



# NAICC NEWS

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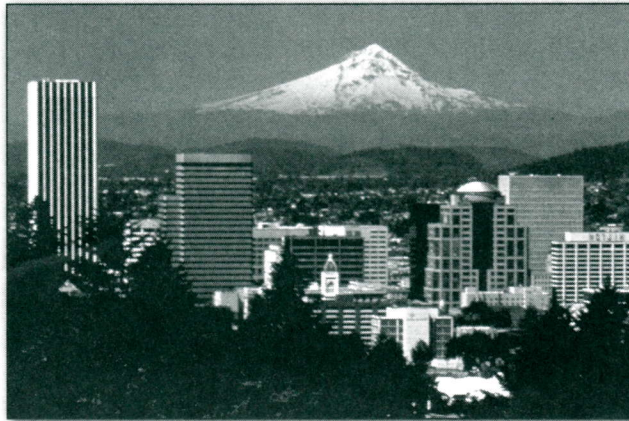
## Destination: Portland, Oregon

As NAICC gears up for its Year 2000 Annual Meeting, it's time to start making plans to attend. The meeting will be packed with information – and with opportunities to relax and explore Portland with colleagues, family and friends.

Otherwise known as the "Rose City", Portland makes a great setting for business and leisure. It's a city that offers all the conveniences of America's thriving metropolitan areas, permeated with a delightful combination of art and outdoors appreciation and an exciting nightlife. Its inhabitants often sport flannels and jeans and spend a good deal of time in the city's numerous coffeehouses and bookstores.

And while Portland emits a relaxed

western attitude, you can enjoy a vast array of cultural offerings – professional sporting events, Shakespeare, ballet, the city's famous alternative



policies have made it one of the top three most bicycle-friendly cities in the United States.

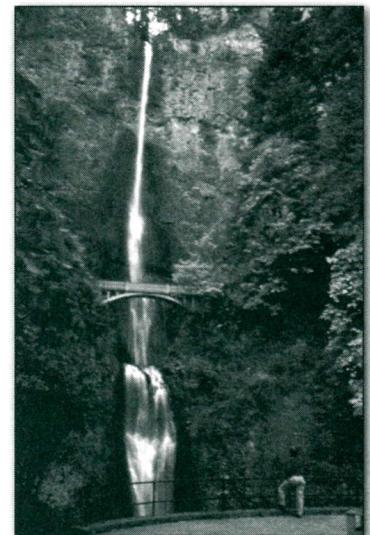
For families incorporating vacation time with the meeting, Portland offers plenty of entertainment, including the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, with everything from computer games to tornado simulations. Other family attractions include the Children's Museum, the Metro Washington Park Zoo, the World Forestry Center, the American Advertising Museum, the Ice Chalet and more.

Portland's location allows easy access to renowned ski resorts like Mt. Hood, the lovely Oregon coast, and the vineyards of the Willamette Valley. If you are interested in a pre- or post ski trip, please contact the NAICC headquarters. For more information about the meeting and its setting, contact Allison Jones, NAICC, at (901) 861-0511; (901) 861-0512 (fax); JonesNAICC@aol.com.

music scene. Art lovers can explore numerous Native American galleries, and the Portland Art Museum has become the setting for the nation's most important traveling shows. It also houses treasures that span 35 centuries of Asian, European and American art.

If it's a beer you're interested in, Portland offers more than 40 craft breweries and brewpubs – so many, in fact, that Portland is often called "Munich on the Willamette." If it's a walk in the park you want to take, you'll have no trouble – the city has 37,000 acres of park space.

Getting around Portland on foot is a breeze, thanks to the European style of the city, with miles of nature trails and pedestrian-sized 200-foot city blocks. Numerous statues and fountains throughout the city make it even more scenic to explore. You can enjoy wandering through the Japanese Gardens or absorb the view offered by bridges that connect the city. A light rail train system helps commuters get from place to place. As well, Portland's progressive bike



### INSIDE THE NEWS

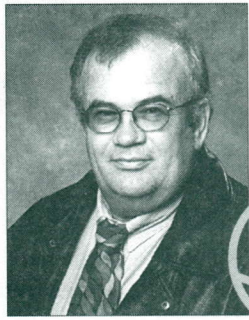
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Allison Jones Executive Vice President  
Daney D. Kepple Communications Counsel  
Brenda Weber Managing Editor

1055 Petersburg Cove / Collierville, TN 38017  
Phone: (901) 861-0511 / Fax: (901) 861-0512  
E-mail: JonesNAICC@aol.com  
www.naicc.org

Roger Carter President  
Route 1, Box 45 / Clayton, LA 71326  
Phone: (318) 389-4411 / Fax: (318) 389-4855  
E-mail: AMSRoger@aol.com

## Consolidation



BY  
ROGER CARTER,  
NAICC  
PRESIDENT



**C**onsolidate – to combine, unite, merge; to make or become solid, strong, or stable. Consolidation via buy-outs, mergers, etc., are the current norm in not only agriculture, but many other industries and businesses including computers, communications and transportation. Most is done to curb costs, increase efficiency, maximize profits and minimize labor and management.

Does consolidation strengthen an industry or profession? How do the consolidations occurring in agriculture affect independent agricultural consultants, contract researchers and the NAICC? It seems that not a week goes by without rumors of a new consolidation. We must face this trend with optimism.

Independent agricultural contract researchers rely heavily on the business of agricultural companies for their dollars in exchange for evalua-

tion of various new and old products. Conceivably, consolidation could reduce the number of products on which data may be needed, but the opposite could be true. Stability may cause the fewer companies remaining in the industry to intensify their search for viable revenue sources – and those sources in the ag industry are ag products. Furthermore, the increased portfolio of compounds per company caused by consolidation will need to be tested. And the sooner the better for the company's profitability.

Research of biotechnology products will need to be enhanced. The rapidity at which information is gathered on the many new biotech products must be increased to avoid some of the problems that have already been exposed at the farm level. Problems should be found before products reach the market – not afterward. Farmers are savoring new technology, but are also aware that without reliable testing, certain new products with less than ideal characteristics may enter the market.

Both independent agricultural contract researchers and consultants will have fewer companies to deal with in the future. Contract researchers have to “court” fewer clients, but the importance of each ag company client is increased because of the decreased number. If companies are more stable they may each have technical representatives, sales personnel and researchers that call on the ag and research consultants. In other words,

each company may have more than one “face” – each a potential resource.

Independent agricultural consultants may have greater input with fewer companies, and each decision made by ag companies is more critical than in years past. Profit margins are slimmer from the farm up to the ag company. Consultants have a vision of whether or not a certain potential product may have a fit in the market considering potential pests, crop acreages, resistance problems, efficacy, competitive products, future economics, etc. Ten years ago companies put products on the market and then tried to make them fit. Now products are designed to be placed in the marketplace even before they are developed in order to address a certain problem. The high cost of the developmental process of ag products has caused companies to make this policy change.

The change brought on with consolidation in the industry cannot be all bad. If we look at it optimistically, we can build on what should be a very stable environment.

Hopefully, the fervor of consolidation will diminish so that research and ag consultants can build relationships between themselves and the company representatives that are essential for either side to operate efficiently and knowledgeably. Accepting these changes to consolidation may be our biggest obstacle but one that we must accept with optimism. After all, we may be the next profession or industry to consolidate. ■

## Selling Services

by R.F. Meyer, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, Burlington, CO

Increasing complexity in agriculture can be a strong selling tool for consultants and researchers. In an environment that is flooded with new products, new information and new regulations, the independent crop consultant community provides increasingly more value to producers who cannot afford the

time and resources to stay on top of so many developments.

By promoting aspects of crop consulting, such as the ability to adapt services to meet varied needs (from insect and disease management to irrigation scheduling), consultants can increase business opportunities. The value consultants add in ensuring a farm is economically efficient and environmentally sound is a key selling point.

Unlike many businesses, crop consultants scale their services to specific jobs (limited or full service). And, depending on crops and

services, fees range from \$5 to \$30, again geared to meeting producer needs.

Because of the nature of the business cycle, the educational opportunities consultants undertake in the off-season position them well for selling updated knowledge and services in the subsequent seasons. Certification is becoming increasingly important in the business, too, allowing many consultants to further leverage their services to clients. (NAICC offers a certification program; to learn more contact

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## WORKAHOLICS

Of all the addictions receiving attention today – alcohol, drugs, gambling, food, sex – work addiction is perhaps the least recognized and most treacherous. This is because a work addiction is a compulsion that is rewarded and reinforced by society. In particular, it's rewarded by corporations that encourage overwork as the norm. Moreover, the lure of work is increasing as innovative, flexible companies use and reward fewer people to get more accomplished.

Yet work addiction should not be confused with hard work; it is a disease in which the person is addicted to the process of work. Though addicts may initially seem to be ideal employees, overwork ultimately proves harmful. Work addicts may develop serious health problems, while family ties disintegrate for lack of attention. In addition, overall estimates reveal that absenteeism, diminished productivity, medical expenses and related problems caused by stress and burnout cost the nation's employers \$150 billion a year.

So how can you tell if you're just

working hard or have crossed the line into work addiction?

When work begins to hurt, you're addicted, say specialists. But how can you spot the work addict among your colleagues? According to Workaholics Anonymous, these characteristics are common to compulsive overworkers:

- They are usually in a hurry
- They have a strong need to control
- They expect perfection of themselves and others around them
- They have difficulty in relationships
- They forget birthdays and anniversaries
- They are unable to relax and have fun
- They are impatient and irritable
- They suffer from physical problems – usually brought on because of stress, poor eating habits and lack of exercise – such as headaches, fatigue, indigestion, allergies, stomach upset, ulcers, chest pain, shortness of breath, nervous tics and dizziness.

Addicted workers often try to do several things at once. They eat breakfast while balancing figures, return phone calls while typing on the computer or read the business and trade papers

while going over meeting notes. Work addicts also feel indispensable and are consequently unable to delegate.

Yet as bad as work addiction can get, there is hope for the work addict.

### Steps toward personal recovery:

- Reorganize your life so that work becomes proportionate to family, friends and self. Switch your focus to relaxation, exercise, nutrition and spiritual development.
- Slow your work pace and also learn to eat, talk, walk and drive slower.
- Learn to relax through yoga, massage or relaxation exercises.
- Work in moderation and keep regular hours.
- Set boundaries between work and personal life.
- Strengthen family ties through shared activities and rituals.
- Renew old acquaintances and join social clubs that don't include coworkers.
- Learn to live in the present, truly listen to others and – as trite as it may sound – stop and smell the roses. ■

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## Mailing and Flyer Policy

At a recent Executive Board meeting, the following policy was adopted with regard to publicity flyers mailed in conjunction with the Annual Meeting Preliminary Program. Program information will be detailed in the September issue of the *NAICC News* and the preliminary program will be mailed in October.

One page mailings/flyers may be included in the same envelope as the Annual Meeting Preliminary program if:

1. The person or company sponsoring the workshop/event is a NAICC member and all materials are reproduced at the sponsor's expense and

sent to the NAICC headquarters for insertion.

2. The workshop/event does not conflict with any meetings or events that are official aspects of the Annual Meeting program.

For example, based on the 1999 Annual Meeting program, all workshops/events could have been held prior to the meeting, but could not have gone beyond 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Workshops/events could not be held until after the stated conclusion of the evening events, nor were they could they take place Saturday during Group Tours.

3. The Annual Meeting Coordination Committee and the Executive Board must approve workshops/events and

flyer insertions. Programs of the same topic presented by competing firms may be approved and held during the same times. Attendees will have the choice as to which program to attend.

4. A fee of \$250 must be paid in advance to NAICC headquarters.

5. NAICC staff will, as requested, secure meeting rooms and food and beverages for these events as part of the overall NAICC meeting space requirements, if desired. Such requests must be submitted no later than September 1 in the year prior to the January Annual Meeting. After September 1, arrangements will be made only if time permits and if the NAICC contract will not be affected negatively. ■

## Y2K Problems Addressed

Y2K readiness should be addressed by every organization, and the General Accounting Office has issued a well-regarded guide for government agencies to correct their Y2K problems. The guide is consistent with private industry best practices and is very applicable to

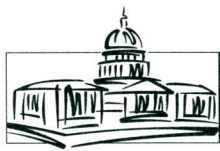
businesses and associations. It recommends the following five phases for ensuring Y2K preparedness:

**Phase 1: Awareness.** Define the Y2K problem and establish a team to develop a readiness strategy. Ensure that everyone within the organization is aware of the issue. Email and interoffice notices can help

relay information.

**Phase 2: Assessment.** Assess the Y2K impact on your enterprise. Identify core business areas and processes; inventory and analyze systems supporting your core business areas, and prioritize their conversion or replacement. Develop contingency

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## HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL

### **EPA Sued by Industry Groups**

Crop industry groups including the American Farm Bureau and the American Crop Protection Association recently filed a lawsuit against the EPA in an effort to ensure proper implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA).

According to Mark Maslyn with the FQPA Implementation Working Group, (IWG) the lawsuit came after what he called "EPA's inadequate response to letters, petitions and face to face discussions asking them to use a sound and fair process to implement FQPA." He said the lawsuit is not intended to be aggressive or hostile and added that those filing the lawsuit do not seek to push all FQPA issues into the judicial system.

The plaintiffs are seeking a "predictable pesticide regulatory process based on reliable information developed in accordance with established and defined data requirements." Maslyn said the industry groups are not seeking anything extraordinary; they want conformance with the requirements specified in the statute, including requirements for rulemaking with proper notice and comment procedures.

"EPA holds it within their power to make the whole issue moot if they would simply implement FQPA according to existing statutory requirements," said Maslyn. He said the plaintiffs decided to sue EPA partly due to the environmental community's response of backing away from the TRAC process, which is leading many to prepare court challenges. "We felt it was prudent for us to get our reasonable and sound requests into the legal system as soon as possible as a result," said Maslyn.

Maslyn said the plaintiff group remains fully committed to the ongoing dialogues, discussions and work with the agency, Congress and other groups interested in FQPA implementation. He stressed that the intention of the

lawsuit is only to bring EPA's implementation of FQPA in line with Congressional intent for FQPA, the language in FQPA itself and the statutes it amends.

As well, Maslyn said the lawsuit clarifies that the involved industry groups are focused on matters of critical importance to farmers and others involved in crop production; those who enhance public health through pest control activities; and manufacturers of products used by such customers. The counts in the lawsuit are targeted at situations where EPA has failed to meet particular statutory requirements, and where this behavior hurt those that use and manufacture these products. The specific counts in the lawsuit address the following five issues:

1. Regulations have not been promulgated for FIFRA governing use of pesticides under emergency conditions (Section 18). EPA has failed to promulgate regulations governing tolerances for emergency exemptions under FIFRA, Section 18, within the required 365 days after enactment of FQPA.

2. Up to date and complete regulations have not been promulgated regarding identification of the data needed in applications for tolerances and registrations. FIFRA and FFDCA include requirements that regulations be issued governing the use of data for these purposes, and although regulations do exist, they pre-date FQPA and are incomplete and outmoded.

3. EPA has failed to implement FFDCA Section 408(f)(1) and FIFRA Section 3(c)(2) (B). EPA is required to collect additional data needed to support the continuation of tolerances and registrations under FFDCA and has failed at this.

4. EPA has failed to comply with key rulemaking requirements for FQPA. EPA is required to issue rulemaking for changes in policies and programs that will have substantial and material effects on those that are regulated. Instead, EPA has relied on informal policies and procedures involving critical matters like choosing a percentile of acute dietary exposure and determining an appropriate FQPA safety factor.

5. EPA has failed to keep its tolerance reassessment schedule up to date. FQPA requires EPA to publish a schedule for its tolerance reassessments. Such a schedule was published, but since that time EPA has made substantial changes to this schedule without going through the formal step of specifying that schedule for the public.

NAICC is a member of the FQPA IWG. This group is not involved with the lawsuit.

### **FQPA Reform Actions Taken**

Legislative provisions developed by the FQPA Implementation Working Group were recently introduced by a bipartisan group of Congressional members. Those leading the introduction were Reps. Pombo (R-CA), Condit (D-CA), Boyd (D-FL) and Towns (D-NY).

The introduction of "The Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999" (H.R. 1592) was followed by a press conference featuring Pombo, Condit, Boyd, Etheridge, American Farm Bureau President Dean Kleckner and American Nursery and Landscape Association Director of Legislative Affairs Bryce Quick.

The bill asks that EPA do the following to ensure fair implementation of FQPA:

1. Ensure sound science is used in all decision-making.

2. Ensure that EPA determines all data gaps – and fill any that exist – before making reregistration decisions.

3. Consider impact of any products made unavailable on international and domestic ag economy.

4. Streamline process for emergency use products.

5. Establish Pesticide Advisory Committee, as TRAC will end in September.

Introducers of the bill have worked to ensure balanced co-sponsorship so that the legislation truly represents a bipartisan effort. Following is a list of co-sponsors gained thus far.

Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-AZ)  
Rep. Christopher John (D-LA)  
Rep. Ernst Istook (R-OK)  
Rep. Ted Strickland (D-OH)  
Rep. Ronnie Shows (D-MS)  
Rep. Mary Bono (R-CA)  
Rep. Rick Boucher (D-VA)

Rep. Bob Etheridge (D-NC)  
 Rep. John Doolittle (R-CA)  
 Rep. Max Sadlin (D-TX)  
 Rep. Virgil Goode (D-VA)  
 Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA)  
 Rep. Matt Salmon (R-AZ)  
 Rep. Rick Hill (R-MT)  
 Rep. George Radanovich (R-CA)  
 Rep. Charles Canady (R-FL)  
 Rep. George Nethercutt (R-WA)

In response to concerns that the EPA might curtail the use of many pesticides which ensure healthy food production Congressman Ray LaHood (R-IL) recently introduced H.R. 1334.

The legislation directs EPA to fairly implement the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). "When FQPA was enacted in 1996," said LaHood, "it was hailed as common sense reform of outdated pesticide regulations. But, as is often the case, Congress' best intentions can go awry when written into regulations by the Administration. My legislation would direct EPA to use sound science, not the whim of a Washington bureaucrat, to implement the FQPA."

Under the 1996 law, EPA has 10 years to reassess the safety of over 9,000 pesticide uses. Because one-third of these evaluations are to be completed by this August, many growers are concerned that EPA will unilaterally cancel many pesticides without reviewing their merits. This schedule makes the entire group of organophosphates at risk of being outlawed. Nationwide, organophosphates ensure the safety of 38 million crop acres, while also being used for public health as an effective mosquito control.

"If these chemicals are unilaterally eliminated," added LaHood, "millions of crop acres would lose effective pest protection. Without these tools production on fields could drop dramatically, and, especially given agriculture's current financial crisis, some farmers could be forced from business."

LaHood's FQPA Implementation Act would:

- ensure sound science is used in implementing FQPA;
- direct the EPA to consider additional data before suspending the use of a pesticide;

- consider the overall public interest before suspending a pesticide;
- receive public input before suspending a pesticide;
- require the Administration to issue a report on the resources needed to properly implement FQPA; and
- establish a program to measure the competitive strength of U.S. agricultural commodity sectors in the international marketplace.

For more about Congressman LaHood's activities, see related article, page 6.

### Farm Funding Needs Met

Emergency farm credit needs and Farm Service Agency (FSA) operations were recently given final approval by Congress. Shortfalls in the current year's USDA budget were also discussed.

Producers in many states had not been able to receive loans for spring planting, while millions of dollars that remained in other USDA loan accounts were held back by USDA Secretary Dan Glickman.

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Larry Combest (R-TX) said that instead of shifting loan funds when farmers needed the cash, hundreds of millions of dollars in loan funds went largely untouched and unavailable for weeks on end. President Clinton's request for additional money came later, when farmers were well into the critical period for securing their credit needs for the planting season. Since then Congress has delivered the cash to cover USDA's shortfalls and short-sighted loan management policy.

The 1999 Supplemental Appropriation for agriculture includes:

- \$109.6 million to replenish USDA loan accounts;
- \$42.75 million to cover Farm Service Agency salaries and expenses;
- \$70 million for additional Livestock Disaster Assistance payments;
- \$28 million to fund Conservation Reserve Program technical assistance to farmers and ranchers for the remainder of FY1999 and \$35 million for FY2000; and
- \$145 million in assistance available to agricultural producers.

### FSA Changes Named

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Keith Kelly announced appointments to two top administrative posts. Lawrence W. Mitchell was named as Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs and Patricia W. Garamendi as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs.

As deputy administrator, Mitchell will be responsible for converting farm program legislation into working policies and procedures regulating the delivery of FSA's conservation and commodity programs. Programs under his responsibility include the Conservation Reserve Program, production flexibility contracts, commodity and livestock disaster programs, marketing assistance loan programs, and the tobacco and peanut programs. Garamendi will serve as his assistant in this capacity.

### Congress Asks President to Alleviate Farm Crisis

Forty Members of the House of Representatives joined Agriculture Committee Chairman Larry Combest in writing a letter to President Clinton requesting that he recommend to Congress a concrete program to address the financial crisis facing American farmers and ranchers for the second consecutive year.

The letter was in response to Clinton's recent press conference where he commented that the situation on the farm is "a terrible emergency." Clinton promised to recommend more help for America's farmers who are in their second year of seriously depressed prices, while world stocks of agriculture products continue to grow.

Congress has offered to work with the Administration toward the goal of providing assistance to agricultural producers and plans to utilize the resources of the Department of Agriculture to provide a national assessment of the scope of the problem. The letter concludes, "...with your (Clinton's) ability to survey the budgetary resources of the entire government, we are awaiting your specific proposals on how to best help farmers through this difficult period." ■

# Agriculture Feeling the Effects of Sour Economy

*The following excerpt, written by Congressman LaHood, offers additional insight into the legislation he recently introduced. This piece ran in Capitol View, March, 1999.*

For most sectors of the U.S. business world, the late 1990's have presented the "Teflon" economy.

Inflation is low. Unemployment is low. Company profits are at all time highs. And the stock market toys with the 10,000 barrier.

Everything is great, right?

Not so in the agriculture community. Even though the country is continuing its unprecedented economic boom, there is a real recession – and in some cases a depression – in agriculture.

Central Illinois commodity farmers, who mostly grow corn and soybeans, are facing the lowest crop prices in well over 20 years. Because of low hog prices, the family-run hog farm is quickly becoming a thing of the past.

I recently sat down with a couple from Armington who raise hogs and farm about 1000 acres of corn. All the corn they grow goes to feeding the hogs. It costs the couple about \$36 to raise each hog. That day, they were selling their hogs for about \$25. That is a tremendous burden for a family farm to swallow.

We need to recognize the dire situation of farming. If the agriculture economy fails, it will certainly have a ripple effect throughout the country.

Some of that ripple can be seen already. Caterpillar and Deere & Co., are talking about temporary layoffs, partly because of reduced demand for agriculture equipment. Those layoffs certainly would affect the overall economy of Illinois.

Agriculture, more than any other segment of our economy, is feeling the effect of a world economy turned sour. Economic slumps in Asia, Russia, and South America have led to dramatically reduced agriculture exports from the United States. Our

farm economy relies a great deal on what happens in other countries.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I believe there are many steps we can take to assist the struggling farm economy. When Congress passed the "Freedom to Farm" legislation a few years ago, we made the commitment that we would also pass "Fast Track" trade authority for the President.

Unfortunately that has not happened yet.

Fast Track gives the President the ability to negotiate trade agreements with other countries without the threat of Congress amending the agreement. Congress must vote straight up or down on the agreement. This allows the President to negotiate better agreements by not having the threat of Congressional amendments hanging over the negotiations. The President needs to become engaged in the support of Fast Track so we can follow through on our commitment to farmers by assuring open foreign markets.

I have introduced legislation that aims to ease the crisis faced by hog farmers. My bill provides financial assistance to small, family operations who were hit by tremendously low prices in the fourth quarter of 1998. The bill also provides for mandatory livestock market reporting to the Department of Agriculture. This accurate and timely information will give producers another tool in making appropriate decisions about the markets.

I have also introduced legislation that provides for the fair implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act. The FQPA was passed as a common sense plan to update pesticide regulations. Unfortunately, the Environmental Protection Agency might use this law to unilaterally eliminate the use of many safe pesticides used in agriculture. Agriculture cannot afford to lose the use of pesticides that make our country's harvest the most productive – and healthy – in the world.

We also must give farmers adequate risk management tools. The crop insurance program must be reformed so it is affordable, and gives adequate

protection, to small producers.

The new farm bill – Freedom to Farm – has been criticized by some who would like to overhaul the current system. I believe Freedom to Farm gives producers the flexibility needed to compete in the global economy and I feel we must allow the legislation to take full effect. If we need to make minor adjustments to it, we will, but we cannot scrap it before it is allowed to flourish.

Agriculture has always been the backbone of our nation's economy. Those of us on the Agriculture Committee realize we cannot turn a blind eye to problems faced by United States farmers. To keep the broad American economy steaming along, we must assist farmers through this current recession. ■

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## Selling Services

CONTINUED FROM PG. 2

Allison Jones at (901) 861-0511; (901) 861-0512 (fax); JonesNAICC@aol.com.)

As potential clients contemplate choosing consultants they feel comfortable communicating with personally and professionally, the businesses that service them can provide better information by anticipating their questions. They may include:

- What services will be delivered – full or specific to a production problem?
- What is the crop scouting frequency?
- What is your experience with each crop I grow?
- Do you have a support network for further information, if needed?
- Is your source of income based on clients like myself, or from product sale?
- How many acres do you manage?
- Do you have help available?
- Why are you the best person for this job?

For clients who have further questions, consider recommending that they talk with their state's professional crop consultant organization or NAICC.

*The preceding information was extrapolated from a Colorado State University regional news release. ■*

## Y2K Problems Addressed

CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

plans to handle data exchange issues, lack of data and bad data.

### Phase 3: Renovation/Remediation.

Convert, replace or eliminate selected platforms, applications, databases, utilities and interfaces in an operational environment.

**Phase 4: Validation.** Test, verify and validate converted or replaced platforms, applications, databases, utilities and interfaces. Test the performance, functionality and integration of converted or replaced platforms, applications, databases, utilities and interfaces in an operational environment.

### Phase 5: Implementation.

Implement converted or replaced platforms, applications, databases, utilities and interfaces. If necessary implement data exchange contingency plans.

To help ensure lawsuits do not threaten information sharing with regard to Y2K preparation, Congress recently passed "Good Samaritan" legislation that:

- Offers limited liability protection for organizations sharing information in good faith about computer problems, testing plans and results

believed to be true at the time but which later turn out to be incorrect.

- Ensures that industry information provided to the federal government on a confidential basis will not be released to third parties.
- Establishes a government Web site at the General Services Administration as a clearinghouse for basic computer problem information for consumers, small businesses and local governments ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)).
- Provides protection from prosecution under antitrust laws for conduct intended to facilitate information sharing in good faith on how to correct or avoid year 2000 computer problems.
- Includes a sunset provision, which would end the limited liability protection for information sharing in the summer of 2001.
- Does not allow for protection when Y2K problems are caused by computer failures. For instance, if a company markets a product that claims to fix the Y2K bug and that product doesn't work, the bill provides no liability protection.

### Extension Offices Offer Help

Farmers and rural businesses can

get help with Y2K preparation at their local county extension offices. USDA-produced information packets on computer and telecommunication problems are available at these offices. Included are fact sheets, brochures and other information. USDA Web sites also offer updates on the most recent information at:  
[www.reeusda.gov/y2k](http://www.reeusda.gov/y2k) and/or  
[www.ocio.usda.gov/nite/Y2Knews\\_ind ex.html](http://www.ocio.usda.gov/nite/Y2Knews_ind ex.html). (Excerpt from Ag Retailer, February 1999.)

### Government Preparation

Also in preparation for Y2K, APHIS and other USDA agencies have worked to help ensure food and water supplies will not be jeopardized by computer glitches during the turn of the millennium.

If your organization shares data electronically with APHIS, ensure that your software and hardware are Y2K compliant. You can find more information at the Food Supply Working Group's Web site:  
<http://www.usda.gov/aphis/FSWG>. As well, you are invited to address APHIS-specific questions to Bill Cosgrove, APHIS' Year 2000 Coordinator, at (301) 734-5200 (voice), (301) 734-7965 (fax) or [William.Cosgrove@usda.gov](mailto:William.Cosgrove@usda.gov).

## IRAC Leads Charge

An organization of crop protection companies is leading the charge in managing insect resistance. The Insecticide Resistance Action Committee is intensifying efforts with research, fieldwork, consultation and educational programs to aid growers confronted with resistance issues.

For more information on how IRAC can help you and your business manage insecticide resistance, send for an educational kit. The cost is \$10 and a check or money order should be made out to IRAC. Please mail it to:

### IRAC

Attn: Gini Arment  
P.O. Box 413708  
Kansas City, MO 64141.

The kit will be shipped within 10-14 days.

## ATTENTION CONTRACT RESEARCHERS AND FIELD QA

Is your QA doing a good job or are you having to deal with additional findings from Sponsors and Project Managers? The Society of Quality Assurance (SQA) will provide five full days of activities and training at its Annual Meeting in Chicago, October 11-15, 1999. A full day will be devoted to issues concerning field studies, including:

- Auditing field study notebooks
- Conducting in-process inspections
- The AgChem studies "Power Hour" Discussion Group

Great knowledge can be gained, with pre-conference training topics that include:

**Technology Update** – a look at the latest technology for research, including a Field Notes demonstration on Computer Validation (a must if you are using Field Notes or other electronic data capture systems).

**OECD GLP Update** – watch for protocols to start requiring OECD and EPA compliance.

**Analytical Chemistry** – find out just how easy it is to contaminate samples.

**Electronic Systems used in Field Studies** – pros and cons of the individual systems used for electronic data capture and transfer.

**QA Metrics** – find out what Sponsor QAs are finding that is being missed by site QA.

**EPA Update** – learn the current issues and EPA's response, including the latest findings EPA Revised GLP Update.

For more information about the SQA Annual Meeting, please contact SQA Headquarters at (703) 684-4050 or visit the SQA web page at [www.sqa.org](http://www.sqa.org).

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**  
SOCIETY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

515 King St, Ste 420, Alexandria, VA 22314  
(703) 684-4050 / fax: (703) 684-6048

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### July 21-23, 1999

"Charting the Course for Site-Specific Agriculture," conference emphasizing strategy, direction and implementation of advanced agricultural systems and products. Radisson Hotel South, Bloomington, Minn. For more information contact SOILTEQ, 5720 Smetana Drive, Minnetonka, Minn. 55343.

### August 2-3, 1999

ASFMRA Summer Meeting (combining Chapters from Ark., La., Miss. & TN). Grand Casino Convention Center, Robinsonville, MS. (near Memphis). For more information contact Mike Leggett at (901) 829-4052 or fax questions to (901) 829-4343.

### August 8-11, 1999

"Walk on the Wild Side," Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Conference, Grand Casino, Biloxi, Miss. For more information contact SWCS headquarters at (515) 289-2331 or visit <http://www.swcs.org>.

### August 20, 1999

Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Association summer meeting, Cologne, Minn. For more information contact Steve Howey at (507) 872-5035 or [howey@star-point.net](mailto:howey@star-point.net).

### October 11-15, 1999

Society of Quality Assurance Annual Meeting, Chicago, Ill. For more information call (703) 684-4050 or visit the SQA web page at [www.sqa.org](http://www.sqa.org).

### October 22-24, 1999

NAICC Executive Board Meeting, Sheraton Old Town, Albuquerque, N.M. For more information contact Allison Jones at (901) 861-0511; (901) 861-0512 (fax); [JonesNAICC@aol.com](mailto:JonesNAICC@aol.com).

### January 19-22, 2000

NAICC Annual Meeting, Doubletree Lloyd Center, Portland, Ore. For more information contact Allison Jones at (901) 861-0511; (901) 861-0512 (fax); [JonesNAICC@aol.com](mailto:JonesNAICC@aol.com).

### February 3-4, 2000

Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, Minn. For more information contact Steve Howey at 507-872-5035 or [howey@star-point.net](mailto:howey@star-point.net).

## HIRING

### Glades Crop Care, Inc. Jupiter, Florida

Openings in south Florida for full-time and seasonal (Sept. - Mar.) scouts and crop consultants.

**Send resume and references.**

fax: 561/746-3775

e-mail: [gccjupiter@igc.apc.org](mailto:gccjupiter@igc.apc.org)



**NAICC**

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