



NAICC NEWS

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Board Makes Annual Visit to Nation's Capitol

During the NAICC Executive Board's annual canvas of Capitol Hill, the group met with policymakers on Capitol Hill, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). They discussed crop and research consultant WPS exemptions and nutrient management issues.

While two full days were dedicated to exchanging information with these officials, time was set aside for networking in a more relaxed atmosphere, officially known as the 3rd Annual "Dads in DC Crawfish Boil."



From Left: Bruce Niederhauser, Harold Lambert, Charlie Mellinger, Roger Carter, Dennis Berglund, Mark Jensen, Al Averitt, Larry Emerson, Glenn Morin, Kirk Wesley, Phil Cochran.

USDA Addresses FQPA Issues

NAICC Executive Board members and staff, as well as Legislative Advisory Committee members **Harold Lambert, Mark Jensen, Billy McLawhorn and Madeline Mellinger** began the week by meeting with USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP). Al Jennings, Director of OPMP, updated the

group on continued efforts to work with EPA on implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA).

NAICC members expressed concern over the lack of communication between EPA and stakeholders throughout the implementation process. Jennings and his staff are working with EPA to "institutionalize" the process of stakeholder input and to make it a more formal process. They also want to ensure time is allocated for meetings with stakeholders, other than registrants, for review of EPA findings.



Marcia Mulkey, Director of EPA-OPP and Dennis Berglund.



From Left: Al Jennings, Wilfred Burr, Therese Murtagh of USDA-OPMP.

The NAICC delegation learned of the possible establishment of another working group to follow in the footsteps of the USDA FQPA Tolerance Reassessment Committee (TRAC). A Federal Register notice will be published, allowing interested parties to nominate participants to the new committee.

WPS Exemptions Revisited

Several members of the NAICC team met on two occasions with Marcia Mulkey, Director of the Office of

Pesticide Programs at EPA. The first meeting on March 23 focused on researcher exemption from the Worker Protection Standard (WPS). This petition was presented to EPA in 1998 by the Consortium of Crop Research Scientists. The Consortium is made up of representatives from the American Phytopathological Society, the Entomology Society of America, the Weed Science Society of America and the NAICC.

Marcia Mulkey reviewed the process for achieving an exemption and suggested that the concerns of the consortium could perhaps be addressed through interpretive guidelines rather than a full exemption. Three main areas of concern were discussed: 1) the conflict between Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) guidelines and the WPS 2) posting requirements, and 3) safety training.

It was suggested by EPA that a WPS minimum acreage threshold for research use of registered pesticides be used. This

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If I Don't Know, I'll Find Out.



BY
DENNIS BERGLUND,
NAICC PRESIDENT



I recently read a quote from a Fortune 500 CEO, urging new leaders to start out humble and not think that they know all the answers. Hey, I agree! Sometimes I just hope to understand the questions! It really doesn't bother me anymore to say that I don't know the answer!

This makes me think about conversations that Jim Murn and I often have. Jim is one of the best consultants that I know and we often talk about how crop consulting was easier 15-20 years ago than it is now. You'd think that with more experience it would become easier to "know" what the best recommendation should be! Well, we've seen things fail when they should have worked, and we've seen things work when they should have failed. We also have a better feel for other options available, so it's easier to say, "It depends on the situation". We need to realize that we don't have to know all the answers, and it's not bad to say, "I don't know the answer, but I'll find out."

During our recent NAICC Board Meeting in Washington, DC, we had the opportunity to say "we don't know the answer, but we'll find out" several times. It was a good Board Meeting, and included many visits to our friends on Capital Hill, USDA, EPA and several commodity

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threshold would be similar to the existing acreage threshold for screening unregistered pesticides that are exempt from the WPS. Rob Hedberg, a meeting attendee and Washington representative for the Consortium, suggested establishing equivalency interpretations for field warning signs and central posting of applied pesticide treatments. Since the meeting with Mulkey on March 23, Mark Jensen and Hedberg have met with other EPA officials to resolve the problem of

groups. We are still working with EPA on the final outcome of the Worker Protection Standard issues, and we will keep contacting them and offering our information, and giving them answers.

We had two important meetings with EPA about the WPS exemption for both Crop Consultants and Research Consultants. We started the first meeting explaining that the Research Consultant needs the WPS exemption because several of the WPS rules are nearly impossible for Research Consultants to follow. EPA indicated that they may be able to resolve some of our concerns by using methods that they termed "comparable or equivalent" to the standard WPS requirements. They indicated that going this route would be quicker and easier than going for a complete exemption. Later in the meeting, we pointed out the conflicting legal requirements of GLP vs. WPS

(which are both enforced by EPA). The EPA agreed that these conflicting laws must be resolved and I hope to be able to update you on that later.

Our second EPA meeting was spent showing EPA that the current WPS exemption for Crop Consultants is a necessity for implementation of IPM, and reminding them that IPM is both an administration and EPA goal. EPA was very interested in what crop consultants do for production agriculture and particularly IPM programs and requested more information in order to have a better understanding of consulting and scouting. We are going to begin

conflicting guidelines between GLP and the WPS. According to Jensen, "The consortium is presently waiting on a ruling by the Office of the General Counsel to ascertain if these issues can be addressed through interpretive policy guidance documents or if the proposed Federal Register notice exemption for researchers submitted to the Agency will have to be acted upon."

Another meeting was scheduled with Mulkey the following day to discuss the crop consultant exemption. Currently,

by documenting the low level of exposure that is involved in most scouting activities. We will also have a dialogue with EPA on label changes before the label changes actually occur.

It's great to see the work that the committees are doing! A lot of the committee work goes on "behind the scenes", but I'd like to give two examples. The first example is the NAICC Web site and it looks great! Now we are trying to increase web site traffic and thinking of ways to compile crop data, which could be a source of revenue for both NAICC and members. Another example is the combining of the Research Consultant Working Group Report from January, 2000 with the NAICC Strategic Plan from October, 1999 to make a single plan that will focus our efforts over the next few years.

You've heard that "It's the new growth

that produces the bloom". While this analogy is true of plants, it is also true of Boards and organizations. I'm impressed with how quickly the new Board Members are giving valuable input and asking good questions. It's fun to see all the Board Members grow in their leadership positions. New members and new leaders add valuable viewpoints by asking questions

that "old-timers" no longer ask, and they often aren't satisfied with the answers given. We certainly need new members and leaders in NAICC. But, don't forget that all of you old NAICC members can contribute in new ways, too. We can all be the "new bloom".

Last, but not least - Have a safe spring and summer! ■

"Berglund's Ground Rules for Better Brainstorming"

1. Defer judgment.
2. Build on the ideas of others.
3. Have only one conversation at a time.
4. Stay focused on the topic.
5. Encourage wild ideas.
6. Avoid changing your mind just to reach agreement.
7. View differences of opinion as helpful.
8. Appoint a "Devil's Advocate".

EPA is proposing additional regulations on "a handful" of product labels that affect crop consultants. According to EPA, the WPS provides a minimum acceptance level or "floor" of protection for individuals who are exposed to pesticides. A letter from the Office of Pesticide Programs stated that the "floor" does not provide sufficient work risk mitigation for specific chemicals.

The NAICC reiterated to EPA that the current WPS exemption is sufficient for certified crop consultants. NAICC mem-

bers also reminded EPA that certified crop consultants are not “workers” but are professional, well-educated crop health evaluators and consultants. They emphasized that lumping risk to workers with risk to the most experienced doctors of plant health consultants and other certified crop consultants is not sound policy.

EPA was open to understanding more about the day-to-day activities of a crop consultant and was interested in seeing actual field data showing the type of crop consulting activities and actual time spent in the field. A subsequent meeting has been requested with EPA officials to review data compiled for cotton and wheat consulting activities and to further discuss EPA's current position on the WPS “floor.”

HOT TOPIC: Nutrient Management

One of two objectives of the NAICC nutrient management team was to inform stakeholders about NAICC members' professionalism, independence, level of education/certification standards, experience and ability to influence agriculture on a national level. The second objective was to learn what nutrient management issues are of concern and how we can help.

The team met with Roger Rayburn of USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by NAICC and NRCS for third party vendors writing conservation assistance plans. Discussion was held regarding individual states' awareness of the national MOUs.

Rayburn reiterated that while all state conservationists were sent copies of the national MOUs, it was imperative that individual vendors remain in contact with their state officials for updates on specific state requirements in addition to those on the national level. A list of State Conservationists will be included with NAICC Third Party Vendor renewal cards. In the meantime, you may obtain a copy by contacting the NAICC headquarters directly.

Chris D'Arcy and Brent Gattas of the House Agriculture Livestock and Horticulture Subcommittee met with **Billy McLawhorn, Phil Cochran, Bruce Niederhauser, Al Averitt and Kirk Wesley** to discuss nutrient management issues. The nutrient management team also met with Andy Johnson, minority staff direc-

tor of the subcommittee.

Meetings were held with George Beatty and Janet Goodwin of the EPA Office of Water. According to Bruce Niederhauser, “Members of the NAICC must be aware that animal waste management from Confined and non-Confined Animal Feed Operations (CAFO & AFO) is important to EPA from a water quality standpoint and is directly influenced by nutrient management plans (NMP). Fertilizer use/applications are not of serious concern now, but will be critical in the near



Dennis Berglund (left) visits with Congressman Collin Peterson of Minnesota (third from left) and Peterson staffers.

future. The EPA is using the NRCS as a source for technical guidance. NAICC members should be certified to write NMPs on a national level and definitely on a state level. Certification is critical.”

NAICC Interacts with Key Policymakers

Much of the time spent in Washington last month was on Capitol Hill, where NAICC leaders called on key Congressional policymakers and key staffers on the House and Senate Agriculture Committees.

Meetings were held with Bill O'Connor, Chief Counsel for the House Agriculture Committee and Danelle Farmer, Minority Staff Director for the Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry Subcommittee. Bob White with the Senate Agriculture Committee commented on Total Maximum Daily Load (TDML) regulations, another popular topic on Capitol Hill. A TDML is a calculation

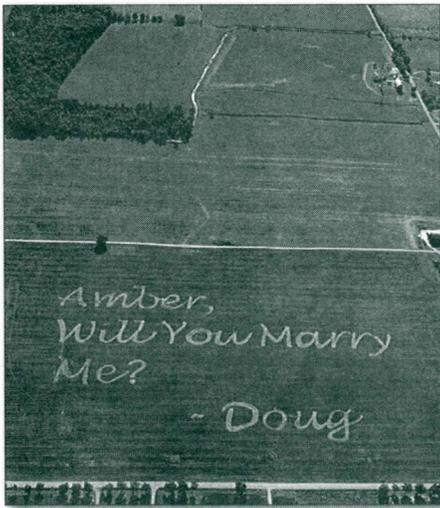
of the maximum amount of pollutant a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that amount to the pollutant's sources (point and non-point). EPA approval is required.

In addition to FQPA, WPS and nutrient management issues, members were given the latest details of the crop insurance bill by Hunt Shipman with Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS). The bill passed the Senate by a margin of 95-5. NAICC also inquired of House and Senate leaders about the status of H.R. 1592 and S. 1464, the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999 (also known as the FQPA corrective bill). Provisions of this bill would ensure that EPA uses sound science and real-world data when evaluating pesticides to maintain a safe, affordable, high-quality supply of food and fiber. There was mixed reaction on the Hill as to whether or not this bill would be debated prior to Congress adjourning for the elections. In addition, members of the Board and legislative committee met with key commodity and farm group representatives to discuss FQPA, WPS and nutrient management issues.

NAICC reiterated their appreciation to these key influencers on and off the Hill for the important work they do. One way they showed that appreciation was by hosting the 3rd Annual “Dads in DC Crawfish Boil.” Several Congressmen, staff from Congressional offices and House and Senate committees, officials from EPA and USDA and Washington representatives attended the crawfish boil. Crawfish etouffee and spicy crawfish were flown in that day from Louisiana. Also attending the crawfish boil were NAICC members **Cindy Spoor** and husband Dale Thorenson, Washington, DC; Anne and **Jim Steffel**, Hamburg, Penn.; and **Glen Luedke**, Lake Ridge, Va. ■



From Left: Glenn Morin; Roger Carter; Hunt Shipman, Agriculture LA for Senator Thad Cochran; Larry Emerson, Allison Jones, Mark Jensen.



GPS Helps Tie the Knot

By Charlie Southworth

When Doug Irrer graduated from Michigan State University last spring and came back to the Tom Irrer family farm in rural St. John's, Mich., he wanted to make sure his college sweetheart, Amber Klemczewski, would accompany him.

After watching **Charlie Southworth** use GPS to soil-sample a wheat field south of the home place, Irrer asked if Agri-Business Consultants, Inc. could use the same technology to write a marriage proposal in the wheat stubble. **Neil Miller** used 700 flags to lay out Doug's proposal, and then Doug and Tom cut the stubble with a mower to form the letters.

On July 28, Mike Schiffer from Al's Aerial Spraying Service in Ovid, Mich., flew Amber, Doug and Tom for what Amber thought was "a look at the farm from the air." As the airplane passed over the farm, Amber was looking through Doug's airplane window at the field below. She was speechless until pilot Mike prompted, "What is your reply to Doug?" Needless to say, the wedding has been set for June 10 of this year!

Charlie Southworth is a NAICC associate member with Agri-Business Group in Ithaca, Mich. ■

FEAE is Working For You

By Earle Raun

How many of you have heard of the FEAE? Do you know anything about it? It's not surprising that many members of the NAICC know nothing about it. The Foundation for Environmental Agricultural Education has not been well publicized.

The FEAE is an NAICC offspring. By 1990, many members of the NAICC were concerned about the quality of environmental and agricultural education at land-grant universities. Crop consultants are, or should be, "practitioners" of plant health. Whether you subscribe to the holistic nature of IPM or more thoroughly practice ICM (integrated crop management), an education designed for such a career does not exist.

FEAE was originally started to improve the educational opportunities for crop consultants, both within the NAICC and at educational institutions. It was called the "Independent Crop Consultants

Professional Improvement Foundation."

The original Incorporation was accomplished in 1991 through **Harold Lambert's** efforts. The name was changed to its current title in 1993 and is registered in Delaware. The IRS approved the Foundation's application for a 501 (c)(3) organization in 1994.

The FEAE's current balance is approximately \$59,000. This balance has been achieved through various gifts and NAICC auction proceeds. A separate portion of those funds, donated as a memorial to **Dick Jensen**, is being used to provide an annual \$1,000 scholarship to an agricultural college senior, beginning with the fall term in 2000. Support for some of the educational portions of the NAICC annual meeting has also been provided through the FEAE.

The major target of the FEAE is and has been to work with agricultural institutions to provide a "practitioner"

curriculum. Efforts to obtain grants to support the effort of what the FEAE is calling "New Pathways to Agricultural and Environmental Education" continue to go forward under the leadership of **Dan Bradshaw**.

The University of Florida's "Doctor of Plant Health/Medicine" program has recently been announced. The NAICC and FEAE efforts and the support provided by letters and visits with various educators over the years have played a role in its development.

As an NAICC member, the FEAE is working for you and your successors. Because of this Foundation, independent consultants and researchers, increasing in numbers over the years, will be better able to cope with the complexities of agriculture in an enlightened environmental millennium.

Earle Raun is a NAICC Voting Member and FEAE Secretary. ■

Research Consultants Form Working Group

By Alan Courville

Greetings from South LA (that's Louisiana to you Minnesooooota people — not Los Angeles). The land that time forgot and the only place on the planet that you are always guaranteed a good meal!

I had a friend and employer back in my college days that told me I speak real well but I should learn when to talk and when to listen. Well guess what? I still have not learned that lesson. I was unanimously volunteered to provide a series of articles for the newsletter. That's what happens when you're too vocal around

NAICC board members. Thanks Dennis! I don't get mad, I just get even.

DATELINE: January 17th & 18th, 2000 — Portland, Oregon — Research Consultant Working Group.

A group of Research Consultants and Sustaining Member representatives received an invitation from **Roger Carter** and the Executive Board to come to Portland three days before the annual meeting. We reacted like any loyal subject when summoned and arrived 16 strong for a scheduled afternoon meeting on Monday and a full-day session on Tuesday.

Why did we give up two days of our time? Most of us arrived without a clue. The meeting began, as most do, with introductions. The group was diverse with good geographic representation. We started with only a single thought. ** What could help research consultants gather a vision of what lies ahead in this rapidly changing business environment and how can NAICC help our members thrive in such a zone? ** Go ahead, say it out loud. Sure sounds good. My first thought was money. You know — just enough for fishing/hunting trips, vaca-

tion homes, winters in the Caribbean, summers in Canada, etc.

Sixteen opinions and 16 personalities. We needed help. The Executive Board showed its wisdom; they provided a facilitator. So, what is a facilitator? His name was Bernie Shafer and he deserves all of the credit for the results of our labor. He was a referee, an organizer, a disciplinarian and above all a good listener. His ability to find the pearls of wisdom in our oftentimes disjointed thoughts and responses still amazes me.

We adjourned after 5:00 on Monday with 25 ideas. I went to the nearest wa-

tering hole confused and convinced we should just ask the government for a subsidy payment. Well guess what! I was wrong as usual. Tuesday morning came in bright and clear and Bernie started in on us again. He took our thoughts and ideas, pushed, prodded, moved them around, extracted key points, kneaded 'em a little and before we knew it, six initiatives emerged on Tuesday afternoon with multiple action points.

Thanks, Bernie, for the experience. I think we all learned a lot. I know I did.

Well, did we do good? I think so, especially when **Dennis Berglund** shared the

strategic plan the Executive Board put together in Albuquerque two months previously. The six initiatives of the Research Working Group mirror or enhance that plan. Great minds think alike!

Would you like a list of the other members of the Chosen 16? Those identities are a secret, and if I told you, I'd have to shoot you. So, do you all want to know what those final six initiatives contained? You will have to wait till the next issue, this is a mini-series and yes...

WE WILL ALL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER!!!! ■

"Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, if he gets angry, he'll be a mile away — and barefoot." — Anonymous

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NEW MEMBER PROFILE

Jim Turner and his wife, Barbara, own and operate AgriScope, LLC, an agricultural contract research facility in Athens, Ga. Jim earned a Bachelors degree in Plant Pathology from the University of Georgia in 1980 and a Masters degree in Plant Protection and Pest Management in 1989. He was employed by BASF Corporation for 15 years. During that time he gained experience as a technical representative, product manager and marketing manager.

Since 1977, AgriScope, LLC, has offered contract research services, specializing in GLP conduct of residue and environmental fate studies. The company also offers a



JIM TURNER
AgriScope, LLC

full line of efficacy services. AgriScope has recently employed a full-time principal field investigator, **Jesse Hickey** (also a new NAICC member).

Jim said he joined the NAICC because he believes it is the primary forum for contract researchers to interact directly with industry personnel. He believes personal relationships are extremely important in conducting business, and he plans to become active in the Alliance by serving on committees.

When asked what his thoughts were on the current situation relating to industry mergers/buy-outs, cutbacks and the general status of agriculture, he gave the following reply. "Our pesticide industry is re-learning how to conduct business in a more cost-effective manner – unfortunately, that usually means personnel cutbacks as a way to reduce fixed costs.

The farm economy's woes and the short term effect of GMO introduction has reduced the various companies' abilities to maintain profitability with a downtrend in prices of pesticide inputs. Also, many markets are mature – there are multiple solutions to each problem. This forces price competition and restricts profitability amongst the basic manufacturers.

"I'm concerned that we will see a part of our agricultural production moving offshore during the next 20 years. This will be due to problems ranging from environmentalists' concerns to water (irrigation) restrictions due to urban sprawl, and from low commodity prices for our U.S. producers to GMO acceptance by the public. Some profitability for our U.S. producers must be secured for our good, inexpensive food source to remain just that." ■

NEW MEMBER PROFILES (cont.)



WENDY SHOFFNER
Shoffner Farm
Research, Inc.,
Newport, Ark.

New NAICC member Wendy Shoffner has a BS in Plant Science from the University of Florida and a MS in Plant Physiology/Weed Science from the University of California, Davis. After graduation she took a position as Assistant Field Experimentalist with ICI Americas at their Delta Research Station, then located in Vicksburg, Miss. After three years managing the herbicide efficacy and residue program, Wendy transferred to Texas as a Technical Representative for ICI. There she conducted efficacy and residue trials in all crops grown in East and South Texas. In 1986, ICI began working on GLP compliance and Wendy served on a committee to develop the strategies. She left ICI in 1987, moved to northeast Arkansas and,

with husband **John Shoffner**, operate Shoffner Farm Research.

Wendy is president of Shoffner Farm Research, Inc., a company involved in contract agricultural research (efficacy, residue, demonstration and varietal testing), contract seed production and conditioning, custom research farming and crop consulting.

She joined NAICC because, "The agricultural industry is in a period of rapid change. As individuals, we cannot handle the many moral and political issues that must be addressed as our industry evolves. As a group, we can fight more battles than we can alone.

"It is easier to sit back and say, 'Let someone else take on the new challenges facing us today. I met the last batch.' However, if we lie down now in the midst of this turmoil, we will get trampled in the race to get ahead. I will get involved in the NAICC, bringing with me enthusiasm and experience."

Wendy believes our industry is in a natural process of evolution. "The cut-

backs and mergers are probably a correction, much like the stock market experiences from time to time. Business has been good for many years and the turnaround due to rising farm input costs and falling commodity prices has ground growth to a stop. The farm is evolving into a business that merges management skills with the science of growing crops. All players have to reorganize their businesses to make them more efficient and more productive. Naturally, government regulation is affecting us all by increasing our input costs."

Over the next 10 to 20 years, Wendy anticipates that agriculture will have to grow. "As the worldwide population increases at its ever-expanding rate, there will be more demand for food. Food will need to be grown more efficiently to meet this demand and will need to be more nutritious to help solve the alarming problem of illness and malnutrition. Our future is in biotechnology. It is exciting to realize how close we are to making farms into "pharms." ■

Proposed Changes to GLPs

By Debi Garvin

They're here! Finally, on December 29, the proposed consolidated EPA GLPs were issued. Although long in coming, EPA did not harmonize the US GLPs with the OECD GLPs. There is still no mention of "test sites," "principal investigators" or personnel duties when dealing with the multi-site studies.

The GLPs can be downloaded from the EPA Web page (www.epa.gov). SQA has formulated a response and encourages everyone to use part of all of the response when submitting comments (www.sqa.org). The comment period ended March 29 and NAICC submitted written comments in support of SQA's recommendation.

The new GLPs will combine 40 CFR 160 (FIFRA) and 40 CFR 792 into the new GLPs now found under 40 CFR 806. The following summarizes some of the major changes in the regulations.

- The word "air" has been added to the definition of test system and carrier.

- The Quality Assurance Unit definition has been modified to make it clearer that no one involved in the conduct of the study may serve as QA.
- Examples of vehicles have been added.
- The Master Schedule no longer has to be indexed by test substance.
- QA no longer has to archive copies of protocols. They must still maintain a copy, but only until study completion.
- Subpart C has been clarified to allow co-exposure of test species in inhalation studies.
- The following statement has been added to the equipment section: "The integrity of data from computers, data processors and automated laboratory procedures involved in the collection, generation or measurement of data shall be ensured through appropriate validation processes, maintenance procedures, disaster recovery and security measures."
- Laboratories will be allowed to develop performance standards in lieu of assigning expiration dates to transfer bottles and wash bottles.
- Solubility can now be determined con-

currently with a study instead of prior to the experimental start date.

- Test material containers may now be discarded, with appropriate documentation, prior to study completion. The preamble also asks for comments on whether the new GLPs should allow for disposal of containers upon study director authorization, with a note in the raw data that this has been done.
- Storage conditions must be stated on TCR labels.
- Tank mixes prepared for most agchem field studies and applied within 12 hours, and solutions prepared for immediate administration in mammalian acute toxicity studies, metabolism studies or mutagenicity studies are exempt from requirements for concentration determinations (but not from uniformity).
- If the purpose of a metabolism study is to identify metabolites, the reference substances do not need to be identified in the protocol.
- If a study is terminated or discontinued, a protocol amendment may be issued in lieu of writing a final report. ■

Times are tough - what do we do?

By Bill Cox

I have heard that statement/question often in the 27 years I've been in the consulting business, but never as often as

this year. Times are tough. NAFTA has made a huge impact on our vegetable business. Cotton prices are too low to make it a viable crop in this high input area. The dairies are not contracting their feed with local growers and when they do, they keep dropping the price. What

do we do?

This is a story about two growers. Both are about the same age, 40 and 44. Both have families and have spent their lives farming. I have been consulting for both since the day they started.

Don farms about 1000 acres. He grows

alfalfa, wheat, chili peppers and corn silage. Farming has always been somewhat of a struggle for Don. He's a good farmer but has always had a hard time putting two or three good years together. He has tried to diversify. He is a partner in a chile dehydrator and a spice blending plant. He has been in the ostrich business and had the good sense to get out while there was still money in it.

Don is about as down as I have ever seen him this year. It was hard to get him to talk about plans and when he did, his talk was filled with doom and gloom. He did not know what to do.

Gary farms about a half mile from Don. He raises onions, chili peppers, wheat, corn and milo on about 750 acres. Gary is what I call a finesse farmer. His farm always looks good and his crops are always as good or better than any in the

area. Gary is also diversified. He owns a chili dehydrator and an onion packing shed.

Gary is plagued by the same problems as Don. Mexican imports are really hurting the pepper and onion business, and the dairies are playing the same games with him. Gary is seldom down. He realized early that he was going to have to make more changes to keep his operation profitable. We started the planning process early and any ideas were welcome, regardless of how extreme. Gary did not know what to do either, but he started exploring options and developed a plan.

Don's solution to his dilemma was to sell 600 acres of farmland. He can retire a sizable portion of his debt and rent more land if necessary. He also plans to plant pecan trees on 135 acres. He still has

enough land left to grow peppers and plans to concentrate on the dehydrator and spice blending operations.

Gary's solution was to go to the bank, borrow about 2 million dollars and build his own dairy. He will be milking 2000 head of cows by early October.

Is one grower right and one grower wrong? I guess time will tell, but the real message is the change. Both growers realized that the status quo was not the answer and have made the moves they think necessary to keep their operations viable. As consultants, it is our job to help in the planning process and try our best to make the changes work.

I expect both Gary and Don to be farming 10 years from now, and I expect to be working for both of them. I also expect to see many more changes in both operations. ■



Marvin Kauffman, Ph.D., of Albany, Ore., was recently featured in *Capital Press*. The article highlighted Kauffman's business practices and pointed out how much his clients depended on his advice,

especially during recent economic blows to agriculture in the Willamette Valley. The article also featured Kauffman's hydraulic soil sampler he developed several years ago that allows him to determine nitrogen at various depths. In an earlier edition, *Capital Press* carried a story about the NAICC Annual Meeting held in Portland and featured keynote speaker Leonard Gianessi.

Phil Cochran and **Dave Mowers** were featured in *Soybean Digest* last month in

an article entitled "The Big Soil-Test Debate". Cochran of Cochran Agronomics in Paris, Ill., defended his method of sampling by soil type saying it is more practical and beneficial. Mowers of Mowers Soil Testing Plus in Toulon Ill., claims grid sampling yields more information at less cost than sampling by soil type. The article did mention that Mowers and Cochran are good friends and agree on most everything else. ■

Rogers Retires After 46 Years

The following letter was received at the NAICC Headquarters from NAICC member Mills Rogers.

Dear Allison,

I am both glad and sorry to announce to my friends that I am retiring after 46 years as a crop consultant. Sorry because I am going to miss so many of my good friends. Glad because I'll be 72 in November and have been waiting for

retirement for a long time. While attending a recent chemical meeting, it was brought to my attention that I was probably the oldest active crop consultant in the business!

The lord has given me a good healthy life with a tremendous wife and four wonderful children. Who could ask for more?

Many of you have contributed to my success as an entomologist. Through the years, my connection with Mississippi

State and the State Plant Board has been deeply appreciated. I have never regretted going back to college and getting my MS in entomology.

I hope the name Rogers will not be forgotten since my son, Lee, plans to continue in my profession.

Thanks again and I hope to see many of you at a later date. Stay in touch.

Yours truly,
Mills Rogers, CPCC-I ■

Calm, deliberate action by everyone...

By Edgar W. Duskin
Executive Vice President
Southern Crop Production Association

Sometimes it seems we tend to jump on each new bandwagon as it goes by, forgetting our history and logic and losing sight of the big picture. The broad family of products that includes all those things that protect and improve our crops is a case in point.

In the last five years we have embraced

genetic engineering as the wave of the future. We have inserted traits into various commodities to enhance their yield, to make them resistant to certain insects and fungi and to make them resistant even to certain herbicides so the materials can be used over-the-top with impunity.

Showing even greater promise to the world as a whole are parallel genetic engineering efforts to enhance quality traits in various high-use grains.

American farmers, knowing a good

thing, have embraced the new technology - in some cases almost to the exclusion of conventional technology (conventional meaning that which was preferable five years ago).

For whatever reason, Europeans, our export customers, have been goaded by an enviro-spearheaded doubt-and-fear campaign into attempting to ban GMO grains - or at least to require labeling of anything that has more than 1 percent GMO content.

European marketers who have little

GMO grain and access to highly subsidized local stocks can hide behind this GMO rule to limit competitive imports.

U.S. based enviro-Luddites, following their European counterparts' hue and cry, are in the midst of a major U.S. anti-GMO campaign.

One major grain buyer has succumbed and will buy only segregated grain. Thus far only a few others have gone with this plan.

The poor farmer is caught between the rock and a hard place. He wants to take advantage of the lower input requirement of GMO seeds, but he fears that if he uses GMO seed, he may lose his market altogether or be forced to sell his GMO crops at discounted prices below those which are already too low.

If allowed to operate freely, the market will determine which type of seed the grower plants. That which gives the farmer the greatest net return always will prevail.

This brings me to my point. So long as there is demand, Mr. Farmer will produce for it. That may be for GMO or non-GMO crops. The same is true of trait-enhanced GMO seeds versus synthetic pesticides (both long-used and new products in the pipeline).

I am convinced from experience that each will find its own niche and level. For a long time to come, perhaps always, there will be crops into which genetically engineered traits are not introduced and which will require traditional pesticide treatments.

Also, there always will be times where weed, insect, and fungus infestations overwhelm the genetically engineered resistance and conventional pesticides must be applied.

We will arrive at an IPM which measures conventional pesticide use against infestation reduction by other means that are tried first. This would include GMO.

In these times of change, revolution and uncertainty, it is prudent to maintain our full arsenal of traditional pesticides as well as continuing the introduction of GMOs. We hope EPA will understand and will not go hell-bent to eliminate many useful but high-toxicity pesticides.

Calm, deliberate, non-precipitous action on everyone's part should be the order of the day.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 9-13, 2000

16th Annual SQA Meeting, Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. For hotel reservations call (514) 861-3511. For more information contact Haley Johnson, SQA Executive Director at hjohnson@clarionmr.com or visit the SQA website at www.sqa.org.

October 26-29, 2000

NAICC Executive Board Meeting, Raleigh, N.C. For more information contact Allison Jones at (901) 861-0511, (901) 861-0512 (fax); or JonesNAICC@aol.com.

January 17-21, 2001

NAICC Annual Meeting, Hyatt Orlando, Orlando, Fla. Registration, exhibit and sponsorship information will be available in October 2000. For more information contact Allison Jones at (901) 861-0511, (901) 861-0512 (fax); or JonesNAICC@aol.com.

Remember: It's time to renew your CPCC certification. Renewal forms were mailed mid-March and are due May 31. ■



NAICC

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