



NAICC NEWS

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Happenings on the Hill

Revised WPS Signed Into Law

by Allison Jones, NAICC Executive Director

President Bill Clinton signed into law April 6 the bill introduced by Republican Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi that delays implementation of WPS until the first of the new year.

EPA has issued a press release and Q&A document on WPS requirements. These are available at NAICC headquarters.

NAICC representatives and staff met with EPA and USDA officials in April to continue discussion on concerns crop consultants and contract researchers continue to have with WPA that take effect after January 1.

EPA intends to have "interpretive guidelines for crop advisors" ready for review by NAICC and EPA top administration officials in early June.

***Clean Water Act** — S. 1114, the Clean Water Re-Authorization Act (CWA) was recently approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works

Committee. This bill would cut clean water costs by \$30 billion per year, strengthen non-point source pollution controls and reduce amounts of runoff from farms into water supplies.

Amendments are expected to be introduced from the floor to require a risk analysis in setting CWA standards.

The House version (H.R. 3948) was referred to the House Public Works and Transportation Committee and was subsequently sent to the Subcommittee on Water Resources.

Additional committee action is expected soon with Congressman Jimmy Hayes (D-La.) planning to introduce an amendment dealing with wetlands.

Congressional sources say the CWA will likely see Senate floor action soon, but the Senate will probably consider a "Safe Drinking Water" bill introduced by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) first. Sen. Baucus is the chairman of the

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

***Prescriptive Use Pesticides** — EPA has begun to work on a plan that would allow growers to continue the use of several pesticides that EPA identified as a threat to safe drinking water.

Under this plan, which will be further outlined later this year, a written "prescription" will be required for application of these particular chemicals.

Growers will have to obtain the written prescription from a state-certified ag chemical advisor, who in turn, will be required to have a plan approved by the state agricultural commissioner's office.

NAICC is working to ensure that crop consultants are included in the definition. The membership will be updated as more information becomes available.

Two Sustaining Members Added

Little Publications in Memphis and *Mid-South Farmer* in Memphis have become sustaining members of NAICC.

Little Publications, which publishes such magazines as *Cotton Farming*, *Rice Farming* and *Custom Applicator* has been in business since 1957. Total circulation of all its publications is over 100,000.

"We have long recognized that the consultant plays an important role in farm production in the United States—an extremely active role in cotton and rice," said Walter Little, president and publisher of Little Publications. "Our goal is to help promote professionalism of consultants and help them band together in an association to help them better the profession."

Little Publications co-sponsored the New Member Reception at the annual

meeting with Rhone-Poulenc Ag Co.

Mid-South Farmer, one of the Farm Progress Company publications, is new to the area. In fact, the 42,000 circulation magazine started in January.

However, many consultants might be familiar with one of the 20 other regional publications such as *California Farmer*, *Texas Farmer Stockman* and *Prairie Farmer*.

"NAICC is an organization worthy of support and it is important for us to be involved," said Tommy L. Keith, regional sales manager for *Mid-South Farmer*.

He said crop consultants are making many of the important crop production decisions in the Mid-South as well as around the country and that it is important for his readers and advertisers to know what consultants are doing.

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President's Message

Learning to See the Gray

Maggie Alms, NAICC President

Sixteen years ago a small group of consultants met to form an organization they named the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants. They drafted a Constitution and a Code of Ethics. They debated philosophical issues. They shared technical knowledge. They became friends. Thus was born a concept and an organization.

What an idea and what a concept! Look where it has brought us today!

We had a normal childhood. We stumbled occasionally and made some mistakes. But we learned and we grew.

Remember the first time we went to Washington, D.C.? Crop consultants were being written out of regulations because no one had ever heard of us.

Now Congressional aides, USDA and EPA staffers and other highly placed national policy makers are CALLING US for our opinion and help. We had major involvement in the Worker Protection Standards debate. Our Executive Director is an expert in Washington affairs and keeps us informed about matters likely to impact our businesses.

I'd say we've done a lot.

Remember when volunteers published the newsletter, maintained all the records, planned the meetings and tried to carry out all the other small details essential in running an organization? Today we have a professional staff taking some of the weight off our shoulders and ensuring consistency and quality control in our operation.

I'd say we've done a lot.

Remember when there were only 20 membership applications in a year? Now we receive that many in a month.

We're strong and we're growing!

Should we stop here? Are we good enough?

It's tempting to sit back, rest on our laurels and enjoy this rapid growth. A calm and successful year is every President's sweetest dream....

But those of you who know me, know better. It's not time yet for sitting on laurels. Now, in a position of

strength we face the best opportunity ever to position ourselves for the future.

What does the future hold for the NAICC? Agriculture continues to change quickly. Our clients are changing, our businesses our changing. Maybe our organization needs change too.

We have gained credibility and influence and with that success comes challenge. As more and more membership applications come in, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fit applicants into the categories that served us in the past.

When membership expands in any organization, new problems invariably arise. We are still functioning under a membership system that assumes applicants are the same as they were 16 years ago and that they fit neatly into one of our categories. Wrong. The gray areas are becoming more common than the black and white ones.

We're not black and white thinkers. I gave a speech in Washington, D.C. in which I criticized our policymakers for assuming problems in the field had black and white answers. All of us know that is just not so. More than most, we know gray is real.

Faced with all this gray, then, what membership options does NAICC have? We can become more exclusive and "just say no" to all shades of gray. We can become more inclusive and just say "yes" to everyone. Or we can try to find an organizational structure that, without compromising ideals, meets our need.

The Membership Recruitment and Rules Committee is fleshing out five options for reorganization of the NAICC membership structure. Over the next few months these options and possible consequences of each will be outlined to you. In the fall the membership will be asked to vote on the structure of your choice.

We've done a lot in the last 16 years. We can do a lot more in the future — but only if we take the time NOW to evaluate and position ourselves for the future.

Roberta Spitko Takes Leave

The NAICC Executive Board Secretary, Roberta Spitko of Montague, Mass., has had to reduce her responsibilities with NAICC for health reasons.

Several weeks ago Robin was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The prognosis is promising and she looks forward to returning to her friends at NAICC as soon as possible.

Robin and her husband Glenn Morin run New England Fruit Consultants and have a four-year-old daughter.

IN MEMORIAM

NAICC regretfully reports the death of **Vernon W. Meints**, co-founder and president of Agri-Business Consultants, Inc., of Okemos, Mich. Dr. Meints died after a short battle with cancer. He and his partner, **Mark Otto**, founded Agri-Business in 1983.



Vernon Meints

Brochure About Consultants Available

The NAICC has a brochure entitled "The Independent Agricultural Consultant" available for NAICC members to pass along to others interested in the profession.

The brochure discusses what a consultant does, what challenges consultants face, the need for continuing education and the certification of professions in crop consulting. The brochure also talks about NAICC and its role in the consulting profession.

Expenses for the brochure were partially underwritten by a grant from Zeneca Ag Products. Professional services were donated by Barksdale Agri-Communications, Great Lines Inc., and Kirk Hastings Design.

The brochure is available from NAICC headquarters. Get several copies and pass them out to potential clients, educators, and groups you might visit.

Bookkeeping for Busy Consultants

by Dan Easton

When I opened my business as a one person operation a year ago, I knew my greatest challenge would be keeping accurate accounting records while staying busy with my consulting practice.

I made some difficult but rewarding accounting decisions. Small entrepreneurs like me may pick up something useful from this report, but I must warn you that this is being written by an accounting illiterate.

The first question that popped into my head as I faced the accounting ledger was: "Why am I even doing this?" I decided there are four reasons to keep good financial records:

1. to make sure you get paid for work performed;
2. to assure adequate cash flow through out the year;
3. to be able to determine if the business is making a profit; and
4. to accurately determine tax liability.

I also wanted a system that would be simple to use and provide lots of room for expansion as the business grew. (You've got to think positively, right?)

While these objectives were quite clear in my mind, it was equally evident that words like "debits", "reversing journal entries" and "trial balances" of former accounting classes disappeared from my everyday vocabulary long ago.

So, in shopping for a computer I stumbled across a very widely distributed financial software package that boasted itself as "the easiest small business bookkeeping system".

I decided to put that claim to the acid test. It cost me only \$50, is simple to operate, yet is amazingly powerful in performing accounting tasks. I have since come to realize there are a variety of such programs available, and which is best for you depends on your situation.

Now, let me tell you that my software is a joy to operate. It is simple, straight forward, and very fast. I can probably enter a check faster on the computer than I can write it by hand, including account assignments, thanks to the many automatic fill features. I

feel that speed and convenience are extremely important in a small business. In the heat of the season, one tends to choose the path of least resistance, and if you start writing checks by hand, you can quickly lose touch of your financial position.

The hardware side of check and invoice writing is just as important as the software. I have one parallel port on my computer devoted to bookkeeping printers and on that line I have a devoted printer for checks and invoices which are always loaded with the appropriate forms. This way I can print on either media at the touch of a button.

Again, if you have to take time to change the paper in the printer, it probably won't get done when you're busy.

I also have all client and vendor addresses automatically printed on the checks/invoices and use window envelopes to avoid envelope addressing hassles.

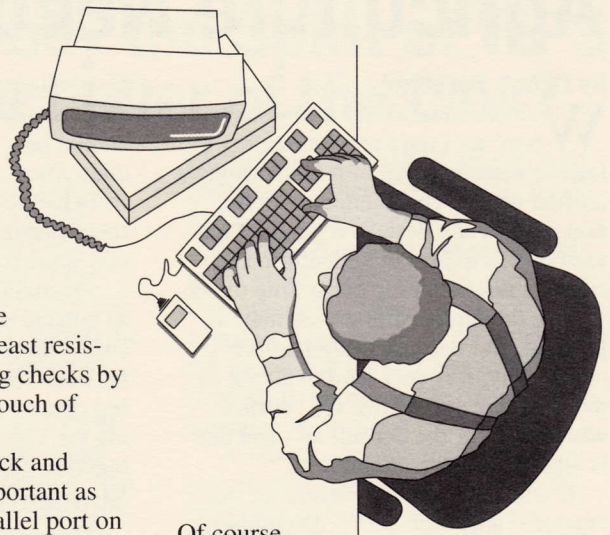
I do most invoicing before the growing season starts. By recording all bills in the accounts receivable section before spring, I can let the computer tell me when they need to be sent out, rather than me having to tell the computer.

When it is time to send an invoice, it takes only seconds to do since the information has already been entered into the computer and the forms are loaded in the printer.

Doing payroll is a piece of cake and takes all of 60 seconds to pay the five people I now employ. I just select the desired employee from a list, enter the number of hours worked for hourly employees and the software makes all the necessary payments and deductions, crediting the appropriate liability accounts.

From these accounts I can, with the touch of a key, figure quarterly payroll reports and get W-2s and 1099s for the Internal Revenue Service.

All this is fine and dandy, but it's all worthless if you can't squeeze out the information you need when you need it. I particularly appreciate the numerous standardized reports such as cash flow projections, balance sheets and budgets.



Of course, there are some pitfalls that warrant caution. A good bookkeeping system is no substitute for a competent accounting advisor. It's best to realize this as you install your system so you can set up your books the way your accountant likes.

I would also suggest you run off some reports and send them to your accountant regularly so he can catch you before you drift too far off target.

With all this simplicity and ease, I still have some difficulty making my books balance perfectly each month. However, when I can't find the error, I can shift the difference to a temporary account and go on with business. When I have time, I can hunt down the problem and easily transfer the temporary entry to the appropriate accounts. I realize this kind of bookkeeping is frowned upon by accounting enthusiasts, but you see, I just want to do some crop consulting. I want a bookkeeping system that lets me feel like I'm the boss.



(Dan Easton of Easton Agricultural Consulting in Bagley, Iowa is a voting member of NAICC).

Agriculture Needs 'System' Approach

by Dennis Berglund

Webster's dictionary defines a "system" as a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole. This dictionary definition defines and describes many of the various disciplines in agriculture and contract research/crop consulting today.

We do interact and we are interdependent. But because of agriculture's complexity, it is very hard to take it to the next step and realize the "unified whole" part of the definition—and that is what I think we are missing.

If we could somehow embrace this "system" approach across disciplines, all of agriculture would benefit.

I suggest we begin developing our "system" approach in six areas:

- Encourage an educational system approach. Here I am in debt to **Dan Bradshaw** of El Campo, Tex., past president of NAICC and advocate of changing the way consultants are educated. Some of the ideas I will present on the need to refocus university education programs are taken from Dan's research and work;
- Build on the knowledge of universities and departments;
- Use a "System Approach" in research;
- Increase and focus communications;
- Help streamline chemical re-registration;
- Use pilot projects.

Education

The first thing I'd like to stress is a "system" approach to education in agriculture. We need to better develop the student's attitude for learning and thinking which stresses problem solving skills rather than memorization.

To accomplish this, we should try to bring the various disciplines of agriculture together. After all, agriculture is much more than soils, agronomy, weed science or entomology. I'd like to see customized degrees for practitioners—not everyone will teach or do research. Practitioners approach and deal with problems differently than researchers and specialists. Researchers try to eliminate variables to find the one reproducible answer. Practitioners try to include all relevant variables, find a number of options and select the one that best meets the needs of the specific time and location.

It's important to require an internship for any agricultural degree. This should be a practical, hands-on experience where the individual can learn from his own mistakes. It would also focus personal goals and enhance the educational process.

Practicing consultants could be used as outside instructors or adjunct professors. The consultant could be shared between schools and disciplines, teaching courses that concentrate on integrating the various disciplines and tying together concepts.

Strengths

The second part of my "system" approach is to build on the strengths of other universities and departments within university. Perhaps it is more clear to say we need to minimize "turf-protecting", work together and share information.

Research is another key component of the "system" approach to agriculture, particularly when addressing the education research area. I would like to suggest that a practitioner or two help review applicable research projects both before and after the data are collected. While in some projects the review might be of little value, in other cases it could help focus and interpret the data.

Let me give you an example: a research project on the effect of phosphorus on tillering in spring wheat was presented to 60 consultants. I thought the project had very good data until two questions were asked—and after that I almost stopped listening. These two questions—on seeding rate and soil testing—could have been asked by any experienced consultant, but the professor didn't have the answer. Even though the professor probably had the data, by not having ready answers to basic questions any practitioner would have thought to ask, it greatly diminished the impact of the research.

Communication

That leads me to another idea for a "system" approach: communication. We need to identify and focus on the communication needs of the consultant. For example, a good insect manual with pictures of bad bugs and good bugs might be beneficial—and I guess by calling them bugs you can tell I'm a plant pathologist at heart.

I would also like to see academic

researchers use pints and brand names when communicating research, rather than active ingredient and chemical names. In my area one weed scientist is trying this with great success—consultants and growers both get a lot more out of his talks. Every so often he reverts back to his "evil ways", but in general he communicates much better when he talks in terms we all understand.

Speaking of communication, be aware that there is a lot of communication technology out there that we are not using such as computer bulletin boards, videotapes, CD-ROM—to name a few.

And as always we need to keep finding ways to improve our forecasting and communication of potential pest outbreaks.

Minor Crop

One area that really needs help from the "system" approach to agriculture and agricultural education is to streamline chemical re-registration. It is important to keep these labeling decisions science-based rather than emotion based, especially on minor use crops.

The list of crops regarded as minor use is growing. Add to that the chemicals lost due to resistance and the situation becomes more serious.

Finally, we need to institute pilot projects that use cooperation between universities, departments, industry, government, consultants and farmers to find ways to "win small".

Find some issue, problem or new program that requires a "system" approach—cooperation between all facets of agriculture—and complete it. I don't mean we should tackle the complete overhaul of the way food is produced in this country. I mean a small project, a short-term program, a detail in the fabric of agriculture's colorful pattern.

Victory and cooperation on a "win small" basis will lead to big wins later.



(This article was taken from a recent speech given by NAICC Executive Board member Dennis Berglund of Centrol in Twin Valley, Minn. at the North Central Branch meeting of the Entomological Society of America.)

NAICC Benefits from Winning Consultants

Four winners of the 1993 American Cyanamid Consultant of the Year program have selected NAICC as the organization to receive \$2,000 grants in their names.

All six of the winners are members of NAICC. The awards program sponsored by American Cyanamid, honors the entrepreneurial spirit, innovation and creativity of consultants.

Winners included: **Mike Brubaker** of Brubaker Agronomic Consulting Services in Ephrata, Pa.; **Bill Peele** of Peele Agricultural Consulting Inc. in Washington, N.C.; **Stanley J. Nemec** of Nemec Agriservices, Inc. in Snook, Tex.; **David Harms** of Crop Pro-Tech in Naperville, Ill.; **Maggie Alms** of Blue Earth Agronomics in Lake Crystal, Minn., and **B.B. Singh** of Scientific Crop Advisory Service in Hastings, Neb.

Billy McLawhorn of McLawhorn Crop Service, Inc. in Cove City, N.C. was named Cotton Consultant of the Year by *Cotton Farming* magazine.

The national award, sponsored by ZENECA Ag Products, was presented to McLawhorn during the Beltwide Cotton Conference.

Dean Wesley of Key Agricultural Services Inc. in Macomb, Ill. was quoted in *Soybean Digest* on site-specific farming and ways to handle variability within fields.

NAICC president **Maggie Alms**, past president **Bruce Nowlin**, **Charlie Mellinger** of Jupiter, Fla. and **Syed Fazli** of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. attended the second national IPM symposium in Las Vegas in April.

Maggie spoke at the symposium on "A Crop Consultant's Perspective on Challenges for IPM for the Future."

Ethics

Can You Obey the Spirit of WPS But Not the Letter of the Law?

by Will Connell

At the recent annual meeting of the NAICC in Memphis, I looked through a list of potential newsletter topics and there, near the front of the pack, glaring, conspicuously unclaimed, was the title you see above. I took on the task assuming that I had the necessary tools to do the work.

If I didn't, I felt like I could borrow **Bruce Nowlin's**. I saw **Maggie Alms** give him one at the annual meeting. She called it a "sharp shooter" I believe, or was it a "spade". Anyway, it seems inevitable that regardless of what I say in this article, I'll dig a hole for myself.

The spirit of the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is to insure the safety of those who work with and around agricultural chemicals. Can we obey that spirit? I trust we all have been. Can we do so but fall short of the new letter of the law? Probably we all have. So the answer to the title question is yes. Yes—but is it ethical?

The first "ethical check" as presented by Blanchard and Peale in their book *The Power of Ethical Management* asks the question: "Is it legal?" If we accept this guide to ethical behavior we eliminate the idea of ignoring the letter of the law very promptly. But still, we may feel that some details just don't make sense. Cooperation with the law doesn't eliminate the right to persuade lawmakers to change.

Even if our personal evaluation of ethical behavior is not quite so absolute, we would probably agree that the image of professional crop consultants should not be that of outlaws. To practice behavior that blemishes the profession is

not ethical. So maybe, if we don't get caught, it's ethical? No, I really don't feel comfortable with that either.

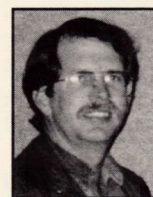
We also recognize that part of our value to our clients is our influence. We lead others to take action. If our "knowledgable negligence" of the letter taught the lesson that the law was totally unfounded or unreasonable, we might lead someone to overlook critical points.

A second question that Blanchard and Peale suggests: "Is it balanced?" Everyday decisions involve risks.

I like to be in a position where I choose my actions on the basis of my evaluation of the risk to me. For example, I choose how extensively/intensively to check a field based on my understanding of the risk of missing something vs. the risk of wasting time.

I abhor the position of someone else making decisions without my input that increase my risk. For example, a scout taking unapproved short cuts. Though I've heard various "official" interpretations, it seems that the farmer is responsible for those under his employ or contract. If this is the case, we create an imbalance when we put others in jeopardy for our actions.

So now, does this make the decision of our conformation to the letter easier to make? Not for me. But discussing the issue helps me identify the implications.



(Will Connell of Will Connell Agricultural Consultant, Inc. in Greenville, N.C. is a voting member of NAICC).

Putting the Plow to Rest

More farmers are abandoning the plow in favor of conservation tillage, according to the 1993 National Crop Residue Management Survey conducted by the Conservation Technology Information Center.

The number of planted acres practicing conservation tillage—either no-till, ridge-till or mulch-till—may soon outpace the acres that are plowed or tilled clean of crop residue. Conservation tillage has been increasing by an aver-

age nine million acres for the last two years. The survey of 3,000 counties nationwide showed 35 percent of the total acres planted—97 million acres—are conservation tilled. Clean-tilled acres account for 108 million acres or 39 percent.

The rest of the total planted acres are included in a residue category, which is not a form of conservation tillage, but is still a positive step in soil erosion control, according to the center's survey.

State Associations Elect Officers

Alton Walker of Harlem was elected president of the Georgia Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants at a joint meeting in Pine Mountain, Ga. with the Alabama state association.

He succeeds past president **Jack Royal** of Leary, Ga. Other Georgia officers include: **Henry Carr** of Quitman, vice president; **Mike Gomez** of Statesboro; executive officer at large **Danny Bennett** of Cochran,

secretary-treasurer.

Agricultural Consultants Association of Alabama officers elected at the joint meeting include: **Richard Davis** of Montgomery, president; **Jim Brumley** of Leighton, vice president; and **Bill Webster** of Harvest, secretary-treasurer.

The South Dakota Crop Consultants Association has elected **Kevin Morrow** of Watertown as president.

Other officers include: **Kim Retzlaff** of Groton, vice president and **Jorden Hill** of Veblen, secretary/treasurer.

The Arkansas Agricultural Consulting Association has elected **Mike Dodson** of Gillett as president.

Loren Cates Jr. of Marked Tree was elected vice president and **Ray Holiday** of Walnut Ridge was elected secretary/treasurer.



Your Newsletter and How It Works

by Jackie Flaum
NAICC Managing Editor

Agriculture has less to do with working the land and more to do with working the halls—the halls of Congress, the halls of the state legislature, the halls of clients—than it used to.

Communication—the friendly art of persuasion through information—is the main business of everyone connected with agriculture.

NAICC is in a unique position to provide important information about what's going on in the field to members, potential members, cooperative members and dozens of influential people in agriculture who get a copy of the NAICC newsletter every month.

The newsletter is an opportunity to exchange views on ideas, legislation, regulations, business practices, and farming methods. But real communication happens through the newsletter only if members participate.

Because NAICC is a national organization of business men and women who work most closely with farmers, legislators, ag chem companies and other parts of the agricultural community, the ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter represent a vital communication link between all segments of agriculture.

So it is crucial that the NAICC newsletter be written by members or specially invited authors on topics of particular concern to the ag industry.

During the months ahead you will see a variety of members from all over the country writing about such subjects as certification, safer food and account-

ing issues.

You have an opportunity each month to write a letter to the editor applauding or disagreeing with an article, an action in Congress or something that happened in your area which other members might be interested in knowing.

If you think a subject isn't being covered or hasn't gotten enough discussion, you might write an article yourself. Just call (901) 748-3756 and discuss your idea with me. Be sure to include pictures — NAICC needs more photographic history.

At the annual meeting in Memphis many members protested they weren't writers. Your value as a newsletter contributor lies not in your literary skills, but in your experience as a researcher or consultant. For the writing skills you have a professional journalist as managing editor.

Editors edit stories. That's the job title and job description. Editors change sentences around, exchange words, cut a 1,000 word story in half, write headlines that hopefully match the story content, check spelling, rearrange paragraphs—anything that will make the story flow better and communicate the ideas of the author clearly.

Don't worry about being edited—it isn't personal and it doesn't mean you are a literary dummy. Every writer who has ever been published has had his or her writing altered by an editor. Professional writers of 25 and 30 years experience still find editorial changes in their

stories—and rarely are they asked if the changes suit them.

Newsletter deadlines are the 10th of every month. NAICC works a month ahead. For example, an article for the July issue must be in the editor's hands June 10 and an article for the August issue is due July 10. By the first day of the month the newsletter is in the hands of the printer.

Occasionally, an article slated for one month must be held up a month or two until space in the newsletter opens up a little. Which articles are held and which are printed is a function of timeliness—some stories will have value no matter when they are printed. For example, an article on accounting for pesticide use is as interesting in May as it would be in December.

After the editor reads and edits the stories, the newsletter goes to an editorial board made up of NAICC Executive Board members **Bruce Nowlin**, **Dick Jensen** and **Larry Stowell**.

They read the stories for accuracy and timeliness. After it is laid out, **Dennis Berglund** reads the entire newsletter for mistakes. By the 10th of the month, more than 500 copies of the newsletter are being mailed, just as the stories for the next month's issue are arriving on the editor's desk.

The NAICC newsletter offers its readers a window to the world of agriculture. It's up to the members to make certain the view from that window is the best.

Certification

Why I Joined and Became Certified

by Bill Cox

I started work as a full-time crop consultant in December, 1974 when the idea of having a "field man" completely independent of agricultural suppliers in the area sounded good, but proved a difficult concept to sell.

It took time, work and lots of support from some progressive producers to make the consulting business go. Change the date I started, and I'll bet this story sounds pretty familiar to a lot of you.

In the early days there wasn't much written about crop consultants, but gradually I started reading about others. Publications like *Ag Consultant* and *Fieldman* magazine were slowly spreading the word about our profession. I read about consultants from all over the country and felt a sense of kinship with these people and could empathize with their stories about the ideas and dreams that pushed the profession into what it is today.

I also started to read about a group of consultants who had decided we needed an organization of our own and NAICC was born.

That was then and this is now. The basic concepts are pretty much the same, but the technical aspects of agriculture, the consulting business and NAICC have all changed drastically.

I did not become a member of

NAICC until 1991. I still don't know why it took so long, but the decision to join is one that I have never regretted. At the first annual meeting I met other consultants — people like **Grady Coburn, Dwayne Coulon, Reed Green** and many of the people I had been reading about for years. It was also at this annual meeting that I decided to apply for REAP certification.

My decision to certify was not based on business concerns. I have an established business with a solid client base and most of my clients could care less whether I'm certified or not.

My decision was based on my desire to promote the work of NAICC and to be a consultant worthy of membership in that organization. It didn't take long for me to realize that if I was going to sit in the same room with members of NAICC that it was my obligation to do everything possible to maintain the standards that were so evident. Subsequent meetings in Washington and Memphis have reaffirmed my assessment of the organization and my commitment to it.

There are many reasons to certify. NAICC member **Thomas Menke's** opinion letter in the February/March newsletter pretty well sums them up. For those of you who missed the letter, he said, in part: "The issue of certification touches upon the very core of my

professional existence—who I am and what I stand for." I agree with him.

To quote Menke again: "Certification for independent crop consultants accomplishes four things:

- it separates the genuine from the imitation;
- it provides a recognition that the public can identify with as having the proper qualifications to perform such services (so important in these days of environmental paranoia);
- it legitimizes and identifies the profession as a cohesive group that has professional standards of practice;
- it elevates consulting to the level of other professionals who have comparable standards of professionalism."

It all boils down to a commitment.

We consultants are not big in numbers, but we do a job that has become extremely important in production agriculture. We owe it to ourselves and to members of our profession to uphold the highest standards of professionalism.

Certification is a demonstration of that commitment.



(Bill Cox of CoxCo Ag Services, Inc. in Las Cruces, N.M., is a voting member of NAICC.)

Cotton Consultants Pay Off for Farmers

Three agricultural economists conclude cotton consultants are worth hiring. In fact, a study shows: "the value of professional scouting in Mississippi under 1989 conditions is estimated at approximately \$135 per acre. Similar results were obtained for the Delta States (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee) as a whole."

The study was done by D. W. Parvin Jr. of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Mississippi State University; Jet Lee and Walter Ferguson, Resources and Technology Division of the USDA's Economic Research Service.

The study showed farmers with professional scouting programs used no more insecticide treatments than farmers who didn't use consultants. However, those who hired consultants used significantly more herbicide, fungicide, defoli-

ant and growth retarding treatments.

However, the study said: "A major tactic used by professional scouts is the application of chemical controls at the economic threshold level, the level at which the benefits of control are expected to exceed the cost of control. Nonchemical tactics against cotton pests may include biotechnology strategies. Other nonchemical tactics include use of computer simulation models, crop residue destruction, crop rotation, crop site selection, fertility management, intensive scouting, natural enemy preservation, short season production, tillage, time of harvest, time of planting, trapping, and water management."

More than 1,500 cotton farmers were studied and, while focusing on Mississippi, included 14 cotton-producing states.

In a relatively few number of years, the cotton consultant in Mississippi developed from simply monitoring boll weevils and making boll weevil control recommendations to monitoring all insect pests and beneficial insects and making recommendations on insect management.

In fact, the study noted, the consulting profession has matured significantly in a few years and now professionals make recommendations on all phases of cotton production.

"Professional scouting is widely used in cotton production, for example, on 55 percent of the acreage nationally and on 70 percent in the Delta States," the study said. "The professional scout has a strong influence on the farmer's use of pesticides and non-chemical control strategies."

New Members

■ Voting

Wayne L. Currey, Ph.D. (Agronomy-Weed Science) FNGA, FTG, SWSS, WSSA

Weed Systems Inc.
8168 Alderman Road
Melrose, FL 32666
Office: (904) 475-1428
Home: (904) 475-1428
Fax: (904) 475-3226

Crops: Turf, ornaments, agronomic vegetables and tree crops. Services: Contract research performed for various crops in all Florida crops.

Doug Lenz, B.S. (Agronomy) ARCPACS, ACA of ND

Centrol of Twin Valley
R.R. 1, Box 134
Buxton, ND 58218
Home: (701) 847-2934

Crops: Wheat, barley, oats, corn, soybeans, dry bean, potatoes, sugar beets. Services: Farm programs, crop planning, crop monitoring, field records and soil sampling.

Robert L. Massey, Ed.S., M.S. (Agriculture Education) MACA, SWCD

Massey Ag Consultant Service
201 Lanelle Cove
Senatobia, MS 38668
Office: (601) 562-7997
Home: (601) 562-7997

Crops: Cotton, soybeans and wheat. Services: Entomology, soil fertility and general consulting.

Luke McConnell, B.S. (Conservation and Resource Development) ASA, CPAg

7735 Dyer Road
Denton, MD 21629
Office: (410) 479-3664
Fax: (410) 479-0564

Crops: Vegetables and grains. Services: IPM implementation, fertility management and soil sampling.

Daniel J. Moser, B.S. (Agronomy)

Centrol of Twin Valley
R.R. 1, Box 617
Larimore, ND 58251
Office: (701) 326-1952
Home: (701) 326-6467

Crops: Wheat, barley, dry beans, soybeans, corn, canola, sunflowers-oils and confections. Services: Full time Consultant for 18 growers.

Danny C. Pierce, B.S. (Pest Management) NCACC, ESA, SN, ASA, ARCPACS

Crop Management Services
674 Lassiter Road
Princeton, NC 27569
Office: (919) 736-4863
Home: (919) 736-4863

Crops: Tobacco, corn, soybeans, wheat and cotton. Services: Fertility, insect, weed, disease and agronomic recommendations.

Stanley J. Viator, M.S. (Botany, Plant Pathology) LACA, LSA

Viator's Ag Advisory Service
P.O. Box 984
Ruston, LA 71270
Office: (318) 856-7065
Home: (318) 255-1268
Fax: (318) 856-7065

Crops: Sugar cane, milo, wheat, soybeans, kenaf and corn. Services: Certification in ag entomology and plant pathology and dem. research, recommendations on insect problems.

■ Commercial

Orvin E. Bontrager, M.S. (Range Science/Weed Science) WSSA, ASA

Servi-Tech, Inc.
1717 N Street
Aurora, NE 68818
Office: (402) 694-5312
Home: (402) 694-5312
Fax: (402) 694-2736

Crops: Corn, soybeans, milo, alfalfa, pastures and rangeland. Services: Weed, insect, disease control, fertility management, equipment adjustment and calibration, irrigation management, crop variety selection and grazing management, record keeping.

Jennifer Feldman, M.S. (Entomology)

HybriTech Seed
300 E. Mallard Drive
Boise, ID 83706
Office: (208) 389-2236
Home: (208) 455-2319
Fax: (208) 389-2280

Crops: Potatoes and fruits. Services: Developing pest management recommendations for transgenic Bt potatoes.

■ Cooperative

Mike Wallace

Texas Pest Management Association
8000 Centre Park Drive
Suite 340
Austin, TX 78754
Office: (512) 834-8762
Fax: (512) 339-6302

Calendar

JUNE 7-10 "Introduction to Good Laboratory Practice and Auditing", International Center for Health and Environment Education, Alexandria, Va. Contact: Robert Morris at the center at (703) 658-8888.

JUNE 8-10 **Corn Utilization Conference**, sponsored by the National Corn Growers Association, Hyatt Union Station, St. Louis, Mo. Contact: Mike Erker at the association at (314) 275-9915.

JUNE 10-12 **World Pork Expo**, sponsored by the National Pork Producers Council in association with the National Pork Board, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis, Ind. NAICC will have a booth at the expo. **Tom Menke** of Greenville, Ohio, needs help running the booth, so call him at (513) 447-4225 if you can help. Contact: World Pork Expo information line, (515) 223-2600.

JUNE 30-JULY 1 "Agrichemical Formulations for the 1990s and Beyond", Formulations Forum '94, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact: (212) 244-5225.

JULY 4-9 **Eighth International Congress of Pesticide Chemistry**, Washington, D.C. Contact: Formulations Forum '94 Planning Committee at (212) 244-5225.

JULY 21 "Consultants Seminar: Focus on Business Organization", sponsored by the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers, Rochester, Minn. Contact: Bill Holstine, Hertz Farm Management, Inc. (515) 382-6596.

JULY 29-31 **Soybean Expo** at the Kansas City Convention Center in Kansas City. Hosted by the American Soybean Association. Contact: Larry Kroeger at (314) 821-7220.

AUGUST 4-6 **Plant Growth Regulator Society of America 1994 Meeting**, Portland, Ore. Contact: David Fritz of the society, Rhone-Poulenc Ag Co. at (919) 549-2408.

SEPTEMBER 13-16 "Introduction to Good Laboratory Practice and Auditing", International Center for Health and Environment Education, Alexandria, Va. For more information contact Robert Morris at the center at (703) 658-8888.