



NAICC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

Volume 12, Number 5

The Voice of the Professional Crop Consultant

June/July/August 1998

NAICC White Paper Offers Relief

Help is available to crop consultants who may feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of precision agriculture and the desire to stay on the "cutting edge" of advancing technology.

The NAICC Precision Ag Task Force spent two years intensely studying precision ag with the following goals in mind:

- To provide a current snapshot of Precision Ag and to assess the direction of the technologies.
- To help consultants make an informed decision about the impact of Precision Ag and how it can fit in his or her area.
- To help consultants plan and prepare to use the technology.
- To provide the NAICC Board with recommendations on time and asset allocation.
- To position the resulting White Paper as an evolving document rather than the final word on Precision Ag.

To meet these goals, the 14-member committee of NAICC members and friends divided into subcommittees and tackled different parts of the Paper. (The resulting 22-page document is posted on the members-only section of the NAICC web page, and printed copies are available to members who request them by contacting NAICC Executive Vice President Allison Jones.)

"It was decided that the White Paper be made a membership service, and that decision was not made lightly," said NAICC President **Lee West** of Research Designed for Agriculture, Yuma, Ariz. "It is not our desire to be exclusive," she said. "It is clear that the information compiled by the Precision Ag Task Force

will give a competitive advantage to those who choose to use it." West said she welcomed everyone in the consulting and research professions to join the Alliance and take advantage of this Paper and all other membership services. "We have a category of membership for anyone who's interested," she added.

HELP CELEBRATE 20TH ANNIVERSARY



Check those files and photo albums. NAICC needs your help to make the association's 20th anniversary special. We'd like to use your keepsakes (photos, old newsletters, anecdotes, etc.) to reflect our 20-year history. We'll feature selected memorabilia in some of the upcoming newsletters, and we'll have an old photo contest during the 20th anniversary meeting in January. To submit your photos and other NAICC collectibles, please send them to Allison Jones, NAICC executive vice president, at 1055 Petersburg Cove, Collierville, TN 38017. Please include as much information as you can about your entry, and mark it clearly with your name and address so that we can return it to you. All entries must be submitted by October 15, 1998.

Former NAICC President and the person who appointed the Task Force, **Don Jameson**, is impressed with the results of the intensive study. "They did exactly what I hoped they would do. I couldn't be more pleased."

Dennis Berglund of Control, Inc., Twin Valley, Minn., chaired the committee. Committee members included Joe Berry of Spatial Information Analysis, Ft. Collins, Colo.; **Brad Buchanan** of Crop Tech Services, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; **Phil Cochran** of Cochran Agronomics, Paris, Ill.; Mark Fering of **John Deere Precision Farming**, Moline, Ill.; **Mike Freeberg** of Control, Twin Valley, Minn.; **Dave Harms** of Crop Pro-Tech, Bloomington, Ill.; Grant Mangold of AgInovator, Linn Grove, Iowa; Pete Nowak of University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisc.; **Earle Raun** of Pest Management Company, Lincoln, Neb.; Kevin Scholl of Mowers Soil Testing Plus, Inc., Toulon, Ill.; **Bill Stangel** of Soil Solutions Consulting, Lake Mills, Wisc.; **Kirk Wesley** of Key Agricultural Services, Macomb, Ill.; and **Dave Willis** of Agassiz Crop Management, Thief River Falls, Minn.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Summer Not The Time To "Go It Alone"	2
The Ethics Of Confidentiality	2, 3
Happenings On The Hill	3, 4
Spotlight On The States	3
Development And Implementation Of IPM	
Program For Sweet Corn Production System	4, 5
Invest In Yourself	6
A Year In The Life Of A Research Farm Manager	6, 7
Membership Services Committee Meeting	7, 8
Calendar Of Events	8

Allison Jones, Executive Vice President • Daney D. Kepple, Communications Counsel • Brenda Weber, Managing Editor
1055 Petersburg Cove, Collierville, TN 38017 • Phone: (901) 861-0511 • Fax: (901) 861-0512 • E-mail: JonesNAICC@aol.com.
www.agriculture.com/naicc

Lee West, President

2345 East 16th Street • Yuma, AZ 85365 • Phone: (520) 783-3552 • Fax: (520) 783-3877 • E-mail: westyuma@aol.com



President's Message

Summer Not the Time to "Go it Alone"

by Lee West

Somehow it seems easiest, when things get really busy, to bury yourself in your work and take on the world's problems alone. But that's usually when it's most important to turn to others, not only for moral support but to rely on their knowledge and expertise to make your job easier.

Don't forget, in these hectic months of summer, to reach out to others in the field. While you may not feel comfortable calling a competitor or local dealer, you can still talk to your peers about how they might handle a similar situation. By turning to others for input we broaden our scope. Now we can rely not only on what we know as professionals, but also take into consideration experiences of others in the field. Will they always have the right answers? No, just as you may not. But two heads are so often better than one. And you may gain more than you anticipated in consulting with a peer. You may learn how to handle a specific situation better, or what backfired for someone else in the past. You may be able to better serve your client. You may find a valuable ally you can rely on in the future. And you may find that peer calling you for your recommendations in the weeks or months to come. You certainly will have taken advantage of "networking," an increasingly important aspect to doing business in just about every industry.

In today's competitive environment, we're offered a cornucopia of ways to network. We can rely on phone and fax, e-mail and teleconference to keep the lines of communication open, in addition to the traditional meetings and visits.

In particular, the Internet offers an easy way to keep in contact with others through e-mail and discussion groups. As well, it contains loads of information for research, not to mention games and shopping, newspapers, book groups, you name it.

What I encourage you to do is take advantage of the discussion forum the Internet offers to you through NAICC's web site. In addition to what the site offers with regard

to current information on industry affairs, membership and upcoming events, it offers discussion groups regarding technical issues. By joining in the various discussions, you can voice your own opinions, share experiences and take advantage of others' expertise. You can gain a national, even global scope of issues similar to those affecting you. The result? New ideas, new processes, new ways of thinking.

The Internet is a powerful conduit in maintaining contact with others when we're pulled in so many different directions. When we're facing many pressures we often feel alone. By tapping into discussions via the web, we can feel more connected, and we can more easily recognize that we aren't alone in the problems we face.

I encourage you to log on to the site at <www.agriculture.com/naicc>. There's no reason to tackle these hectic summer months alone. Turn to others for support and expertise. You might be surprised at how much lighter the tasks at hand feel.

The Ethics of Confidentiality

William D. Brown, Ph.D. and Dan E. Bradshaw, CPCC-I

About 11 years ago, you did some efficacy testing on a soil amendment/fertilizer material for a large agricultural concern. The client required that you sign a confidentiality agreement stating you would not disclose the results of your tests. In return, they agreed not to use your name as a reference in any advertisement about the product, a condition meeting your approval since you had some concern they might pick and choose favorable points from your analysis in promoting the product. Nor had you wanted to endanger your reputation if the product did not perform,

especially as you were just starting your career as a professional consultant. You recall having some questions regarding the client's credibility at the time but you had needed the business to weather a tight year. Subsequently your client went out of business. You gave your report no further thought until recently when you learned a newly formed company is starting an aggressive marketing campaign statewide, citing research done by independent researchers as proof of the value of this same product. One of the research locations cited is the area in which you work, where there are no other independent researchers. You are concerned that your clients may assume you tested and approved of the product. The product is not performing and you feel that farmers using the product are being taken advantage of by these claims. What should you do?

Confidentiality is of utmost importance in the crop consultant/client relationship. But is the principle of confidentiality an absolute? If so, then the professional described herein has no choice but to remain silent. But alas, absolutes are few in this life and confidentiality, depending on actions and good faith of both parties in this scenario, is not among this short list of absolutes.

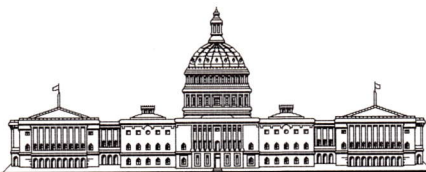
The signed confidentiality agreement obligated the consultant to maintain confidentiality concerning the results of the tests. Similarly, this same agreement obligated the client to refrain from using the professional's name in any advertisement about the product. As the original client is no longer in business, technically that entity no longer exists. With the other party to the agreement now defunct, confidentiality would be a non-issue in relating to these two parties.

However, suppose rights had been purchased or transferred to a new company. Would confidentiality apply to this new entity? Ethically a case can be made that the crop consultant would be bound to the agreed confidentiality agreement, as would the new company, given such an agreement. Most germane to the issue is that this new entity is not abiding by the original confidentiality agreement, especially when claiming that an independent contractor — in an area where the crop consultant is the

sole professional offering such services — conducted research favorable to the product.

The crop consultant should contact the start-up firm, giving it an opportunity to correct advertisements and notices implying either explicitly or implicitly on his or her reputation as a professional. If this effort proves unsatisfactory, the crop consultant should not feel bound to an agreement violated by the other party. With one's professional reputation at stake, as well as concern that farmers in the area may be taken advantage of by false claims, the crop consultant should educate his clients as well as the entire farming community. All should be made aware that he has not been party to any tests or research proving the efficacy of the product in question.

William D. Brown, Ph.D., is President of The Ethics Institute and Chairman of TRT, Inc., and he has conducted ethics presentations and workshops for NAICC and other clients. Dan E. Bradshaw, CPCC-I, is a former president of NAICC and has served as chair of the Ethics and Grievance Committee.



HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL

AG RESEARCH BILL PASSES IN HOUSE

Final Congressional approval was recently given for the first major overhaul of agricultural research programs in more than 20 years and for the restoration of crop insurance for America's farmers. These changes came with passage of the Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (S. 1150), which passed by a vote of 364 to 50 in the House of Representatives.

Over five years this bill allocates \$600 million to create new agriculture research programs, \$500 million to partially fund crop insurance costs, \$100 million for the Fund for Rural America and \$800 million to partially fund food stamps for non-citizens.

Passage of the bill not only modern-

izes research and loan programs, it allows farmers and ranchers the opportunity to maintain their competitive edge in an increasingly global marketplace. "We worked diligently to improve upon the current structure of Research, Education and Extension. This bill increases competition and maximizes research for leveraging private dollars with limited federal funds," said Congressman Larry Combest (R-TX), chairman of the Subcommittee on Forestry, Resource Conservation and Research.

Congressman Charlie Stenholm (D-TX), the Committee's ranking minority member, said that despite significant differences in the original House and Senate versions, the final bill is a fair and balanced compromise among the competing priorities.

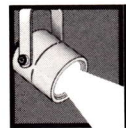
ANTIBIOTICS UNDER SCRUTINY

(The following has been extrapolated from information compiled by Roberta Spitzko, Ph.D. with New England Fruit Consultants.)

Concern regarding antibiotic use in plant production has been raised by the Environmental Protection Agency. The concern — fear of possible development of resistant strains of human pathogens — has been raised regarding the antibiotic gentamicin, and its registration has been delayed over the issue. As well, currently registered antibiotics, including streptomycin and oxytetracycline, are also being reviewed by EPA.

Use of antibiotics in plant production is minimal. Of the 51 million pounds of antibiotics used annually in the U.S., less than 0.1 percent (fewer than 50,000 pounds) is used in plant production. And in most cases, antibiotic treatments on plants are used only in years of bacterial plant pathogen outbreaks. Antibiotics are primarily used on six minor use crops: apples, pears, peaches, tomatoes, peppers and snap beans. But while use is minimal, the availability of antibiotics to many growers is essential, as in the case of pome fruit growers who rely on streptomycin and oxytetracycline as the most effective means to manage fire blight.

EPA is currently in the process of making decisions about these and other antibiotics. NAICC has submitted a letter to EPA stressing the importance of



SPOTLIGHT ON THE STATES

IAPCC Hosts Field Training Day

A hands-on field training day was held for crop consultants and agronomic advisors in early June at the Purdue University Agronomy Research Center. Hosted by the **Indiana Association of Professional Crop Consultants and Dow AgroSciences**, the 11th annual crop diagnostic field day focused on diagnosing problems in the field, such as pest outbreaks, pesticide performance and weather/crop development interactions.

Members of the Indiana, Illinois and Ohio crop consultant associations participated in the program, which also gave them an opportunity to network with peers and to speak informally with Purdue University specialists.

Purdue's Research Center offers a 20-acre outdoor laboratory, where more than 900 small plot demonstrations are used to illustrate common problems in ag production systems. Training sessions at the center are designed to provide participants with a comprehensive short course in crop production and management, and they include information on pests, tillage and fertility.

By hosting this field day in conjunction with Dow AgroSciences, IAPCC helped to fulfill its organizational goals, which include promotion of professionalism in the business of consulting, formation of crop management philosophies, expansion of consultants' knowledge and assistance for Indiana growers in producing their crops economically and in sync with the environment.

antibiotics for disease management and encouraging the registration and continued availability of these products. Additional input from the crop production industry and the scientific community is needed. Information and comments should be sent to Dr. Lynn Goldman, EPA Assistant Administrator

for Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 410 M Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20460, phone (202) 260-2902, fax (202) 260-1847.

EPA INCREASES REGULATIONS FOR LIVESTOCK, POULTRY OPERATIONS

An increase in federal government regulation on the nation's biggest livestock and poultry operations is being attempted by EPA in an effort to reduce animal waste run-off. The Agency is requiring operating permits for all large producers, and to get permits operators will have to comply with comprehensive waste management requirements. They will be inspected more frequently by EPA and will be subject to stiff fines if found in violation of the regulations.

Operations that come under these regulations are what EPA considers concentrated animal feeding operations: those with 1000 or more cattle, 2500 or more swine or 100,000+ laying hens. EPA contends that these additional enforcements are needed due to the growing concentration of animals at large feeding operations and the availability of new waste management techniques and run-off controls.

NAICC IS ON TRAC

Policies and risk mitigation measures are currently being formulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for evaluation of organophosphates under the directive of the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act.

As part of this process, an advisory committee of 52 key persons representing a wide diversity of agricultural interests was put together to form the USDA-EPA Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee (TRAC). The committee was formed partly as a result of a directive from Vice-President Al Gore to proceed cautiously with FQPA implementation and partly as a joint EPA/USDA initiative for processor and user input.

Jointly chaired by Fred Hansen, deputy administrator, EPA, and Richard Rominger, deputy secretary, USDA, the first meeting was held in late May at EPA Headquarters, Crystal City, Washington D.C. It was well attended by other high-level USDA and EPA offi-

cial. NAICC members **Dr. Charles Mellinger**, representing Glades Crop Care, Jupiter, Fla., and **Dr. Robin Spitko**, New England Fruit Consultants, Montague, Mass., representing NAICC, serve on TRAC.

In general, both federal agencies appeared aware of possible disruption in agricultural production systems if FQPA implementation proceeds too rapidly without fair assessment of the consequences of widespread changes in use patterns. Particular concern was expressed by USDA officials about the disruption of carefully developed IPM programs if rapid shifts to other groups of insecticides take place. Crop consultants can play an important role by providing detailed scientific input from direct experience with IPM programs in the field.

The first day of meetings was taken up with discussion of very intense risk evaluation methodologies and statistics. The size and definition of the "risk cup" was the subject of much debate. Many committee members were frustrated with the lengthy process but the basic methodology had to be covered before more specific issues could be addressed. On the second day the co-chairs opened up the floor to more TRAC input and the meeting flowed better as members became more comfortable and voiced their concerns. After two days of meetings, the level of complexity of the issues and the lack of clear understanding of the risk model parameters were quite evident. The committee members and administration officials agreed that they face huge challenges in finding common ground and making sound regulatory decisions.

At the May 27 - 28 TRAC meeting, the major topic of discussion was comparing actual pesticide use data with data used in risk assessment (usually full label rates, maximum application numbers and minimal pre-harvest intervals). Information was presented regarding USDA's recent data gathered on actual OP use and residue levels.

TRAC will meet three more times in Washington, D.C. in June and July to discuss the effects of changing organophosphate registrations and use patterns on all parts of the agricultural industry. This includes food producers

and processors, farm workers, ag chem industries and crop consultants.

Having input into the decision-making processes of agricultural policy has been a role NAICC has sought for many years. It is an honor for our profession to have been selected for two seats on this important advisory committee.

Development and Implementation of IPM Program for Sweet Corn Production System in Homestead, Florida

Steven T. Hoak, July 24, 1996

*As part of the Certified Professional Crop Consultant programs, the required case study analyses provide opportunities to exemplify work with clients. The following excerpt is from a case study by **Steven Hoak** of Glades Crop Care, Inc. It shows how Hoak was able to carry the study out easily as part of his normal work. NAICC encourages consultants to take advantage of the certification programs and to recognize that the case study can be a simple, straightforward analysis, as Hoak's write-up suggests.*

About 6,000 acres of sweet corn are grown in this community each winter and it is all sold as a fresh market commodity. Thresholds for both physiological and pest-related damage are very low. Average yields are about 350 crates per acre (50 ears per crate). At this yield, a market price of roughly five to six dollars per crate is needed to break even.

Homestead is considered a subtropical region. The growing season for sweet corn is from October to April. Corn is grown on a calcium-based soil called marl. Overhead irrigation is required for almost all sweet corn acreage. Most pesticides are applied by a ground rig; however, when wet field conditions exist, airplanes are used.

I categorize the growth stages of sweet corn as follows: spike; two through 10 leaves; tassel in whorl; late tassel in whorl; pushing tassel; pushed tassel; silked and pollinating; pollinated; silks drying and dried silks. For worm control, the most crucial growth stages are late tassel in whorl until after pollination. During these crucial growth stages,

potential yield loss is at a maximum because, as the tassel is pushed out of the whorl, any worms present are also pushed out and usually fall directly on the developing ear shoot. A large worm can destroy these small ear shoots in a matter of hours. The same may be said of green silks. Any damage to these interferes with pollination and the proper development of kernels.

A grower I began working for in 1988 grew about 1,000 acres of sweet corn. Until 1988 the grower controlled insects and disease by using a calendar spray schedule. The schedule in effect at the time consisted of approximately 30 pesticide applications per acre; at least half were mixtures of more than one pesticide. Despite the grower's excessive spray schedule, he is a very progressive farmer and wanted to modify his current farming practices. Prior to actually being hired, we had a couple of meetings, and various considerations were reviewed. His main concern was that the crop would be devastated by the wide range of insect pests that survive the winters of south Florida. In his mind this was the justification for applying these exorbitant amounts of pesticides.

After reviewing his pesticide schedule, I pointed out that the cost of his current procedures in a year of extremely low insect and disease pressure is enormous. On the other hand, the costs of letting insect and disease levels devastate the crop in a year of abnormally high pressure is equally enormous. Also, I expressed my concern about the excessive amounts of active ingredient introduced into the environment and asserted the fact that this is one of the ways that pests can build up resistance.

Before 1988, the grower's calendar spray schedule consisted of one pre-plant application of an insecticide to control cutworms. From emergence until tassel push, insecticides were applied every three to four days for fall armyworm (FAW) or viruliferous leafhopper. After tassel push, the grower sprayed every other day with two insecticides until three to four days before harvest. His main concerns here were FAW and corn silk fly. At least once a week a fungicide was routinely added to whatever tank-mix happened to be going out that day.

The first year was a transition period for both the grower and me. The grower had to be comfortable with the quantification of insect and disease levels reported, and I had to become more familiar with his particular cultural practices. My initial plan was to check pre-tassel corn twice a week and post-tassel corn three times a week. Even with the scouting, not enough trust existed between us, so he continued to treat pre-tasseled corn weekly whether the crop needed it or not.

I encountered problems with the scouting system the first year; occasionally upon arriving at the farm several of his fields were getting their weekly spray. For safety reasons, these fields would not get checked that day, so it may have been five to seven days before these fields were checked again, as it was a three-hour drive to his fields. I changed the scouting procedure the second year. Pre-tassel corn would still be checked twice weekly, but post-tassel corn would be checked between sprays.

At the end of year one and prior to year two, I reminded the grower of the service he received, and we began making preparations for year two. We agreed that a sound scouting program had been established, and the grower felt confident that scouting reports reflected field situations. This enabled me to begin working on improving some of his cultural practices. Some improvements I made to his farming operation were as follows:

- Establishment of a threshold of 5 percent for FAW and treatment of pre-tassel corn only when infestations exceeded threshold.
- Incorporation of methomyl granules into the spray program for FAW control in the mid- to late-vegetative corn stage. In problem areas granules may be applied while fields are being cultivated, thus saving a trip through the field. During windy conditions, constructing a shield around the Gandi boxes would keep more active ingredients in the whorls and allow less to be needlessly introduced into the environment.
- Avoiding treatment of late tassel-in-whorl stage fields that are above the worm threshold four to five consecutive days. Wait until corn starts push-

ing tassel, then make two successive sprays. Insecticide treatments applied when tassel is still in the whorl are of marginal control value. A much better kill is obtained when tassels are open and worms are exposed.

- Through the use of water-sensitive paper, I demonstrated and concluded that the addition of drop nozzles on the spray rig would allow more active ingredients to be applied to the ears or ear shoots in fields that had already pushed tassel.
- Continue treating green silks every other day; after corn is pollinated, if reports show low worm pressure, increase spray interval to three to four days or longer.
- Rotate insecticides during silking program for silk fly control.
- Discontinue the practice of using very low rates of the fungicide Tilt on a weekly basis. Use mancozeb fungicides at the first onset of disease. If this does not provide adequate control, then use Tilt. Usually if the Tilt application can be held off until corn is in the tassel-in-whorl stage, then four ounces can take care of the disease problem through harvest.

Through the combined efforts of the grower and my IPM service, we were able to develop and implement an effective IPM program for the farming operation. The reduction of pesticide use had a significant impact on his farming operation. By reducing the number of applications per acre, the grower was able to use his spray applicator in other phases of the farming operation. Beneficial insects multiplied in his fields, thereby further reducing the need for control options. The grower realized that the service paid for itself, and he had the security of knowing that his crop was being scouted two to four times a week.

The IPM program developed for this large-acreage grower not only cut down production costs, it decreased the amount of active ingredient introduced into the environment. This abatement not only diminishes the impact of pesticides on the local flora and fauna but is a benefit to everyone involved in farming and to the residents of Homestead, Florida.

Invest in Yourself

Following is a letter that was recently sent to John Gruber, NAICC president, from Joe Nester, a new NAICC supporter.

Dear John:

A few years ago, I joined the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, mainly because I felt it was the thing to do if I intended on making a living consulting. I sent in the application, paid the dues and at the end of the year felt I had paid \$200 for a newsletter. When the notice came to pay my dues the second year, I balked. I soon received a call from someone in the NAICC and they persuaded me to send my dues in.

Now I felt I was the proud owner of a \$400 newsletter. I was convinced I couldn't continue with the membership. I talked to a couple fellow consultants who were active in the NAICC and they both had a suggestion: let's settle this dilemma before wasting any more money. They thought I should attend the annual meeting, give it half a chance and if it wasn't for me, they wouldn't bother me with membership requests again.

My wife agreed, so I was headed to Washington. Guess what? I was surprised to learn the NAICC is made up of consultants truly concerned about their future. Some have businesses similar to mine and some are vastly different, but all aim at the same target: promoting higher education and professionalism in consulting and forming a common voice that can help lead agricultural legislation down the best path for everyone.

I was impressed with the organization of the annual meeting. Topics were timely, speakers well informed and accommodations were more than adequate. Then you throw in the networking. Ample time was allowed to rub shoulders with consultants from coast to coast and believe me, NAICC members aren't afraid to stick out their hand, introduce themselves and then share information about their businesses.

Agriculture has some terrific hurdles to cross in the near future and whether it's new technology or legislation, you will be affected if you plan on making a living consulting. And unless you have a secret plan, you won't be able to do it on your own.

An experienced consultant gave me some excellent advice when I started my business. He said, "There is no better investment you can make than an investment in yourself." Take some advice from one who doubted the NAICC's worth and try it one year. Invest in yourself for the benefit of you, your family, your business and your clients. But to be fair, don't just join; attend the annual meeting! As Allison Jones said in Columbus, "Someone has been holding up your end!"

Joe Nester

A Year in the Life of a Research Farm Manager

During the NAICC Annual Meeting in January, Patrick Fenstermacher of Crop Management Strategies (CMS) explained the farm management profession and how its practitioners can interact with NAICC members. Fenstermacher is a research farm manager for CMS, located in Germansville, Penn. His company works with farms and orchards on a wide variety of fruits and other crops.

Fenstermacher began by giving a general overview of his job. His duties include field and orchard maintenance and preparation, general facility care and data collection. He also works with sample box and bag preparations, inventory and supplies. From month to month his responsibilities vary as he tries to carry out certain objectives concerning the farms and orchards.

"In the winter sometimes just getting to the farm office can be a challenging journey," Fenstermacher commented. In January his wide range of activities includes spending a lot of time doing calibrations for sprayers. He also does repairs to soil sampling probes and reciprocating hammers, for example. His more scientific tasks include finalizing and archiving records and taking dissipation samples, which also means updating the soil dissipation notebooks. "Many studies have ongoing applications, like this stored grain study, where this application fell only days after a blizzard," Fenstermacher explained. In

addition to all of these jobs, he maintains and updates the company farm maps and site specific maps.

In February and March Fenstermacher focuses on organization, updating and inventory. He inventories, orders and organizes field supplies and does form and S.O.P. revisions and updates. He also orders seeds and transplants, as well as lime and fertilizer. He meets weekly with Principle Investigators and management so that "everyone is aware of daily operations, issues and study updates." He finishes out March by doing all the modifications and routine maintenance to existing equipment so it can be ready for use at any time.

"In April we begin the best time of the year at CMS - spring," Fenstermacher said. "I start with layouts for residue plots. The plot layout is done by creating a grid using a transit for straight lines and angles. This gridding of residue plots allows for permanent, square and accurate mapping of our yearly studies." This grid also allows for grass access ways, maximized use of a field for plots and reduction in erosion between plots, he said. Other important jobs include field preparation, bare soil plot preparation and laying sod for dissipations. "I do spring transplanting and weekly mowings. I also assemble and label sponsor bags and boxes and plant cover crops in fallow areas." April concludes with orchard pre-bloom programs.

May begins with IPM of agronomic, vegetable, turf and bare soil areas, which is accomplished by calibrated maintenance chemical applications. He does crop maintenance with a focus on pest control, side dressing and cultivation of transplants and direct seedlings. "I then mow the orchards and import orchard pollinators for plum bloom."

June's focus is the beginning of sampling turf, vegetables and agronomic and soil commodities are priorities as well. "Trees, vegetables and bare areas also receive cover sprays. And I remove or treat tree suckers." Fenstermacher said he closes out June by finding areas to aid Principle Investigators with study conduct. "Usually this means going back to being a technician and calibration, calibration, calibration," he explained.

July and August bring attention to planting, harvesting and fall crop irrigation. In July, Fenstermacher finds himself putting fall plantings and transplantings into grids. He lays fall sod and orchard herbicides get a touch-up, too. "In August fall crop irrigation occurs as the plants need moisture to stay healthy for final samplings. Tree fruit, like cherries, is harvested and tree leaf analysis is taken for fertility requirements," he stated.

"September starts notebook review and completion, which is always a treat," Fenstermacher said jokingly. "I may sample leaves for dislodgeable foliar residues. This is also the time of year when CMS runs a hands-on GLP training course, where the participants actually make a simulated application. We also mow the orchards.

"In October we concentrate on grain, vegetable, turf and agronomic sampling." He said he finds his desk cluttered with paperwork, such as supporting data – farm records, climatological data, CV's and more. "We end September with an apple harvest so we can give cider to family and friends.

"November begins with crop destruction – we take apples off the trees for disposal. Next year's field strips are prepared and fall cover crops are planted. I plan next year's rotations and implement appropriate practices so we can maintain three years fallow. This means no pesticides on our hay or grain crops." The cycle continues with soil sampling, fertility and pH analysis. The orchards are cleaned up and mouse bait is refilled. The winter orchard herbicide program may be done, but it is usually not necessary.

"December brings the season to a close," Fenstermacher said. "The equipment is winterized and we send Christmas gifts. We take a hike along the Appalachian Trail above the farm and we rest for next year," he added.

Fenstermacher closed his talk by saying, "CMS is where I have found a way to increase the accuracy, reproducibility, reliability and efficiency with which we conduct GLP and efficacy studies. We can thus supply information and data to our clients."

Membership Services Committee Meeting

The Membership Services Committee broke out of the mold during their most recent meeting in Washington, D.C. They began looking at new ways this valuable committee can help the NAICC provide service to its membership.

The committee has long worked on group buying arrangements and similar services, and it continued to do so at this meeting. Errors and Omissions insurance and a discount on long distance rates were among the topics discussed, but the group also did some brainstorming, which will result in a number of exciting new projects for this committee to tackle in the future. One of the projects given top priority was the NAICC Internet site. This committee will be working on ways to help the membership find value in this exciting new tool.

Another project the committee assumed has already been partially implemented. Justin McGee, chairman of the Researcher Subcommittee, like others in the past, saw an opportunity for the membership directory to function more as a marketing tool for members, especially those who are providing GLP research services. As a result, a supplement has been published and distributed that lists members according to EPA Regions in which they work.

While this dynamic committee has its plate full this year, co-chairs Al Averitt and Justin McGee have set clear priorities for the group to follow through with existing projects and to tackle new ideas one at a time.

In addition to expanding service at their recent meeting, Membership Services Consultant Committee Chair Al Averitt surveyed the Alliance of Association Leaders. Responses to the survey as of March 27, 1998 follow:

RESPONSE: 15 OUT OF 32

Are you a member of NAICC?

Yes = 10/15

No = 5/15

If yes, for how long have you been a member?

5 = less than six years

5 = six years or more

If yes, briefly explain your reason(s) for joining the NAICC.

- 5 = Promotion of the Profession/Professionalism
- 4 = Supporting Legislative Activity/Awareness
- 3 = Networking Opportunities
- 3 = Educational Opportunities
- 2 = Information Exchange

What do you feel are important benefits to you as a member?

- 4 = Same as Above
- Camaraderie, Political Awareness, Education, Networking, Recognition, Broadened Perspective, Friendship, Shared Knowledge

If no, are there specific reasons that you are willing to comment on here for not having joined the NAICC?

- Attended Meeting in '97 – plan to join in '98
- Was a member, but due to distant meeting sites and fluctuating income dropped out
- Not having time to make a commitment to the organization.
- 1 = No comment

If you answered no to 1.) What services or benefits of membership might the NAICC offer that would increase your interest in joining?

- 3 = No comment
- Regional annual meetings
- Inform state associations of NAICC activity with EPA and join forces with states
- Support independence and deter USDA, Universities, people from "moonlighting" as scouts

Have you ever visited the NAICC web site?

- 6 = Yes
- 8 = No
- 1 = No comment

How often do you visit?

- 2 = Three times a week
- Once every two weeks
- One to four times a month

What did you like and dislike about the web site?

- 10 = No comment
- Need to delete old discussions, but it's a good communication tool
- Have no dislikes
- Like opportunity for members to communicate and share

- Dislike that there is nothing new
- Dislike that it is not being used
- Difficult to get to
- Colors are bland

Is there any other use or element(s) that you would like to see with the web page?

13 = No comment

- More interactions among states
- Reduce commercial appearance by sponsor to give members more feeling of ownership and increase use

Does your state association have a web site?

5 = Yes

10 = No

What is the primary purpose for maintaining your site?

- To keep updated on association activities
- Directory of members
- Information about the association; hot topics

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 23, 1998

Milan No-Till Crop Production Field Day, Milan Experiment Station, Milan, Tenn. Contact Dr. Blake A. Brown at 901/686-7362 for more information.

AUGUST 14, 1998

The Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Association summer meeting, Holiday Inn, Willmar, Minn. For more information contact Steve Howey at 507/423-5423.

AUGUST 17-21, 1998

Fifth International Symposium on Adjuvants for Agrochemicals (ISAA '98), The Peabody, Memphis, Tenn. For more information contact Allen Underwood at 901/537-7260.

OCTOBER 20-23, 1998

Society of Quality Assurance (SQA) Annual Meeting, Adams Mark Hotel, Denver, Colo. For more information contact 703/684-4050.

NOVEMBER 8-11, 1998

Symposium on New Crops and New Uses: Biodiversity and Agricultural Sustainability, Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, Ariz. For more information contact ddierig@uswcl.ars.ag.gov.

January 20-23, 1999

NAICC Annual Meeting, Peabody Hotel, Memphis, Tenn. For more information contact Allison Jones at 901/861-0511, 901/861-0512 (fax), or JonesNAICC@aol.com.

FEBRUARY 4-5, 1999

The Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Association annual meeting, Sheraton Metro, Minneapolis, Minn. For more information contact Steve Howey at 507/423-5423.

MAY 23-28, 1999

10th Annual Soil Conservation Organization Conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

REMEMBER: *The NAICC membership booth is available for your state or professional meetings. To reserve the booth for your function, contact NAICC Headquarters.*

NAICC

1055 Petersburg Cove
Collierville, TN 38017

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
COLLIERVILLE, TN
PERMIT NO. 19