



NAICC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Ray Young
NAICC
President

Winding Down

By this time of year in the deep South, crops are maturing. Some have been harvested already, most of the corn has been cut and some beans have been combined. Cotton is being defoliated and a little has been picked. Happily, yields have mostly been good this year.

As you know, consulting is very serious business when you are in charge of a person's livelihood. In the case of cotton and most crops, controlling insects is a great part of the cost of production. It's a tight wire you walk being sure to control economic infestations – and cost. So by this time of the season you look for something lighthearted to mull over, like the young man I hired who grew up in the city.

On his first day, all three crews came home and no one remembered to pick him up after his last field. When I got to my house his mom was there to see how his

first day went.

How do you explain this to a mother? About that time a client called to see if we were missing one scout. We drove the 40 miles, picked him up and home we came. Thankfully, his mom was very understanding. He, however, wanted to quit right on the spot but she talked him into staying. He worked for us for five years and was one of the best scouts we ever had.

In our fields in Louisiana we have little ditches, big ditches and canals. We told one scout to check a line of fields and go until he came to a ditch he could not cross and then turn around and come back. Dark came and he hadn't shown up so we started to look for him. After about an hour we found him by the roadside one mile past where he was supposed to be. He had crossed a canal ten feet deep and kept on going. He said we told him to go until he came to a ditch he couldn't cross and he was able to get across the canal!

Although we occasionally misplace a scout or two for a couple of hours, we always do our best to make sure they feel like part of the family. For 36 years, my wife Dorothy fed all Young & Young employees three square meals a day from June through September. However, they each were allowed to make their own sandwich of choice after breakfast. Now during the winter months, it's hard to get her back into the knack of cooking for just the two if us!

Dorothy is definitely the glue that keeps us together. She made sure each employee knew what he or she was supposed to do and that they were properly clothed and fed. In addition to washing and running errands for them, she even consulted them regularly to see if there was anything she could pray for them about!

Dorothy's nurturing nature has carried over into NAICC as well. She helps me keep abreast of the numerous e-mails flowing between Board members and NAICC headquarters. She also helps Allison Jones with decorations, event planning and registration at the convention.

And why not — NAICC is an extension of the Young family. Most of our members will tell you that NAICC is one big happy family. We sincerely hope you will become part of that family at the 2004 Annual Meeting.

I look forward to hearing your "on the job" stories, too – come to the New Orleans meeting in January prepared to share your experiences, both serious and humorous. It'll be a great time in a great city. Not to mention the fact that Bayer is generously paying registration for new members! And Syngenta is planning a special meeting for the Southern consultants just prior to our meeting.

Roger Carter and his committee have planned a great program. We'll all gain from the experience — I look forward to seeing you there!

Warm Welcome to be Had in New Orleans This January

NAICC'ers – we'll soon be in Louisiana for a New Orleans-style Annual Meeting! You can expect a warm, southern welcome, some of the best cuisine in the U.S. and plenty to do while you network with our ever-growing group of researchers and consultants.

While we're working hard to incorporate a flavor of the Crescent City into our meeting, you may want to arrive early or arrange to stay later to take in all the activities New Orleans has to offer.

CHECK OUT THE ACTION!

For starters, you'll be visiting an old city that still relies on the street car for transportation. A great way to check out the lay of the land, a street car route runs along one of the country's most beautiful boulevards, St. Charles Avenue. An uptown route passes the Garden District mansions, Loyola and Tulane Universities and Audubon Park.

For those interested in less serene entertainment, alligator-packed swamp tours are

available, as are tours of New Orleans' "cities of the dead" - above ground cemeteries.

The New Orleans Museum of Art is a popular venue, as is Laura Plantation, which was a sugar plantation home. It's currently offering a new "Slavery in Creole Louisiana" tour.

Popular family attractions include the New Orleans Aquarium, the Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, the Audubon Zoo and Six Flags Over the Crescent City.

Or picture yourself simply relaxing in one

of the French Quarter's many sidewalk cafés with a beignet and coffee, enjoying the hustle and bustle of the city!

As for the Annual Meeting, you don't want to miss the Mardi Gras party on Friday night, courtesy of **FMC Corporation**. The affair will include a Mardi Gras parade, led by a brass band and complete with float and our own King Ray and Queen Dorothy Young!

Beads and masks will abound, and members will be treated to a special New Orleans style dinner.

Caricaturists will be drawing pictures throughout the evening, and the band will play light jazz, blues, Cajun music and zydeco. Greeters dressed in Mardi Gras attire will be available for photo opportunities, and zydeco dance instructors will show us their moves in this traditional style of dance!

While plenty more fun is on the agenda for the January meeting, spouses should be aware that we're cooking up some New

Orleans style fun especially for them! On Thursday, January 22, a New Orleans School of Cooking tour is scheduled for the afternoon. Attendees will enjoy a cooking demo and savor the results!

On Saturday, January 24, a City Tour and visit to Longue Vue House and Gardens and Mardi Gras World is scheduled. Attendees will sample King Cake on their tour.

And this year's farm tour will be of the Bungee grain barge loading facility and southern plantation, sponsored by **DuPont Agriculture and Nutrition** and **Pioneer Seed Company**.

RESERVE YOUR ROOM!

This year's meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans, which is connected to the Louisiana Superdome (which, incidentally, is the largest enclosed stadium in the world!)

Often used for conventions, the hotel is downtown and adjacent to the New Orleans

Shopping Center. It's minutes from the New Orleans Convention Center, the French Quarter, infamous Bourbon Street and the Mississippi Riverfront. The Union Passenger Terminal is two blocks away, and a complimentary shuttle runs to the French Quarter and Harrah's Casino.

For reservations, go to <http://www.neworleans.hyatt.com/groupbooking/nacc>.

GET CASH BACK!

And through a special new program brought to you by NAICC and **Syngenta Crop Protection**, you may receive \$10 cash back if you stay at the Hyatt! Just reserve your room at the hotel and, upon checking in, you'll receive a special NAICC key card.

Those who are staying at least three nights at the Hyatt, and who are among the first 250 people to register at the NAICC meeting, will receive \$10 in cash or check from the NAICC at registration.

PRIZES TO BE AWARDED FOR NEW ORLEANS TRIVIA CONTEST

In honor of our Big Easy Annual Meeting, our New Orleans trivia contest continues. This month we're focusing on food Louisiana style.

So be the first to submit your (correct)

answers to both of the questions and you'll receive a prize at the Annual Meeting! (Contact NAICC headquarters with your answer.)

1. Who was the first bottler of Coca-Cola,

and where did he live (name of city)?

2. What Louisiana food product holds the second oldest food trademark in the U.S. Patent Office?

Allied Industry Committee Suggests Changes for 2004 Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting attendees will notice some changes at the New Orleans event in January per a recent meeting of the Allied Industry Committee.

Among the group's discussion items was how to improve the Emerging Technology presentations at the meeting. As a result, presenters will now be able to include four or five slides in their five-minute Emerging Technology presentations (up to 15 presentations will be made).

The Allied Industry Committee suggested that a list of raffle items and exhibitor descriptions should be included in the program or as an insert in the registration packets, along with an exhibitor description.

To add enthusiasm for the raffle, the committee recommended spreading the drawings throughout the week rather than just during the Exhibit Hall Extravaganza.

The Executive Board agreed and decided that items valued at less than \$25 will be announced during the continental breakfasts and coffee breaks, while higher priced raffle items will be given away during the Extravaganza.

They also discussed the Sustaining Members raffle, which they determined should be continued. (The items will be used at the Los Angeles meeting in 2005 to encourage attendance there and allow for expenditure in either the 2004 or 2005 budget year.)

Committee Chairman **Jim Elliott** gave an

update on informal discussions regarding a survey of consultants and Sustaining Members. As a result **Doane Agricultural Services** will conduct a survey of NAICC members with the intent of providing a vehicle for Sustaining Members to educate others within their companies on the benefits of supporting the Alliance. Sustaining members could be allowed to submit five questions to be incorporated into the survey. A deadline of September 15 was set for submission of questions.

The Committee also suggested that NAICC conduct a separate survey, asking Sustaining members how NAICC can better serve their needs.

DUES PAYABLE ONLINE!

It's that time again – please remember to pay your membership dues and your certification renewal fees (you may want to take advantage of the option to pay online by going to www.naicc.org).

This is an important investment in your business, and in your credibility as a consultant, researcher or sustaining member. NAICC appreciates your support!

Richard L. Jensen Memorial Scholarship Presented to Penn State Ag Student

Elijah D. Meck is the honored recipient of this year's Richard L. Jensen Memorial Scholarship, which is sponsored by the Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education (FEAE) and the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC). Meck is a Penn State senior majoring in

Agro Ecosystems Science.

Meck, a well-rounded student with strong work experience in agriculture and pest management, anticipates earning his Bachelor of Science degree from Pennsylvania State University's College of Agriculture. He then plans to study Applied

Entomology - with an emphasis on IPM — at the graduate level. Ultimately, Meck wishes to develop pest management strategies for agricultural systems.

Like many in the field of agriculture, Meck's interest in the business began long before the university. He held his first job on a farm at the age of 15 and delved into FFA in high school, when he maintained five beehives for honey production.

Later, Meck's research project, "Varroa Mites, The Silent Killer", was selected for a state award in the FFAs AgriScience Student Recognition Program. Also while in high

school, Meck was accepted into and attended the Pennsylvania Governor's School for Agriculture Sciences.

In 1998, Meck began work as a research technician with NAICC member **Jim Steffel** of Lehigh Agricultural and Biological Services, Inc (LABServices). He has since completed two internships with the company and was promoted to Senior Research Technician last year.

In addition to being a full-time student at Penn State, Meck works part time at the Pennsylvania State University Mushroom Test and Demonstration Facility. He's

served as a mentor for a new Fly Fishing for Urban Youth Class and has been involved in the Agricultural Student Council, the Delta Theta Sigma Agricultural Fraternity and the Penn State Fly Fishing Club. "It's an honor for us to award an exemplary student like Elijah Meck this scholarship," said Don Jameson, chairman of the 2003 Scholarship Committee. "It is also our hope that through this scholarship program other young people will choose the crop consulting profession."

The scholarship, a \$1,000 award, will apply to the 2003-04 school year.

THOUGHTS

by Roger Carter

Being an ag consultant is one of the most stressful jobs possible.....perhaps even more so than farming.

We can make a farmer smile if we get out of the truck without a sheet of paper in our hands. If we get out with a sheet of paper the farmer immediately looks down at the paper to see if he can detect how much writing is on the bottom of the report. We've learned over the years that it is best to always write something on the report, regardless of what is found. The greatest gift you can give a farmer is a report that states "No Application Suggested" written at the bottom.

Farmers are generally very good organizers. They organize what they want to do the next day either on paper, computer or in their minds. They have all day planned on who is to do what, etc. Then the consultant arrives with another list of priorities. Irrigation needs to be turned on, fields need in-

secticide, others need Pix or foliar feed, etc. And, often, it is multiple mixtures and they are different for each field. We try to avoid this as much as possible to simplify decision-making for the farmers. And often we provide a list of priorities as to what to do first, second and third.

We are on call 24 hours a day. We have a client who is a surgeon and he has called at 2 a.m. after performing emergency surgery because that is one of the few times he had to talk. And Sunday nights and Monday mornings can be busy. We hope the client calls rather than feel we should not be disturbed at a certain time. We are only disturbed if they fail to call when they have a question.

We work with some of the nicest people and have grown to know not only the farmers, but their families and friends. We see our clients more during the growing season

than we see our own families. We hope they see us as friends rather than as employees or just business people. The killer to a consultant is to be called a "bug man". Sounds like we spread 'em rather than help manage them.

The reward is not the money.....it's just like farming. It's not there anymore and leaving faster than it is arriving. It is a smile, thank you and warm handshake with someone saying "I appreciate what you do for me, and not just in the field, but with your work with EPA, USDA, LDAF, National Cotton Council, etc. that helps our cause. Sometimes we need that after facing the hot days, mud, and many, many, many hours of decision-making we dedicate to our profession.

To our clients, we say thank you for being our friends and for trusting our expertise and knowledge in helping you.

Top Three to Be Chosen for Consultant of the Year Awards

We're lucky – our industry is full of leaders. People who aren't afraid to take a stand, to help another, to do more than what's expected of them. That's why it's hard to choose only three to honor as Consultants of the Year each year!

But we'll do our best again this year to choose three outstanding crop consultants, representing different geographical areas, to be 2004 Crop Consultants of the Year.

This program, sponsored by NAICC and BASF, will honor the top three with plaques and special recognition during NAICC's

President's Lunch and Awards Ceremony.

The winners will also receive editorial recognition in *AgProfessional* magazine and in *NAICC News*. As part of the award, meeting travel, hotel, meal and registration costs for the 2004 annual meeting will be covered for the winners and their spouses.

"Independent crop consultants face many challenges daily in their businesses," said NAICC President **Ray Young**. "The Consultant of the Year program offers us a way to recognize the hard work and dedication made by top performers in our busi-

ness. We appreciate BASF's sponsorship of this important program."

Members are asked to nominate other members – or themselves – through applications that are available at www.naicc.org or from NAICC headquarters. All applications will be reviewed by the NAICC awards committee, and five finalists will be selected. A committee of NAICC members and representatives from BASF and *AgProfessional* magazine will then select the three winners.

Still Plenty of Time to Recruit a Member - and Win a Prize!

Our ambitious goal of recruiting 100 members is taking shape - but we need more help. As part of our Recruit-a-Member campaign - sponsored by **Bayer CropScience** – we're asking each NAICC member to recruit

one new member. (And each MRR&R Committee Member has been charged with recruiting three new members!)

Soon you'll find form e-mails you can send to prospective members at

www.naicc.org, or contact NAICC headquarters if you need more tools for your campaign. Top recruiters will be awarded prizes at the Annual Meeting.

Thanks to Bayer CropScience's generosity,

new members will receive full complimentary meeting registration to the 2004 Annual Meeting. This is a \$350 value 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.

To ensure new members remain long-term NAICC'ers, we've started a "buddy" program, wherein a new member will be partnered with an existing one ("buddy"). The buddy will greet the new member at the Annual Meeting and introduce him or her formally (at the Awards Luncheon) and informally throughout the meeting. The buddy will "touch base" with the new mem-

ber a couple of times throughout the year.

NAICC also appreciates Syngenta's membership appeal efforts. Syngenta will hold its annual consultants meeting at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans just prior to the NAICC Annual Meeting. Attendees who are not already NAICC members will be invited to take advantage of joining NAICC through the New Members Campaign and receive complimentary registration.

Invest in Yourself Through NAICC

As the one professional organization representing the nation's crop consultants and researchers, it's essential for us to have good representation at our most important industry meeting of the year: the Annual Meeting.

But it's just as crucial for us to have active, dedicated committee members throughout the year, spearheading issues, ensuring our practical needs are met, shaping the future of our industry.

Please take a look at the committee list below and consider dedicating some of

your time and talent to it throughout the upcoming year. You won't regret your commitment, and you might surprise yourself with how much you gain.

- Allied Industry
- Annual Meeting Coordination
- Awards
- Certification Board
- Consultant Education
- Corporate Alliance
- Dads in DC

- Ethics & Grievance
- Legislative Advisory
- Membership Recruitment, Retention & Rules
- Membership Services
- Newsletter Involvement
- Nominating
- Research Education
- Research Electronic Data Task Force
- Scholarship



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