as a not-for-profit organization under SEC.102(2)(C) of S.2334. Given the current fiscal environment, the federal government has become more reluctant in recent years to approve this designation. NAICC is a nonprofit organization and has been committed to educational activities throughout its existence. However, recognizing the extreme difficulty and time required for approval under 501(c)(3), NAICC elected to file under 501(c)(6). This does not lessen our nonprofit status and commitment to education. Because our members are highly trained scientists and practitioners of sustainable agriculture, however, we believe NAICC should be eligible to participate in research and demonstration projects supported with S.2334 funds.

Again, NAICC appreciates your support of sustainable agriculture as expressed in S.2334. We respectfully request your consideration of our proposed amendments, as indicated on our enclosed mark-up of the bill. If we can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,
Dan E. Bradshaw, CPAg/CS
President



PHOTO CONTEST TO PROMOTE THE NAICC

Public Relations Committee Announcement

The public relations committee has recently been swamped with requests from various ag-trade publications for photos of consultants working in the field. We have been unable to provide quality photos to meet the specific needs of the articles being printed about consultants and feel that we are missing an important marketing opportunity.

Photos in six categories will be judged for artistic merit and their ability to convey the message of the independent crop consultant. The top three photos in each category will be displayed at the annual meeting in Orlando. Awards may be limited due to the lack of a budget for such purposes, but we hope that the recognition of your peers and the satisfaction of making a significant contribution to promoting the NAICC will be motivation enough!

So polish up your lenses and start shooting! You will have all summer to create that special shot! Read on for the specifics on the contest.

CATEGORIES:

1. Crop consultant at work in the field.
2. Crop consultant interacting with grower client.
3. Contract research activities.
4. Crop pest or pest damage symptoms.
5. Prettiest crop scene.
6. Application of a crop protection product.

Rules:

1. All entries to be 8x10 color prints from 35 mm slides or negatives.
2. All prints to be labeled on the back with an adhesive label with your name and address.
3. Competition is open to NAICC members and their employees.
4. A limit of 3 entries is allowed in each category.
5. Entry deadline is October 15, 1990. Judging will be done by the PR committee on November 8th at the annual meeting.
6. NAICC reserves the right to use all entries for the purpose of promoting the organization. Entrants will be asked to submit the master negative or color slide for reproduction if their photos meet the NAICC's needs, without compensation. NAICC guarantees that these photos will not be used in the direct promotion or advertising of any product or service.

Send all entries to: **Randy Van Haren, Chairperson**
Public Relations Committee
P.O. Box 188
Plainfield, WI 54966

WISHING CARL A SPEEDY RECOVERY

NAICC Affiliate member Carl Richgels is recovering from recent surgery. Carl is with the BASF Corporation and has been very active on several committees, especially the public relations committee. Cards and letters can be sent to:

Carl Richgels
2932 Valley Bunion Way
Raleigh, NC 27613

NEW DISPLAY ARRIVED Promotes the NAICC

One of the goals of the NAICC Public Relations committee has been to update and improve the quality of the NAICC pop-up display. The committee conducted much research to insure that the display would adequately portray our professional organization. The display was delivered to the NAICC office and the results are beautiful! The new display is one that we can all be proud of. It should serve us well for many years to come. If NAICC members are attending meetings where the display would be appropriate please feel free to call Garry to schedule shipping arrangements.

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

Michael A. Myers, M.S. (Plant Science)
1310 Bigleville Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325
(717) 334-2147

Rama Krishna Velicheti, Ph.D.
(Mycology and Plant Pathology)
712 W. California
Urbana, IL 60801
(217) 384-5214

CALENDAR

June 11, Indiana Association of Professional Crop Consultants field day, Purdue University, IN. Contact: John Obermeyer (317)494-4563

July 30-31, American Society of Agronomy, North Central Branch Annual Meeting, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. Contact: Nancy Harvey (612)625-8215

July 1-3, American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers Summer Meeting, Monterey, CA. Contact: ASFMRA (303)758-3513

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

--Ag Consultant, April, 1990. John Ed Brothers authored the article "Soil: A Dynamic Environment" found in the Crop Consulting column. Ken Pohlman and Dale Stukenholtz were featured in the article "Laboratory Basics."

--Agrichemical Age, April, 1990. Dan Bradshaw and Deanna Marquart were featured by author Len Richardson in his Back Talk column. Len supports the Doctorate of Plant Health proposal.

--Agri Finance, April, 1990. Philip Small submitted Harney silt loam as a candidate for our national soil. Clyde Sartor authored the article "Lessons to be learned from SP53" found in the Crop Consultant Concepts column. Vernon Meints was quoted in the article "E&O insurance: Who has it and Why." Dan Bradshaw was quoted in the article "Ph.D. Program."

--CPM Magazine, May, 1990. Madeline Mellinger, Mark Otto, Doug Petersen, and Yella Reddy were featured in the Crop Consultants column.

--Farming Today, Vol. 7, Issue 4. Bob Ascherman, Dan Bradshaw, and Garry Raymond were quoted in "Crop Consultants Pay Their Way." Farming Today is published by the Northrup King Co.

--Potato County, April, 1990. Dale Stukenholtz and Randy Van Haren were featured and quoted in the article "An Extra Set of Eyes: Value of Ag Consultants."

August 22-27, Symposium on Soil Testing and Plant Analysis in the Global Community, Orlando, FL. Contact: J. Benton Jones, Jr. (404)542-0782

October 10-12, Annual Meeting American Society of Agricultural Consultants, Westin Hotel, Dallas, TX. Contact: Frank Frazier (703)356-2455

November 8-10, NAICC Annual Convention, Grosvenor Resort, Walt Disney World Village, Lake Buena Vista, FL. Contact: Madeline Mellinger (407)746-3740

National Alliance of
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NAICC

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