



NAICC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Ray Young
NAICC
President

Spring Has Sprung

Spring is here at last! It's been a long time coming, and the consultants and growers in Louisiana are glad it's here. I suspect everyone else feels the same way.

I know spring is here when two things happen. The first is the ground starts to dry and my son Jesse says, "Dad, how long will you be gone this week?" With all this traveling I'm doing, I may be about to lose my "day job".

Secondly, spring has officially begun when the NAICC Executive Board goes to Washington, DC, for the season's board meeting. Each year we go in to Washington a few days prior to the meeting to call on our nation's policymakers. This year we called on more than 30 government officials, updating them on NAICC's activities and discussing issues that affect our members and growers.

There were several highlights of our 2003 trip. The EPA invited us to put on a seminar for Agency employees who haven't yet worked with NAICC. **Al Averitt** and **Robin Spitko** did an excellent job representing the Alliance and I put in my two cents worth. Our information was well received and we had an opportunity to answer questions about consulting. We were also fortunate to have friends in the audience who knew NAICC well. They made a point of telling the others in the audience — and I quote Pat Cimino, "If IPM gets done these are the guys that are going to get it done." There was good interchange, many

questions were asked and we all came away feeling good!

Our meeting with representatives from EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs, Biological and Economical Analysis and Health Effects divisions to further our plans for crop monitoring profiles was very productive. This program is an excellent opportunity to reach out to our members and supply much-needed information to EPA about the daily activities of consultants.

One of the best parts of our annual trip to our nation's capitol is the "Dads in DC" crawfish boil. Six years ago, our own **Roger Carter** and **Phil Cochran** came up with the idea of treating our friends inside the Beltway to some good ole southern cookin'. They enlisted the help of **Jim Braucht** from **Monsanto**, formally with **Rhone Poulenc**, to bring in live crawfish and "do it up right"! Jim has been doing that for us ever since. He flies in with the crawfish and then cooks them right in the federal office building on Capitol Hill. This year we had over 200 attendees!

Ned Darbonne with **Bayer CropScience** — also of Louisiana — (who taught Jim the original secret recipe) joined us this year. Those two gentlemen worked so hard they only came out of the kitchen for the last 10 minutes of the reception! Many thanks to **Jim, Ned, Roger, Billy McLawhorn** and the rest of the "Dads in DC" Committee for a job WELL done!



Jim "de Cook" Braucht and his loyal assistant Ned Darbonne are the men behind the scenes and the real heroes of the NAICC "Dads in DC" crawfish boil.

In January I started my campaign to get more NAICC members communicating

with their representatives in Washington. Now that the House and Senate Agriculture Committees are in place, I want to share with you the current list of members on those Committees (see enclosed).

Please take the time to communicate with your Representatives and Senators. The legislators in Washington are eager to hear from their constituents and you'll never know how you can make a difference until you try. One person can make a difference.

Plus, it only takes a few mouse clicks to e-mail your Congressman! Visit <http://www.house.gov/writrep>. Select your state and enter your zip code. For your Senators, visit <http://www.senate.gov>. Click on the e-mail address listed below your Senator's name. You will be connected to their Website, where you can contact them directly.

The other significant factor about the NAICC spring board meeting is that we set our goals and priorities for the current year. Each committee's report is reviewed, recommendations are accepted, and plans are made to make NAICC the best organization it can be for its members. This is our goal!

The budget is also set at this meeting. Rest assured that we are doing our best to balance the financial stability and future of the Alliance with the growing needs of our members. It is our goal to watch our expenses while offering the membership services that are needed. Let us know your needs!

I once asked an older gentleman several years ago if he had gotten his cotton up. He said, "Mr. Ray, we put the seed in the ground but the Good Lord gotta get 'em up."

And now a few suggestions as you begin your spring planting:

You know all the stuff about good seed, soil contact, etc. NOW...

1. Plant a seed for NAICC. The next time you run into a fellow consultant in your area, encourage him to join NAICC.

2. Make plans to attend the 2004 Annual Meeting in New Orleans. You will enjoy yourself, I promise!
3. Help NAICC grow by deciding what

committee or area you'll work in this year. The more dedicated members we have, the more we can do, and the more the Alliance will grow.

This is the Easter Season celebrating the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's celebrate the reason for the season.

HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL

Representatives from the NAICC Executive Board and Legislative Committee canvassed Capitol Hill, USDA and EPA on March 17 and 18, 2003. **Al Averitt, Loarn Bucl, Dennis Berglund, Bill Cox, Robin Spitko** and **Ray Young** visited with several Congressional representatives from their own districts as well as members and staff on the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and the Senate Appropriations Committee. Key discussion topics included the current Farm Bill legislation and how it affects our farmers and the status of the Technical Service Provider (TSP) regulation currently being implemented by USDA.

Over the two-day period, NAICC members met with more than 30 officials in Washington. Meetings at USDA were very productive; the discussion centered around the TSP program and the cost of production insurance. The NAICC Memorandum of Understanding with USDA's NRCS is near completion and will be an excellent service to NAICC members who participate in nutrient management, pest management, animal waste management and many other areas. We are fortunate to have a comprehensive certification program that is widely acknowledged by our government.

On Thursday, NAICC was invited to meet with EPA personnel and give an overview of the organization and the daily activities of independent contract researchers and crop consultants. **Ray Young** gave a history of consulting and the Alliance while **Al Averitt** presented facts about the NAICC membership, acreage influenced, the professional-

ism of our members and the NAICC certification program. **Robin Spitko** concluded the seminar with details about the many current partnerships between NAICC and EPA as well as future projects. **Bruce Niederhauser, Dennis Berglund** and **Bill Cox** were also present and helped presenters field many questions from the audience.

NAICC is moving forward with EPA on the crop monitoring profiles. An official proposal is being drafted and will be presented to EPA this spring. Tentative plans are for NAICC members certified under the CPCC program to sign up through the Alliance for submission of crop profiles. Information regarding crop development/pesticide usage and scouting/monitoring activities throughout the growing season would be submitted. Type and duration of exposure and corresponding REI's would be included. Task force members are currently defining

how many and what crops to survey, the number of profiles per crop and costs associated with each profile.

Also on the agenda was a meeting with officials from EPA's Office of Compliance. **Bob Glodt** discussed GLP programs and how we can continue to provide the best contract research services possible.

The 6th Annual "Dads in DC" crawfish boil was held on March 19. The NAICC members in attendance reported an excellent turnout. They were able to visit with Congressional members and staff and officials from USDA and EPA in a relaxed envi-



EPA Assistant Administrator with the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances **Steve Johnson** (center) enjoys crawfish with Program Specialist **Dennis Franklin** (left) and son **Matthew**.

ronment. Washington representatives from commodity and other agricultural organizations were also in attendance. First time attendee and Executive Board Member **Daryl Wyatt** had this to say about the "Dads", "I was impressed with the attendance on a rainy night not to mention the tense situation overseas and in the US (remember this



Congressman Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) was one of several representatives who attended the 2003 "Dads in DC". Here he visits with NAICC member **Dennis Berglund**.

was the second day of Operation Iraqi Freedom). This turnout is a good indicator of the influence of the NAICC on Capitol Hill. All attendees were very complimentary of our "Dads in DC" format – they said that it was a night they look forward to every year and for us not to forget to invite them next year. I would encourage all NAICC members, including sustaining members to participate in the "Dads in DC" because of the influence NAICC has on Capitol Hill."

NAICC Mirrors Association of Independent Crop Consultants in the UK

By *Al Averitt*

This story actually began about two years ago, when Neil Miller was the chairman of the Annual Meeting coordination committee. The committee had some discussion about international consulting and indicated they would like to have an international consultant speak at our Annual Meeting. Neil conducted some research and found the Association of Independent Crop Consultants in the United Kingdom. He invited them to our Annual Meeting in Albuquerque, but because it was short notice they couldn't make it. They said

they'd like to attend the next year and would send **Allen Scobie**, their chairman, to our meeting in Washington, DC. As well, they asked that our president (yours truly at the time) pay them a visit.

The AICC's 2003 Annual Meeting was held January 6-8 at the birthplace of William Shakespeare — Stratford-upon-Avon in England. My wife, Julie and I traveled to England on Friday, January 3. As many of you know, flights to Europe are overnight and often sleepless, unless you're blessed with the ability to sleep in an air-

plane seat.

Allen Scobie and **Sarah Cowrick**, AICC's Executive Administrator, had graciously given us information on how to proceed from the airport to Paddington Station by train, where we stayed at the Paddington Hilton over the weekend and toured London. On the afternoon of the 7th, Sarah arranged for a cab to take Julie and me to Warwick Castle, since we hadn't had an opportunity to see any of the castles around London. We toured the castle for about three hours and were struck with how

much history there is in the UK compared to the US.

Nuts and Bolts of the AICC Meeting

The AICC Meeting is probably more akin to one of our State Association or Regional Meetings where the topics are more agronomic in nature because so many of the consultants work with the same cereal crops (wheat, barley and oats) as well as canola. Since they have so much in common they are able, for example, to have speakers present data on sub-label rate use of fungicides. The information comes from an unbiased source such as university data or producer funded private research. Some of their members conduct research but not to the degree, as I understand, that our members do.

Their meeting is an annual occurrence, like ours. The first afternoon was a discussion of agronomic data on fungicide use and wheat and disease management. A business session concludes their meeting.

On Day 2, the meeting began with the international forum they set up this year. Carlage Pederson from Denmark, Kristoph Dequie of France, Patrick Stephenson (their member from Northern England) and I spoke. (Patrick won Agronomist of the Year award.)

During the morning session a UAP individual also spoke. The AICC had an opportunity to respond to his opinion that "independence was dead" — the AICC contended that it's actually increasing in scope and acreage. A more technical production meeting took place later that day and the following morning.

That night their President, a figurehead, spoke. He's a non-member farmer who consults and was once leader of a research institution formed by the wheat growers

union of the UK. (As Chairman, Allen Scobie's role is comparative to that of our President's.)

I recommend building this relationship with the AICC. It's uncanny how we've evolved to be almost identical, independently of each other. Their organization is around 21 years old; ours is around 25. Their members tend to average about 10,000 acres per shop and they pretty much do all their work themselves. They have very few employees. Some of the larger companies are in the neighborhood of 20,000-25,000 acres.

They are a little bit smaller in scale, maybe indicating they work more intensely with those crops, as with some of our southern crops. Their standards are high; rather than deciding not to take the exams that their fertilizer dealers and pesticide dealers are taking to certify themselves, the AICC has another approach. They make it a requirement that all their members take the tests.

They mention in their documentation that it's not necessary to take the tests and that their standards are above and beyond the dealer distributor test and certification level. However, they are willing to meet that goal and their members are required to do that. Their members are required to have indemnity insurance as a component of their membership, as well.

I plan to go back someday at my own expense, and look forward to maintaining close contact with their organization over the next year and beyond. Hopefully we can develop an exchange farm tour program in the future. Their members are identical to our members — any of us would be as comfortable in their meeting as I believe they would be in ours.

AICC Involvement Opens Foreign Dialogue

Involvement with the AICC in the UK has already opened dialogue with English Nature, the UK's government agency that handles environmental issues. Anna Hope, who is with the Biotechnology Advisory Unit (BAU) at English Nature, wrote to Al Averitt regarding transgenic crops and pest control.

The BAU is the UK government's statutory wildlife conservation agency for England. It provides independent, science-based advice on the impacts of biotechnology on the environment, on behalf of the statutory conservation agencies in England, Wales and Scotland. Anna's group provides advice to government and other interested parties, participates in conferences and debates on biotechnology and the environment but does not promote or oppose the technology of genetic modification. Rather, the group examines the risks and benefits on a case-by-case basis. Visit www.jncc.gov.uk, click on 'species' and 'GMOs' to learn more about the BAU.

Anna's correspondence with Al was about an article in the UK-based Farmers Weekly magazine, which covered the AICC conference Al attended. The article relayed Al's comments about GM crops leading to unanticipated secondary pest increases in the southern U.S.

Because of public debate about the commercialization of GM crops in the UK, Anna asked Al for more information about the secondary pest increase issue and other agronomic (and environmental) realities of growing these crops. Al responded with more information about secondary pest increases and is seeking some U.S. research to provide Anna with as the discussion continues in her part of the world.

Al's involvement in the AICC conference has also led to other types of inquiries from French counterparts.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Membership Recruitment Retention and Rules Committee News

Independent Quality Assurance Officers Granted Voting Member Status

By Don Harlan

Appropriately, the theme of the 2003 NAICC Annual Meeting was "United We Grow". On January 19th, at the conclusion of the NAICC Annual Meeting, the Executive Board approved the recommendation of the MRR&R committee to give independent quality assurance officers voting member status. (Prior to this change, these officers were accepted as associate members of NAICC.)

For this change to become effective, the membership will vote on a change in the

By-laws to include independent quality assurance personnel (ballots will be mailed in fall, 2003, with the ballots for the 2004 Executive Board election).

Although NAICC began as an organization for crop consultants, many became voting members as research consultants. Over the years of learning GLPs, QA personnel — both independent and sponsor employees — have worked hard to educate contract researchers on GLP compliance issues. As crop consultants diversify into conservation, nutrient management and other areas, QA members may also become their allies on QA and QC issues.

We invite our independent QA's who currently hold an associate member status to

apply for voting member status. We also hope you will encourage other independent QA's to join the NAICC.

NAICC to Gain Global Views Through Honorary Member from UK

Following the success of Al Averitt's participation in the Association of Independent Crop Consultants' Annual Meeting, the two groups have already begun discussing how they can help each other through shared information. One of the suggestions has already been acted upon; Allen Scobie of Scotland, Chairman of the Association of Independent Crop Consultants, has been invited to become an honorary NAICC member.

We believe this will help further our rela-

tionship with the AICC, which is similar to our Alliance, and both organizations will gain valuable insight about issues of pertinence to the industry. Other ways the two organizations are considering include swapping speakers at Annual Meetings and arranging reciprocal farm tours.

For speakers and topics, the NAICC is seeking a sponsor or sustaining member to speak about the Farm Bill at an AICC meeting. In turn, a sponsor of the AICC could speak to our organization about their Mid-term Review, which is akin to our Farm Bill.

Group trips to the UK – organized by the two associations – would allow NAICC members to meet consultants and to learn firsthand about their methods, issues and clients. Again, the AICC members could be provided a similar opportunity, hosted by NAICC members. Stay tuned for more information about growing global relation-

ships to enhance the crop consulting profession worldwide!

Scholarship Committee Focuses on Promotion Reminder: 2003 Applications due July 1

Submitted by Don Jameson

NAICC's Scholarship Committee reported that the 2002 Richard L. Jensen Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 was awarded to Abel Wurmnest in December. He was one of seven applicants.

The 2003 scholarship application is available at naicc.org, and the deadline for submission is right around the corner — July 1, 2003.

The Scholarship Committee is introducing some changes to the application and process:

- The criteria list will now include “preference to work with an NAICC member company.”

- All Jensen scholarship winners will be listed in the NAICC directory.
- Each scholarship recipient will be required to write a letter of appreciation to the Jensen family, with a copy of the letter sent to FAEA.
- The scholarship award presentation will be made by an NAICC member or State Association or University when appropriate or practical.

Promotional ideas were also discussed by the committee. Suggestions included beginning promotions immediately in the fall and continuing through March, using the newsletter and Web site as promotional vehicles and potentially sending e-mail or mailings to land-grant universities. In addition to listing winners in the NAICC directory, the suggestion was made to include their names in the Annual Meeting program.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE STATES

Our partnerships with state organizations have been a key part of our success in increasing the influence of our profession locally and nationally. We have a lengthy history of working with state associations, and we hope to continue these partnerships for years to come.

As our activities have gained in prominence nationally to affect the playing field for all consultants, we've discerned the need to distribute our costs more fairly. Our actions have benefited and continue to benefit paying members and non-paying non-members alike.

Through our consistent meetings with high-level policymakers in Washington, we continually convey our integral role in the agriculture industry. Our relationships with EPA, USDA and Senate and House Ag Committees have led to increased understanding of our day-to-day operations and needs.

To more fairly distribute the financial responsibility of our activities, we chose to change our fee structure in 2003. We've developed a state affiliate program, wherein \$10 in dues is paid for each state affiliation's voting member. The cap is \$500 per association. We see this investment as fair, given the time and resources our members devote to ensuring the success of our business nationwide.

Already, we have 13 state affiliates on our roster for 2003. We encourage other states to join us, as we can make a bigger difference when we work closely together.

2003 State Affiliates

- *Arkansas Agricultural Consultants Association*
- *Georgia Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants*
- *High Plains Association of Crop Consultants*

- *Independent Agricultural Consultants of Colorado*
- *Indiana Association of Professional Crop Consultants*
- *Kansas Association of Independent Crop Consultants*
- *Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association*
- *Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Association*
- *Nebraska Independent Crop Consultants Association*
- *North Carolina Agricultural Consultants Association*
- *Ohio Association of Independent Crop Consultants*
- *Professional Crop Consultants of Illinois*
- *Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants*

North Carolina, Kansas Prominently Displayed on naicc.org

One of the benefits of being a state affiliate with NAICC is the opportunity for a highly visible presence on our Web site. On naicc.org's affiliates page you'll find links to the **North Carolina Agricultural Consultants Association** and the **Kansas Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants**. Interested parties can find each organization's directory, contact information, discussion forum, calendar of events and membership information quickly and easily.

By appearing on the NAICC site, the affiliates' sites can be more easily accessed by members nationwide and others who can benefit from the information.

This opportunity is made available to state affiliates by NAICC with the collaboration of the Center for Integrated Pest Management. The process is simple — the state creates its own Web page, which is

hosted on the NAICC web server. After registering, the page can be linked to the main NAICC Website.

Two options for Web packages are available to state affiliates.

Option A costs \$250 per year. This package includes:

- introductory page with a logo
- page with contact information
- one additional page of your choice
- membership database

Option B, which costs \$400 per year, includes the same options as A, along with:

- unlimited number of additional pages
- searchable membership database
- targeted e-mail
- open OR password protected discussion board
- calendar of events

Both Kansas and North Carolina chose option B for their Web sites.

To learn more about the process or to view a template, visit naicc.org or contact NAICC Headquarters.



**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**

Ray Young President

**Box 648 / 521 Hope Street / Wisner, LA 71378
Phone: (318) 724-6287 / Fax: (318) 724-6347
E-mail: RDYoung@3g.quik.com**