



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Tim Case
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NEW TECHNOLOGY

I was sitting at the dinner table the other day talking to a client about the upcoming season when he asked me about a specific cotton variety I knew nothing about. My first response, in good consultant form, was to tell him I didn't know about the variety but I would check it out and get back to him. As a matter of fact, I would email him the information later that evening. He

shook his head and said that wouldn't work because he didn't have email and probably never would.

Now, I'm not saying technology is everything, but to information jockeys like consultants, it sure makes life a lot easier. It's awfully difficult to keep from getting in a heap of trouble when you call a grower at 2 a.m., but I can send an email and not wake him up.

Technology has come a long way in a very short time and because of this I believe many consultants have more time now to interact with their customers than just a few years ago. I know some people will argue with this point, but the ability to track down necessary information after daylight hours allows us more time to talk to our clients during their workday. Also, it is much easier to track down information on some topics now that we have the Internet.

To keep up with the times, NAICC is going to make the jump into the informa-

tion superhighway with the release of our newsletter via our Web site. Hopefully this will allow us to get the newsletter into the hands of our members faster than in the past. Also, we shouldn't have the space restriction of a standard print newsletter. This will allow us to include more information pertinent to our membership as the need arises. And hopefully in the future NAICC members will be able to take care of all their NAICC business on the Web site.

Now, back to my grower who swears he will never get email. Nothing I say will convince him of the convenience of this new form of mail. Likewise, if you are an NAICC member that has no intention of ever going online, please contact NAICC headquarters and let them know you will need to get the newsletter in another format. We don't want anyone left behind on NAICC happenings, so we'll find a way to work with you.

Finally, I hope each of you has a very productive and prosperous growing season.

FEAE Soaring to New Heights

By Billy McLawhorn, CPCC-I

The Foundation for Environmental and Agricultural Education (FEAE) was established as the tax-exempt foundation of NAICC in 1991 with the purpose of supporting the education of both current and future professionals.

Your Foundation has sponsored the Richard L. Jensen, Ph.D. scholarship and the Jensen address at the Annual Meeting, provided travel grants to students to attend that meeting, assisted NAICC in delivering regional workshops, and responded to other requests of the NAICC Board whenever feasible. But limited financial resources have always restricted the activities of the FEAE.

At our Annual Meeting in January, 2004, the FEAE Board decided it was time to make an aggressive move to take the Foundation to a much higher level.

There was unanimous consent that we needed to be in a position to do more for our members, and to do much more to insure the viability of our profession in the future.

The educational needs of practitioners operating during the next several decades are likely to be quite different from the needs of those focused on highly specialized basic research. Crop consultants and related professionals will need applied, multi-disciplinary programs similar to Veterinary Medicine Programs. In such programs, the focus is on understanding systems; this is taught through a variety of internships to broaden the scope of the students' experience. The first example of a program like this is the Doctor of Plant Medicine program at the University of Florida, which now has 46 students.

The success of this program – and the need for others like it – led the FEAE Board to focus on helping to establish a DPM program at a major mid-western university, along with continuing to support the immediate needs of our members.

We decided to hire professional help to promote the DPM concept and to assist in fund-raising to support our efforts. With the assistance of Lynn Henderson of **Doane Ag Services**, Past President **Madeline Mellinger** secured the services of Dr. Ken Bader to help us on a part-time basis.

Dr. Bader has a wide range of relevant experience, having presided over the exponential growth of the American Soybean Association during the 70's and 80's. Prior to that, he served on the Agronomy faculty and had been a Dean at Ohio State and a Vice-Chancellor at the University of

Nebraska-Lincoln.

This experience and his time spent working as an international agri-business consultant gives Dr. Bader a unique perspective and understanding of both the public and private sectors. His enthusiastic support, organizational ability and leadership have allowed us to achieve much in the past nine months.

Visits were made to faculty and administrators at Purdue, Iowa State, Illinois and

the University of Nebraska-Lincoln this past summer. All of these meetings generated some level of interest and positive response, with Nebraska being the most active. (The school has since sent a delegation of six to visit the University of Florida's DPM program, where program director Dr. Robert McGovern and his colleagues served as gracious hosts.)

More recently, officials at Nebraska asked **Earle Raun** how FEAE could help facilitate a

meeting among potential stakeholders and employers at their school. Details of this meeting are being worked out for this critical step in the university's decision-making process.

The FEAE Board realizes that the only way better educational opportunities for consultants will develop is if we can target other stakeholders who can utilize graduates of such programs and partner with them in assisting universities.

FEAE Fund Raising

Our first success in fund-raising was when BASF provided an unrestricted gift of \$12,000 to support our efforts. A portion of these funds has been sent to Nebraska to support their exploratory work, while the remainder of these funds will further assist the FEAE (see photographs).

Dr. Bader and I also recently had some



NAICC Board member Stan Winslow (right) accepts BASF's generous donation to the FEAE from Rick Chamblee, Manager of BASF's U.S. Technical Services Group.

very productive meetings with Bayer, Syngenta and Monsanto. These companies, as well as a few seed companies and others in the crop protection business, have been contacted regarding support of the DPM concept. The typical reaction has been recognition that this is exactly the type of training a portion of their work force needs.

Similarly, government agencies, including Homeland Security and Extension, have positions which would benefit from additional DPM programs.

As independent consultants, we have the opportunity to influence the future of agricultural education in a very profound way. The program at Florida is achieving success and others are sure to follow. I believe we owe it to future generations to do all we can to see that these programs are viable, relevant and adequately funded.



FEAE Board member Dr. Earle Raun presented a \$2,000 check to the University of Nebraska's Dean Steve Waller. It represents NAICC's appreciation and support in the College's willingness to consider a DPM program similar to that at the University of FL.

Upper left to right: Vice President for Agriculture, University of Nebraska, Dr. John Owens; Dr. Earle Raun (Independent Crop Consultant); Dr. Steve Waller, Dean, College of Agriculture; Dr. Ron Yoder, Head, Dept. of Biological Systems Engineering. Lower left to right: Dr. Susan Fritz, Assoc. Dean, College of Agriculture; Dr. ZB Mayo, Head, Dept. of Entomology; Dr. Anne Vidaver, Head, Dept. of Plant Pathology.

NAICC Supports IR-4's Continued Success

Without safe, effective pesticides, the United States' growers of minor crops would be hard pressed to produce the quality and volume needed to meet consumer demand — and to do so cost effectively.

In turn, the availability of these tools is also critical to NAICC members, both consultants and sustaining members.

To ensure the availability of these tools, the Interregional Research Project No. 4 (IR-4 Project) was developed to secure regulatory clearance for pesticide registration on specialty crops. Since its advent, IR-4 has been instrumental in expanding the availability of these pesticides - something the NAICC fully supports and appreciates.

In fact, the NAICC has and would like to continue contributing to the efforts of IR-4 to help ensure the program's continued growth and success. To this end, representatives of the Alliance recently attended the IR-4 Strategic Planning Conference in an effort to learn more about IR-4, to answer any questions related to the NAICC and to

offer member services for research and other needs.

The Conference, held in Washington, D.C. in February, was designed for USDA and IR-4 personnel to evaluate past performance of the program and to identify new ways it can be expanded or improved.

Attendees included high ranking government officials responsible for various aspects of the IR-4 program and representatives from agricultural chemical companies, minor crop commodity groups, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, CropLife America and the American Mosquito Control Association. In attendance for NAICC were members **Bob Glodt, Tim Case and Tim White.**

The first day of the meeting was spent reviewing IR-4's accomplishments, including its success in obtaining 567, 793 and 1,014 new food use registrations for specialty crops in 2002, 2003 and 2004, respectively.

Since 1999, the Group has worked with the EPA to eliminate road blocks in the pesticide registration process, reducing the

time required to register a new use of a compound. (Essentially, products that have gone through the IR-4 program are "fast tracked" through EPA, thus reducing registration and review time by the Agency.)

With the group's overview of IR-4's successes, attendees at the conference discussed the importance of communicating program achievements to farmers, farm commodity organizations and congressional representatives.

The second day of the conference was spent brainstorming new funding opportunities and program expansion plans. The group talked about seeking new or additional funding from Congress, agricultural chemical companies and grower commodity groups. Proactively marketing the success of IR-4 to help in the funding process was also discussed.

Regarding future plans, Conference attendees discussed growth opportunities, including pesticide registrations for public mosquito control, waterways and the

potential registration of specialty crops that are genetically modified.

These plans – along with the current goal to raise awareness of the successes of the IR-4 program, is one area where the NAICC can play an important role. NAICC members work on a “one-on-one” basis with the farm community, are heavily involved in farm organizations, and have built strong

in-roads among the nation’s policy leaders. Members of NAICC are also well aware of the need for minor use registrations and the benefits the IR-4 program can provide to their clients who grow minor use crops.

In addition, NAICC members have skills readily suited to participate in research trials, studies and other IR-4 initiatives, and they’re eager to support or assist in IR-4

efforts, particularly as the size and scope of the project expands.

Members who wish to learn about opportunities for involvement in their areas are urged to contact their local IR-4 representatives or to contact NAICC Headquarters for more information about the program.

“Soybean Rust: What to Expect, What to Do?”

By Harold Lambert, CPCC, BCE, Lambert Agric. Consulting, Inc., Innis, LA

(Below is the first part of Harold’s article regarding Asian Soybean Rust; look for this article to be continued in the May issue of NAICC News.)

A few weeks ago I returned from Brazil, where I went to learn more about Asian Soybean Rust. Space does not allow, nor can I with mere words, describe every wonderful detail of this very enlightening experience.

I was privileged to be the only independent crop consultant in our group of 28 predominantly university extension and research people from around the United States. This article is my effort to share with you what I believe you MUST know and understand about this pathogen and its management.

But first allow me to thank the following: the Southern Regional IPM Center in Raleigh, NC, Dr. Jim VanKirk, Director, whose funding made my participation possible; NAICC leadership who recognized the need for a crop consultant to be on this trip; Eric Rund, Illinois corn and soybean grower who organized everything along our 6500+ mile journey through Brazil, from Sao Paulo to Mato Grosso, to the Amazon and back to Rio; and Dr. Tadashi Yorinori of Embrapa-Soja, Londrina, PR, a world authority on Asian soybean rust, leader of our soybean rust workshop and our companion for the better part of the six days we spent visiting farms and fields.

The potential severity of soybean rust and its ability to drastically reduce yield potential has not been overstated or dramatized. It is unlike any soybean disease you have ever encountered. Our group visited fields that had varying degrees of rust damage (premature defoliation) due to a number of reasons, including poor or late application, weather delays or wash off. Yield reductions can be substantial, but where properly managed rust injury is very minimal.

Rust control has added approximately 12-15 percent to the total cost of growing soybeans in Brazil. Growers who did not

believe or understand what rust could do to their crops were very quickly taught a real-life lesson. Today, they respect and fear this disease, and their current aggressive approach to its control is a reflection of this (see corresponding article “Common Traits” for management practices now employed by Brazilian farmers).

One Brazilian farmer said that he and his neighbors feel they each have their “Ph. D. in soybean rust” –earned the hard way! Yes, they are succeeding against rust, and total Brazilian soybean production and average yield is expected to continue its gradual upward trend.

Having said all that, I do NOT believe the United States will ever have the level of rust threat or risk that we observed in Brazil for the following reasons: (1.) We do not have such an extended window of soybean planting dates or successive plantings. Because of their climate, lack of photoperiod and varieties with the “long juvenile gene,” soybean planting in Brazil usually runs from early September through late March.

We observed fields in close proximity to one another, some of which had already been harvested, some just planted and others at every stage in between. This creates a situation where huge amounts of rust inoculum (the spores move easily by wind) are continually disseminated to neighboring fields, even from those where the rust has been effectively controlled (“controlled” lesions can still release some viable spores).

(2.) We have winter! Some parts of the U.S. soybean belt have a lot of winter! Even Louisiana usually has some freezing temperatures and a number of killing frosts. Brazil essentially has no winter. In fact, southern Brazil is much closer to the equator than southern Louisiana.

Brazil’s warm year-round climate means alternate hosts are not killed back and spore survival is thought to be very good. In contrast, I would expect it to take much longer for soybean rust to “build up” here in the states each season.

On these two points and my assumptions, I readily admit I could be dead wrong! Much of the U.S. encounters far more than the critical six hours of leaf wetness each day, which is necessary for rust to develop. Frequent rains favor rust; drought does not. So what I DO believe is that soybean rust will be at least an occasional threat in some areas, more likely in the southern tier of states where alternate hosts like kudzu may contribute to spore development each spring.

Taking action to prevent damage from rust will be commonplace in some but not all areas of the country. It will be crucial that well-trained consultants know how to detect it EARLY and respond to it properly; otherwise damage to yields will be substantial.

In the next issue of NAICC News look for management practices that will help ensure soybean rust does not become an issue for your clients. In the interim, if you have questions for Harold Lambert regarding SBR, he can be contacted at 225-718-3401.

Common Traits of Brazilian Growers Who Are Successful in Combating Soybean Rust

1. They understand and appreciate the potential severity of this pathogen and its ability to drastically and quickly reduce soybean yield.
2. They find the initial rust infection very early through intense scouting by well-trained individuals. Usually these are full-time employees dedicated to the task, with close oversight by the grower or other member of management. They “get ahead” of the rust from the start.
3. They have a thorough understanding of which fungicide is best suited for certain situations and which tank mix and rate combinations are providing efficacy.
4. They plan ahead and have fungicides on hand well in advance of anticipated use.
5. They make fungicide applications by ground using their own spray equip-

ment. This allows them to avoid sacrificing the crucial timeliness of sprays by relying on custom applicators. It also provides better spray coverage than is commonly expected with aerial application.

6. They pay close attention to water quality and its potential effect on fungicide performance and they know how to adjust it when necessary.
7. They know the importance of good spray coverage in the lower third of the plant,

usually applying 15-20 GPA total volume with hollow cone (or twin jet) nozzle tips. When environmental conditions warrant or when high spray volume is not possible, they know how to use vegetable oil as the carrier or in a carrier mix.

8. They are planning to increase soybean row width in the future to facilitate better spray coverage.
9. They share their know-how and learn from others on anything regarding soybean rust.

New SBR Web Site Launched

For up-to-date information regarding soybean rust in the United States, you'll want to visit – and bookmark – USDA's new soybean rust management Web site: www.usda.gov/soybeanrust/index.shtml.

This one-stop resource for soybean rust contains information regarding surveillance, reporting, prediction and management of soybean rust for the 2005 growing season. Coordinated through federal, state, university and industry efforts, the site will be regularly updated as new information regarding SBR becomes available.

SBR No Longer on the List of Select Agents and Toxins

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service recently announced publication of a final rule that removes Asian soybean rust and plum pox from its list of select agents and toxins.

Asian soybean rust has been removed from the list to facilitate timely research on an effective means to manage the disease, as it has been introduced naturally to the

United States and because it spreads primarily by windborne spores will continue to spread naturally. Similarly, plum pox is a virus of stone fruit and has been removed because it does not spread easily by natural means and would be difficult to spread intentionally.

The list of select agents and pathogens was developed by USDA in conjunction

with regulations regarding their possession, use and transfer, as those listed have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health and safety, to animal or plant health or to animal or plant products.

The updates regarding SBR and plum pox were published in the March 18 Federal Register and are available online at www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html.

New Member Profile



NAICC is proud to announce **Francois Montambault** as a new member and as a recent attendee of the 2005 Annual Meeting.

Francois serves as a research director for Recherche Trifolium, Inc., in Quebec, Canada. He conducts GLP field research

and efficacy studies in Canadian zones 5b, 1, 5a and 5. His responsibilities cover all field and horticultural crops, and he specializes in apples, corn, soybeans, potatoes, small grains, small fruits, turf and market garden and processing vegetables. He also provides contract Quality Assurance service.

Francois obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in General Agriculture in 1984 and a Master of Science degree in Weed Science, both from McGill University (Macdonald College). He has 10 years of regulatory experience with PMRA in the pre-market assessment of herbicides and six years of industry experience in the crop protection and seed business.

Regarding his reason for joining NAICC,

Francois said it was due to his recent involvement in the contract research business. When asked how he thought his position may change in the coming years he said he would likely "become more involved over time in assisting the farming community in voicing their needs to different levels of government."

NAICC welcomes Francois and our other new members and looks forward to working with them for many years. We also extend an invitation to others who may be interested in learning about NAICC membership to contact NAICC headquarters or to visit our Web site, www.naicc.org.



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