



NAICC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Al Averitt
NAICC
President

What Can We Do For You?

After reading my title, some of you might wonder if you're missing anything by not being involved in the NAICC. You may think the Alliance doesn't do much for you and that it's not integral to the success of your business.

Well, I beg to differ. I believe there's great value in our membership, and I believe there's great value in being a member of your state independent consulting association. The NAICC should have 2500 crop consultant members, not counting research consultants.

But even if you aren't a member, you're reaping big benefits. I don't feel it's fair to the rest of us who bear the fiscal responsibility of spreading our collective "message."

Let me give you an analogy that I think you will relate to very well. In the growing season, like most of you, I generally see my clients each week to provide field updates and recommend remedies as necessary. Well, a small cotton farmer adjacent to one of my largest clients stopped by their office once a week. He would ask what was going on in the cotton and what I had recommended that week.

Within a year or so he asked me to consult for him. I debated for a while since it would be yet another stop in my weekly routine for a mere 150 acres of cotton. Plus it would mean a visit with his mom and dad, who I came to enjoy very much – but I could see the hours adding up. Given it

would require more time to report on his acreage than my larger client's, the time to acreage ratio was out of whack!

Despite all that, I took him on as a client to get paid for what he was already getting from me via his weekly visits to the neighbor farm. Guess what happened next! One of his neighbors started going to his house every Wednesday to see what I had recommended. Having become an honest man, my client brought it to my attention and said he did not know how to handle it. He thought his friend and neighbor should be paying me for my services, but when he suggested it he got the response... "why, it's not worth anything."

Well, apparently it was at least worth a weekly trip to "borrow" information. I called the man and told him my client was uncomfortable with the situation. I said I would be happy to start working directly for him, and if he did not stop absorbing information that might apply to his crop, I might have to stop working for his neighbor. He cursed me up and down.

After that incident I was a little concerned about passing by his house, especially since he had a tendency to drink. But the next year I received a call from him, asking me to be his consultant. He was a proud man but humble when he called me. His lifestyle eventually took his life, God bless his soul. Now we continue to work his farms under another client's management. I think about him when I pass his house several times a week.

I think about how he came around to seeing the dollar value of the benefits he was reaping. Don't we all want to be paid for our services by each user? It is no different if you are an independent crop or research consultant who is not a member of your state association and the NAICC. You are not sharing in the cost but are reaping some of the benefits and could reap more if you join and become a Certified Professional Crop Consultant – Independent.

Each March, the NAICC Executive Board meets in Washington, D.C., to hold a Board

Meeting (20 plus business hours), one of many important political and industry-influencing events and activities in which NAICC is involved.

When the NAICC Executive Board, Legislative Committee members and/or staff travel to Washington, our goal is to serve the membership in the best possible way. We do this by gathering information about current and pending laws and regulations, and networking with policymakers and other ag groups. Whether all consultants know it or not, they are benefiting directly from these visits.

NAICC is working to make your daily consulting job easier by making sure policy is reasonable and can be implemented without being burdensome. We also want to ensure that all growers have the right tools to control pest and diseases so that our industry remains viable. And ultimately, our goal is to help ensure a safe and abundant food supply for the world's population.

Our activities in Washington include:

- maintaining our WPS exemptions with EPA through annual and special visits.
- representing our industry at the Office of Pest Management Policies. We recently met at the Office to develop an IPM Roadmap for increased implementation of IPM practices over the next decade. At the meeting, we were asked the question "what can USDA do to create incentives for growers to increase IPM use through the utilization of CPCC-I's?"
- representing our industry and several meetings at USDA-CREEES to increase grant opportunities to the private sector.
- involvement in IFAFS grant-seeking process with the Center for IPM on a project that would directly involve contracting with NAICC members.
- meeting with congressional staff and USDA-NRCS concerning our Memorandum of Understanding for Certified Professional Crop Consultants to be third party vendors in the Nutrient Management Planning process (yet another way

- you could benefit directly!).
- spreading the word to congressional members and staffers about our value to farmers. We do this through office visits and the DAD's in D.C. Crawfish Boil (known as the best reception of its type in Washington).
 - networking with lobbyists for commodity and industry groups in Washington.

I have seen tremendous change in the reception we receive in Washington. WE HAVE ARRIVED! Though our numbers may not be extremely large, our influence on U.S. farms is better understood. We get a warm welcome now when we visit. In fact, look for the job title of consultant in the Farm Bill as a potential recipient for federal funding.

We all reap the benefits of our D.C. efforts, so let's all work together on these issues so we can be that much more effective. If you are an NAICC member, I urge you to be active. If you are not a member I urge you to join! Don't be a stow-away. I don't think you'd want non-paying clients clandestinely "borrowing" your services, would you?

NAICC Heads to Washington for Annual Meeting - Don't Miss It!

If you haven't already, it's time to put NAICC's Annual Meeting on your calendar. January will be here before you know it, and this time we have the opportunity to convene where so many decisions affecting our business are made – the greater Washington, D.C. area.

We'll stay in Arlington, VA, and our meeting will run from January 15-18. Session top-

ics will include organic farming, global biotechnology, regulatory updates on GLP compliance and CROMERR – even bioterrorism.

Precision ag will also be addressed, as will computer technology, the cost of production crop insurance, laboratory sample handling, nutrient management and more. And of course no one will want to miss the annual auction, sponsor exhibits, tours (this

time we'll visit USDA's facility and take a tour of our nation's capitol!) and one of the best parts, both personally and professionally - networking.

We'll mail program and registration materials in early October (stay tuned for more information in the next three issues of NAICC).

Invest Yourself in the NAICC

Along with good representation at the next Annual Meeting, the NAICC counts on active members to complete our numerous committee activities throughout the year.

There's no better way to improve the climate our industry is facing in the next several years than by investing ourselves – our time and energy – in NAICC's committee work. You will not be disappointed, plus you'll have the opportunity be heard, as each committee has a Board liaison who communicates information to the Executive Board.

Below is a list of committees. If you're interested in serving on a committee, please contact NAICC headquarters for more information.

- Administrative Services and Evaluation
- Allied Industry
- Annual Meeting Coordination
- Awards
- Certification Board
- Consultant Education
- Ethics & Grievance

- Legislative Advisory
- Membership Recruitment, Retention & Rules
- Membership Services
- Newsletter Involvement
- Nominating
- Research Education
- Research Electronic Data
- Scholarship
- Corporate Alliance
- Dads in DC

Turduckhen Looking for Company at the Auction

The much-anticipated live auction, held every two years at the NAICC Annual Meeting, will again be hosted by the NAICC and the Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education at the 2003 meeting.

The live auction will take place immediately following the close of the silent auction (6:30 p.m.) on January 16. All members

are encouraged to donate items. And while it may seem early, the meeting is right around the corner, so the sooner we know what your donation will be, the better!

To donate or to learn more about the auction, please contact the NAICC headquarters at (901) 861-0511 or JonesNAICC@aol.com.

To date, the following items have been donated:

Turduckhen – a boneless turkey stuffed with a boneless duck stuffed with a boneless hen, seasoned to perfection. It can be shipped frozen overnight to the lucky bidder. Donated by R&D Research Farm, Inc.

NAICC Helping Shape IPM's Changing Face

Keeping up with and managing the changing face of integrated pest management will take a concerted effort from our industry, and the NAICC is pleased that our membership is actively involved in this endeavor. In fact, many of our members will be on the program – and attending – "Building Alliances for the Future of IPM," the fourth national integrated pest management symposium/workshop.

The workshop will take place April 8-10, 2003, in Indianapolis. This symposium will launch the National Roadmap for IPM – a

vision for the next 10 years in the United States. The workshop's goal is to share pest management successes and challenges and to build alliances for the future of integrated pest management. All disciplines relating to IPM – including weed science, plant pathology, vertebrate management, entomology, nematology, horticulture, agronomy, communications, economics, sociology, etc. – are encouraged to participate.

Representation is anticipated from government agencies, universities, advocacy groups and IPM practitioners in agricultural

and non-agricultural settings, as well as people involved in work with sustainable agriculture, IR-4, pesticide applicator training and other pest management areas.

Invited speakers, posters, workshops and information conferences are planned, and our own Allison Jones will serve on the planning committee for "New Management Tools for IPM – GPS and GIS" and also "IPM in Perspective". Besides addressing the role of consultants, this session will focus on the integration of IPM into ICM, integrated farm management and IPM incentives

and disincentives.

The meeting schedule will begin with plenary sessions and keynote speakers on Tuesday morning, April 8. Workshop and speaker sessions will take place that afternoon, followed by a poster session and reception. Wednesday will begin with another poster session, followed by a day of workshops and speaker sessions, and close

with a third poster session. The meeting will end Thursday following a communication strategy for IPM programs presentation and closing remarks.

Related programs, such as regional IPM and pest management centers, IR-4 and EPA, will have the opportunity to schedule meetings the day prior to or following the symposium to make the best use of

travel expenses.

For more information on the conference, visit the conference web site:

conted.uiuc.edu/ipm. You can also submit a poster on any IPM topic – instructions for submission can be found on the site.

Please get this important national meeting on your calendar and look for additional details to come!

Allied Industry Committee Holds Summer Meeting

The NAICC Allied Industry Committee had long planned to have its semiannual committee meeting graciously hosted by Aventis CropScience. As luck would have it, they became the first organized group of visitors at Bayer CropScience in Research Triangle Park.

"After planning this event for several months, I really hoped the closing of the RTP facility wouldn't occur on our meeting date," said Daryl Wyatt, Bayer CropScience senior research scientist and chair of this year's committee. "Fortunately, we missed it by one day and were able to officially host the meeting as Bayer CropScience."

The Allied Industry Committee of NAICC consists of members from sustaining member companies. The committee is made up of 10 members plus two NAICC voting members. The purpose of the committee is to provide sustaining members a platform to help the NAICC and the industry work more closely on common projects. This committee also identifies areas of mutual concern and provides an avenue of communication.



Jim Hudson, Monsanto; Al Averitt, NAICC President; Daryl Wyatt, NAICC Allied Industry Committee Chair, Bayer CropScience; Allison Jones, NAICC Executive Vice President; Tim Case, NAICC Board of Directors; Bruce Niederhauser, NAICC Treasurer; Jim Elliot, NAICC Allied Industry Committee Vice-Chair, Syngenta; Mike Persell, Bayer CropScience.

"Our primary function is to make sure that the sustaining member companies are getting value from their membership," Daryl said. "In the summer committee meeting, we review the specifications and set the deadlines for submitting abstracts for papers and presentations at the Annual Meeting."

"At the Emerging Technologies Session (held during the Annual Meeting), sustaining member companies have an opportunity to introduce a new technology and invite consultants/researchers to the exhibit hall

for more information. In the fall we will meet again to review the submitted abstracts for the session to insure that the papers/presentations meet the criteria as an emerging technology," said Daryl.

The committee also brainstormed ways to improve the Sponsor Interaction Centers (SICs) at the 2003 Annual Meeting. SICs are designed to allow contract researchers and sponsor representatives 15-minute intervals – rather than informal hallway chats – to discuss plans for the upcoming year's research trials. This helps ensure both parties don't miss the opportunity to share important information.

While it is ideal to hold these conferences in private rooms or hospitality suites, these locations are not always readily available. A discussion was held regarding extending companies' exhibit booths to create a private conference area so companies don't have to rent suites for their SICs.

Ideas were also shared about the best way to register people for the SIC, whether on site at registration on prior to the meeting via the NAICC website, www.naicc.org.

NEW MEMBER PROFILE



The NAICC is pleased to announce that **Larissa L. Schuster** has joined our membership. She is president and laboratory director of Central California Research Laboratories, Inc. (CCRL), in Fresno. Larissa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry, with Honors, from the University of Missouri-Columbia, which she earned in 1983.

CCRL provides independent analytical contract services for the analysis of agrochemicals in samples generated from soil dissipation, ground water, crop residue, worker exposure, re-entry exposure and turf transferable residue studies. All analyses are conducted in compliance with FIFRA GLP Standards and various EPA Pesticide Assessment Guidelines. Instrumentation capabilities include Gas Chromatography with ECD, NPD, FPD and MSD detection, and High Performance Liquid Chromatography with UV/VIS Fluorescence and Triple Quadra pole Mass Spectrometry.

Besides her NAICC membership, Larissa is a member of the American Society of Mass Spectrometry, the American Chemical Society (ACS) Agrochemicals Division, the Pacific Regional Chapter of the Society of Quality Assurance (PRCSQA) (where she currently serves as treasurer) and the Society of Quality Assurance (SQA).

Larissa joined the NAICC to keep abreast of current issues and concerns in the industry. She believes the NAICC is an excellent forum for interfacing with current and prospective clients, as well as field researchers.

Contract Researchers - Endangered Species?

By Denise Wright

When I began working in the contract research business in 1987, we worked with about 20-25 individual sponsor companies. There was never a shortage of work, and at times, trials had to be declined due to lack

of space availability and/or insufficient manpower to conduct them in a quality fashion. The ag chemical industry was flourishing in its "hey day."

Then along came the mergers and

acquisitions, something we've all grown accustomed to these past few years. I guess a couple of the first really big mergers was the linking of Sandoz Crop Protection and Ciba-Geigy to form Novartis around

1996...which now has merged with Zeneca to form Syngenta. And then there's Rhone-Poulenc's merger with AgrEvo (or was it Nor-Am at the time???) to form Aventis CropScience, which is now Bayer Corporation.

Many industry representatives have lost their jobs or been moved to different positions in far away places, some even to other countries. We've seen "Cajuns" and "Rednecks" "exiled" to places such as Pennsylvania, New Jersey or France. Some adapt, some don't...

Through the years, more and more of these companies have blended together in mergers or through outright purchases by the stronger and larger entity. The result has been, in some cases, fewer products, with the high-market value products staying, and the rest either being put on the shelf, so to speak, or done away with entirely.

Because of this, less research to prove new pesticides has been needed, putting a tremendous strain on the private contract research businesses that turned down work in the '70's, '80's and early '90's. To the best of my knowledge, work is never turned away anymore, unless the capability to conduct the trial is just not there. More and more researchers travel across states and even into other countries to oversee needed research, since there is a sore lack of it at home.

The more prevalent research being conducted these days is probably varietal and transgenic (biotech) trials involving cotton, rice, corn and other commodities, depend-

ing on your geography. Pesticide research has decreased dramatically over the past few years, primarily due, I believe, to mergers and acquisitions, but also due to the unsteadiness of EPA's reactions to, for example, organophosphates.

In retrospect, you would think that sponsor companies would have many formulations in discovery to replace the pesticides coming under attack by EPA's Food Quality Protection Act, if indeed, this becomes necessary. But in talking to several different study directors in several different companies, this doesn't seem to be the case. It almost seems as though some companies have all but given up trying to convince EPA that sound scientific results obtained from research is the way to determine whether or not a pesticide should be marketed, not by listening to and basing judgment on what is reported by radical environmentalists.

Over the past few years, the ag industry has tried to combat the allegations made by unsparing individuals or "tree-huggers" (and please don't get me wrong — I love trees and nature) by implementing "Good Stewardship" policies. Companies are holding seminars, setting up websites and publicizing the need for farmers to join them in participating as good stewards of the land they till. In particular, water quality programs have sprung up across the United States. This should enlighten the EPA to the fact that the ag industry as a whole does care about the environment. In fact, they are some of the best stewards of the land existing today.

That said, we need to concentrate on investigating what research needs to be conducted over the next few years. We need to have a good rapport with our ag chemical reps and let them know what we see as vital needs in the area of ag research. We need to do this, or we won't be around as part of the process for getting ag chemicals approved for market. Since the beginning of 2000, I've watched fellow contract researchers go out of business or be forced to drastically diversify their services to make ends meet. I feel safe saying that anyone who does this type of work knows that it gets in your blood, not unlike farming. It's not just another job.

My husband and I farmed for 13 years, quitting in 1994 because we finally saw a little daylight and were able to get out in pretty good shape financially. I missed it terribly, but really worried about my husband because farming was his lifeblood, it seemed. Well, for us, things worked out for the best; he and I are still very much involved in agriculture, and so far, have been able to bring home a check every two weeks.

My hope is that agriculture will make a giant step toward returning to prosperity over the next few years, so that the vast majority of contract researchers who do care so much about the quality of work they do, will continue to be an integral part of those who feed the world.

Field Scout Humor

By Roger Carter

Like you, I've found much humor in my work life over the past years, and amidst some challenges — bad employees, long hours, unpredictable work conditions, etc. — it's that humor that's helped me through. This column will appear each month, and I invite you to share your own humorous accounts — we all need something to make us smile.

The Bear

Black bears have been re-introduced to Louisiana — probably at the ag consultant's expense.

James Price was a second-year scout, and he always wore those cheap black rubber boots with the bright red rubber soles. He was scouting cotton on a farm where we had seen a black bear.

As one of our consultants, Walter Myers, approached an area where he was supposed to pick up James, he looked down the turn-row and saw nothing but the red soles of those boots and the whites of James' eyes

coming at him.

At first he thought James may have been trying to outrun a wasp or yellow-jacket, but as he looked farther down the turn-row, he saw the heels of the black bear going in the other direction. James and the black bear had met at the edge of the cotton field. Neither of them liked the gathering.

Is He Moving?

We once had a scout named Cary Shively who moved so slowly while making counts that it was hard to detect if he was dead or alive. We never had trouble locating Cary in the fields of taller cotton because he would stand in one place so long while making insect counts the buzzards thought he was dead and would circle above him.

It takes about three days for a cotton bollworm egg to hatch. We make egg and small larvae counts on the cotton plants. Cary would invariably find more larvae than eggs. When I asked his supervisor if he was making the counts properly, the super-

visor responded, "Heck, he sits there in one spot long enough that most of the eggs have time to hatch".



**National
Alliance of
Independent
Crop Consultants**

Allison Jones
Brenda Weber

Executive Vice President
Managing Editor

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

Al Averitt President

955 Sandy Grove Rd. / Lumber Bridge, NC 28357
Phone: (910) 858-3740 / Fax: (910) 858-2168
E-mail: aaveritt@earthlink.net