



NAICC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Ray Young
NAICC
President

Share the Wealth

Why did you join NAICC? Was it to distinguish yourself as a professional in the crop or research consulting business? Was it to take advantage of the many benefits of membership? Or was it because you wanted access to some of the best minds in agriculture?

Whatever your reason to join NAICC, it was the right decision. NAICC is an avenue to help you attain the contacts, knowledge, career development and personal growth for success in your business.

Your involvement in NAICC increases your knowledge through educational programs, newsletters and – most importantly – through networking with your peers. Associating with “like minds” helps you find solutions to problems in the field or with your business.

By being a member of the only national

association dedicated to Independent Crop and Research consultants, you are part of a collective force through strategic alliances with state and national agricultural organizations. These alliances are with state consulting organizations and companies within the industry that supply the materials you and your growers need to get the job done.

But the list doesn't stop there. NAICC links you to other national and international agricultural associations and USDA and EPA.

NAICC helps you manage your workload and gain access to resources that give you a competitive edge. Think about the time and money that would be required if you tried to single-handedly secure an exemption from the Worker Protection Standard or wade through all the regulations and training required to become a Technical Service Provider.

By being a member of NAICC and being certified as a Certified Professional Crop Consultant (CPC), you are attaining the highest level of excellence and aligning yourself with a distinguished group of crop and research professionals who have demonstrated that their knowledge is essential to the practice of consulting.

Now it is time to share that wealth. Now is a good time to build on the foundation

that you've helped build for independent consultants. Think about all the great things that those who are not members are missing. Think about how much the profession would flourish if everyone were as dedicated to the consulting profession as you are.

The NAICC Membership Recruitment Retention and Rules Committee is working hard on a Recruit-a-Member campaign.

When everyone does their part, it's amazing what can be accomplished!

It is a simple plan to implement and you AND the new member will reap the rewards! When your co-workers and peers become members of NAICC, they too can operate at peak performance and make lasting contributions to the consulting profession.

I challenge you to recruit one member between now and the 2004 Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Our Alliance goal is 100 new members – so please do your part. Don't rely on someone else to recruit for you. We must all do our part for OUR organization.

In the words of Teddy Roosevelt, “Every man owes part of his time and money to the business or industry to which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere.”

When everyone does their part, it's amazing what can be accomplished!

MOU to be Signed Next Month!

The long-awaited Memorandum of Understanding will be signed by Bruce Knight, Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and NAICC President **Ray Young** on June 23.

The signing ceremony will be held at 11:00 a.m. at USDA headquarters in Washington, DC, with other NAICC leaders **Al Averitt** and **Allison Jones** present. Remarks will be made by NAICC President Ray Young.

Finalization of the MOU has been a lengthy process because the Alliance has 10 areas under which members can be

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certified – as opposed to other groups' standard one to three areas of certification.

As well, NAICC wanted to ensure that the MOU be complete and accurate before signing.

MOU Recap

The purpose of the MOU is to allow NAICC, through its CPC program, to submit recommendations of individuals for

certification as third party Technical Service Providers (TSP).

The cooperative effort will allow CPCs to expand their network of services and it will provide USDA program participants a greater number of certified technical service providers.

In the MOU, it is officially recognized that a CPC meets the NRCS standards for providing conservation assistance in some or all of the following areas:

- Buffers
- Conservation Planning
- CNMP – Plan Approval
- CNMP – Planning and Assistance

- Grazing Forages
- Irrigation Water Management
- Nutrient Management Organic and Inorganic Pest Management
- Tillage and Erosion
- Vegetative Land Stabilization

CPCCs certified as Technical Service Providers will be placed on an approved list to provide technical service to USDA conservation program participants.

As part of the MOU, NAICC is responsible for committing that CPCC members are trained appropriately, as well as establishing and maintaining a registry of individuals who qualify to provide conservation technical services as agreed upon between the two organizations.

Continued education requirements will be recorded by the NAICC to ensure qualifications are maintained (includes deadlines

for continued education, removal of those from the registry who haven't maintained levels of training within three years, etc.).

It is important to note that to be certified by the NRCS as a Technical Service Provider, CPCCs must complete a Certification Agreement with NRCS.

TSPs will be subject to the same annual reviews as NRCS employees, however they are not allowed to legally certify completed cost shared practices for payments.

The NRCS will be responsible for providing NAICC with access to current program information and appropriate technical reference documents for TSPs. Training resources and other material will be provided to NAICC as appropriate.

NRCS will update and provide the approved list of TSPs to USDA offices.

Both organizations have agreed to review progress regularly and make improvements

as needed.

The MOU will take effect the day it's signed and is good for five years. It can be extended or amended upon written request by either party with agreement by the other organization. The MOU can be terminated through a 30-day written notice to the other party.

Should the agreement be terminated, TSPs certified by the NRCS will continue to be listed on the approved TSP list within the terms and conditions of their certification.

While the MOU will not be signed until June 23, TSP certifications are currently being handled. Please let **Allison Jones** know if you are awaiting certification and she can follow up accordingly. NAICC has requested that the NRCS communicate to their personnel that the NAICC's MOU and others are pending so that states do not hold up TSP certification processes.

NAICC Champions Environmental Stewardship through PESP

NAICC's Executive Board voted in May to join the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) which was formed following the federal government's recognition that Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has been underutilized for pest control. Begun in 1994, PESP's members range from electrical companies and state departments of agriculture to crop associations and fruit growers. The program is administered by EPA.

In addition to aligning ourselves with dozens of organizations that relate to our

industry, being a PESP Supporter provides the Alliance yet another way to demonstrate our commitment to environmental stewardship.

As a new PESP member, NAICC formally signed a statement supporting the goals of the organization. NAICC is also required (as are other Partners and Supporters) to write a strategy describing our long-term approach to risk reduction. It must include annual, measurable activities designed to achieve pesticide risk reduction.

An EPA Liaison will be assigned to the NAICC to help manage our involvement in

PESP. This person will work with us to provide information and assistance in developing our strategy and will keep us abreast of EPA activities. The Liaison will also provide information on funding opportunities to support our PESP-related strategies.

For more information about PESP, including its list of members, visit www.epa.gov/oppbppd1/PESP/about.htm. And stay tuned for updates on our involvement in this program!

Prizes In Store For Those Who Recruit New Members

The NAICC hopes to welcome 100 new members by the 2004 Annual Meeting! To do that, we need your help.

We've developed a Recruit-a-Member Campaign wherein we're asking each NAICC member to recruit one new member. Each of our MRR&R Committee Members are asked to recruit three new members.

The campaign is simple and can be accomplished using any of the four easy steps. NAICC members will be notified with details through e-mail and notice in the mail.

One aspect includes having NAICC members send a form e-mail to prospects using the NAICC Website. A mailer or invitation will also be sent to names on our prospect list, and prizes will be awarded

to top recruiters.

As part of **Bayer CropScience's** generous sponsorship, new members will receive full complimentary meeting registration to the 2004 Annual Meeting, January 21-25, in New Orleans. That's a value of \$350 per person! (Includes continental breakfasts, new members' reception, awards luncheon, all cocktail receptions including the Exhibit Hall Extravaganza, Friday evening banquet and Saturday breakfast).

If two or more employees from the same company join, an additional \$50 will be taken off of all memberships after the first.

Other recruitment efforts include **Syngenta's** membership appeal (more details to follow), which will take place at the conclusion of their consultant work-

shop held in conjunction with the 2004 Annual Meeting. Sustaining members will also be asked to recruit for NAICC when they call on consultants this summer.

To ensure each new member is with the NAICC for years to come, intensive follow-up measures have been developed as part of the new recruitment plan.

Each new member will be assigned a "buddy" who will call the new member at least twice a year. The "buddy" will greet the new member at the Annual Meeting and introduce him or her to other members and (formally) at the Awards Luncheon.

A new member kit is also being developed to introduce new members to all the resources available through their membership.

A CROP PRACTITIONER'S BLACK BAG

By Earle S. Raun, PhD., CPCC-I, BCE

After 17 years as a Crop Practitioner, I wrote an article outlining how the bag of tools of a crop practitioner had improved during those 17 years ("Ag Consultant" March of 1991).

Now, 12 years later, I look back and think how much things have changed in those 12 years, but how much has remained the same. Observing crop development by walking the fields, sampling soil and tissues and identifying and managing diseases and insects are still the base jobs.

Yes, Crop Practitioner, the basics are still field walking, observing, sampling, trapping and communicating information to your client, the producer of the crops that are your patients. But the science of crop production is changing yearly, with knowledge becoming more integrated between sciences.

At the same time crops are becoming more complex, with genetic manipulations changing the plant's response to the soil, water, disease and insect environment.

Twelve years ago research was delving into genetic manipulations, particularly in cotton and corn. Now some insects, weeds and diseases are prevented from attacking some of our crops where gene transplants have taken place. In theory a person would think the need for crop protection chemicals and field walking were becoming obsolete. But knowledge never becomes obsolete.

What is the reality? There appears to be more need for crop consulting practitioners now than ever, and they must be more highly trained. These GMO crops are requiring more management, not less. Why? "Just plant all your corn or cotton to GMO varieties" you say? NO, NO, NO!

Why not? First, history has shown that when primary insect or disease problems are controlled, others not affected by the control practice become opportunistic.

Second, disease or insect resistance is likely to develop to counteract our genetic manipulations if all corn or cotton contains the same genes. Thus some acreage must be planted to non-GMO varieties. The EPA regulations require at least 20 percent non-GMO, hoping to slow down the development of resistance in pests.

Third, GMO seed is more expensive than normally produced seed. And crops grown from GMO seed don't generally bring higher return per bushel/bale/ton than non-GMO. Additionally, buyer resistance to these GMO crops – in some instances – is curtailing export sales.

During the '70's, the interrelationship be-

tween the crop and its environment began to be recognized. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Crop Management (ICM) broadened the scope of educational needs from traditional crop production courses. The need to include more diverse subject matter in greater depth began to change curricula.

Between 1985 and 1990, members of the NAICC came to the realization that the changing educational needs of agriculture were largely not being reflected in the curricula of educational institutions.

We began visiting various university and college campuses, carrying the message that a practitioner's graduate degree program was needed for Crop Consultants. Not a PhD, but a practitioner's doctorate. The curriculum of such a degree program would parallel the curricula offered for those studying to become a Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, including internship.

In 1991 the NAICC formed a foundation to help pursue the goal of providing such a practitioner doctorate on a regional basis. Thus the Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education (FEAE) took shape.

There are three primary goals of this tax-free foundation:

1. Annual funding of college scholarships in the agricultural sciences.
2. Educational sessions for NAICC members.
3. Stimulation and assistance in the creation of curricula in institutions of higher education, leading to a practitioner's degree, such as Doctor of Plant Medicine or Doctor of Plant Health.

As so often happens, an effort at the University of Florida was taking root about the time of FEAE's birth. That effort eventually became a graduate degree program for crop practitioners. It is now in its fourth year, with 40 current degree candidates.

The program's first candidate will graduate this spring with a Doctor of Plant Medicine degree. Two more plan to graduate in the summer of 2003. Although the FEAE had little to do with the program's start, it has been supporting the program through scholarships and other funds.

Crop production varies from one region to another. The Land Grant and Morrill Acts of years ago recognized these regional differences. It is for the same regional differences that doctoral programs similar to that of

Florida are needed on a regional basis. The University of Florida can't be the only one.

As these programs crop up, the Practitioner's Black Bag will continue to be filled with more knowledge, tools and technology. And agriculture worldwide will be the beneficiary.

Check Your Insurance Policy!

Certain types of equipment – four-wheelers, Palm Pilots, GPS systems, probes, etc. – may not be covered under your home insurance policy.

NAICC member **Randy Darr** recently discovered that his two four-wheelers required separate coverage, which he did not have. Unfortunately, he found this out after they were stolen.

Other members have indicated they've run into the same situation with other titled pieces of equipment. Given how much each of us relies on these tools and the value of them, make sure you know what your policy does and doesn't cover. In Randy's case, he now has insurance on his new four-wheelers.

Prizes in Store for New Orleans Meeting Attendees...

As we prepare for a Crescent City Annual Meeting, we'll be awarding a prize for the first person who correctly responds to the trivia question found in each newsletter.

Contact NAICC Headquarters with your answers. To be considered for the prize, you must be an NAICC member of current standing.

THIS MONTH'S TRIVIA QUESTION:

The landing craft used to ferry American troops to the beaches during D-Day was made in New Orleans by a boat manufacturer. What was his last name?

There are five chances to win, so keep reading your newsletter for a chance to win. To claim your prize, you must attend the Annual Meeting.

Increased Use of Internet for NAICC Communication Supported by Committees

The Research Electronic Data Task Force's focus is changing to a broader base, following the decoupling of CROMERRR and the relative stability of Electronic Field Notebooks. (The Task Force will continue to monitor CROMERRR, as well as APHIS-GLP – Regulatory Electronic issues.)

Because the Internet provides such an immediate and cost effective way to communicate, the task force has recommended that more NAICC communication be handled online. NAICC's Newsletter Involvement committee also recommends use of the Internet for Alliance communications.

Some of the correspondence that you can look forward to receiving in the future as you click to check your mail may be information we've traditionally sent via mail. Or you might simply go to www.naicc.org rather than waiting for your postal carrier to drop a newsletter or meeting program in your box.

Issues of *NAICC News* can be sent or posted through the Internet so they're received in a more timely manner, and NAICC can use the money saved on postage and printing costs to support other member activities.

Similarly, the registration packet and preliminary program can easily be sent via e-mail or posted on our Website, allowing for up-to-the minute changes and faster turnaround than the postal system can provide.

As an NAICC member you now have the opportunity to choose how you wish to receive your newsletter. Please complete the on-line or e-mail survey (or mail or fax the form below) if you would like to help reduce paper and receive your communications electronically!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Company: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Check only one box:

- Please send my *NAICC News* to the e-mail address above. Do not mail me a hard copy.
- Please send an e-mail alert when the *NAICC News* is available on www.naicc.org for me to download or read online. Do not mail me a hard copy.
- Please send my *NAICC News*, Annual Meeting preliminary program and registration materials to me via e-mail. Do not mail me a hard copy.
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