



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Tim Case
NAICC
President

SYNERGY

As President of NAICC it is my privilege to be able to serve the finest independent crop consultants across the nation. Some of the members of this association have been consulting crops for over 50 years and others are just beginning but the interaction of the two is what makes our profession stronger with each passing year. It is also this interaction between seasoned professionals and new blood that allows members of our association to be able to change as quickly as the farming technology. There is always someone you can call that has either been through your problem or is currently working with the technology in question. My year as president is coming to a close and I must say that this has been the most educational year

of my membership in the Alliance.

As farming changes across the nation, so does the needs of the farmer related to their crop consulting requirements. When I started consulting in 1994 I chose an area east of Amarillo, Texas that was heavy in grain sorghum, wheat, and just a little bit of corn. We sit at an elevation of about 3500 feet and were well suited to the crops we were growing. However, as everyone knows, grain prices have not changed much since the 1950's but our equipment and input costs were rising to a point that economically it was difficult to make ends meet. This led to farmers in our area shifting production to predominantly irrigated corn and also introducing some soybeans. We went from there to corn and sunflowers and from this point to corn and cotton (I'll get back to this one in a minute). I list all the information above to give an example of the shifting needs of the consultant in our area. It was possible for me to continue to serve our growers because of my involvement in the NAICC. Many times I have called an association member to ask about potential problems with a crop and also to consult them during the season with an issue that has arisen.

Now, back to cotton. This crop has been

the biggest commodity shift in our area that any of our farmers or consultants can remember. The county I live in went from about 100 cotton acres in 2001 to 17,000 in 2004 and 42,000 in 2005. We have cotton growing on every little dryland patch and under most center pivot systems. On acres using independent crop consultants our growers are averaging two bales per acre on irrigated and a little over one bale on dryland. The yields drop off dramatically on fields not utilizing an independent crop consulting professional. Through networking with cotton specialists in the consulting industry our independent crop professionals have been able to make the shift to a new crop and do it in a method that is profitable to our growers.

In some businesses the conflict with the old and new are not welcomed and can even create friction and reduced productivity. However, as I have seen in the independent crop consulting industry, this synergy with the old and the new actually creates a winning situation for everyone involved in the agriculture industry.

Annual Meeting Workshops Add Value, Hone Skills

Each year NAICC's Annual Meeting just gets better, from speakers, breakout sessions and roundtable discussions to workshops. And this year's workshops are particularly insightful:

ARM 7 Tips and Techniques

Gylling Data Management, Inc. will host the Seventh Annual ARM 7 Tips and Techniques workshop from 8:00 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, January 18, 2006, in the Arizona Ballroom 10 at the Marriott Starr Pass Resort. If you have questions on how to use ARM and have limited time, this is the perfect opportunity to receive in-depth train-

ing from the original program author, Steven Gylling.

For workshop details and registration forms visit www.gdmdata.com/meetings.htm or contact Francine Rowland at francine@gdmdata.com or (785) 565-0793.

Also, be sure to stop by the Gylling Data Management display at the NAICC meeting trade show, where demonstrations of the newest version of the Agriculture Research Manager (ARM), ARM Summary Across Trials and the Psion Workabout Pro data collector will be available.

For those who have not yet upgraded to ARM 7, a free demonstration CD-ROM of

the newest revision will be available at the booth. (If you are unable to attend the meeting and are interested in receiving an ARM 7 demonstration program, please email francine@gdmdata.com to request a demo CD-ROM be sent to you by mail. You may also fax your request to (605) 693-4180.)

Special Biotech Workshops Will Focus on Corn, Cotton and Soybeans.

Those complying with federal requirements related to biotech-related field trials can attend this workshop for insight on tools, methods and reporting. The half-day program, focusing on corn, cotton and soy-

beans, is an effort by the biotechnology industry to ensure consistent and effective compliance with regulatory requirements. The workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, January 17 from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. and will be repeated on Wednesday, January 18 from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.

Recommended attendees include ag researchers and educators, farmer cooperators and other personnel engaged in conducting or managing field trials.

This program is a result of the Biotechnology Industry Organization's (BIO) "Beyond Compliance" task force, formed in 2002, which identified three product stewardship objectives for the agricultural biotechnology industry:

- achieving consistent compliance with all regulatory requirements in research, development and commercialization of food and agriculture products
- establishing capacity building and education tools to meet future needs;

- and developing transparent systems to record and communicate the industry's results and performance.

To sign up for this workshop, go to www.bio.org/foodag/compliance/corn. The cost for NAICC Annual Meeting attendees is \$100. Four CEUs will be awarded for the Certified Professional Crop Consultant program.

For more information about BIO, which represents more than 1,000 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations in the U.S. and 33 other nations, visit www.bio.org.

Got a Computer Problem or Question? Bring Your Laptop — Computer Workshop & Expertise Available!

For the first time ever, Annual Meeting attendees will have access to computer assistance! CalAg's 2006 exhibit booth will be dedicated to fixing computer problems, with **Kathy Richard's** husband, David, pro-

viding computer aid on both Thursday and Friday, January 19 and 20. (While an Internet connection will not be available, an electrical outlet will be on hand.)

As well, the latter part of the researcher roundtable on Saturday will be dedicated to laptop problem-solving for attendees unable to meet with David on Thursday or Friday, or for those needing additional assistance.

At the roundtable Kathy will provide general insight for people facing similar issues (hardware and software related). David and members of the Arizona Computer Society will also be "working the crowd" at the roundtable, providing advice and hands-on assistance as needed. (Again, electrical outlets will be available but no Internet access.)

So bring your laptops and get those technical questions addressed! And many thanks in advance to CalAg for picking up the costs of this valuable trouble-shooting program.

With Two Raffles, 2006 Annual Meeting Offers a Windfall of Prizes

Each year, the Annual Meeting prizes get better – and multiply. So this year the loot will really be spectacular, and given we'll have two raffles, just about everyone will walk away with something special!

During Friday evening's special Wild, Wild West dinner, a raffle will be held in support of the Richard L. Jensen Scholarship, as well as the FEAE general fund and the NAICC Crawfish Boil on the Hill.

Prizes for the dinner raffle will be on display in the exhibit hall leading up to the Wild West Party so be sure to peruse the treasures you just might win! Raffle tickets will be sold at the registration desk and by NAICC and FEAE Board members.

Tickets will be drawn throughout the evening, and attendees must be present to win. (If tickets aren't claimed, others will be

drawn until a prize is claimed by a dinner attendee. The first winner will have first choice of raffle items and so on until all prizes are claimed.)

Prizes Galore at the Exhibit Hall Extravaganza

A relaxing networking opportunity, loaded with more chances to win, will take place during the Exhibit Hall Extravaganza. Special thanks to our exhibitors who will be supplying the prizes for the raffle! Be sure to visit each and every exhibitor and drop your business card or name in the designated boxes.

Prizes will be raffled periodically during the Extravaganza and the Outgoing President's reception. By donating an item to be raffled at these events, exhibitors can

receive more recognition, and they can display items at their booth leading up to the raffle.

Bring on the Donations!

One of the easiest ways to support the NAICC and its affiliates is by donating prizes for the Annual Meeting raffles. All levels of gift items are appreciated, and just about anything is welcome (i.e. jewelry, handmade clothing, wine, trips, hotel or condo stays, etc.).

If you'd like to add a prize to the raffle pool, please let NAICC Headquarters know. By gathering a wide array of prizes, raffle participation increases, as does the support we raise for worthy activities like the scholarship program and NAICC Crawfish Boil on the Hill!

Networking Lunches Offer More than Just Physical Nourishment

It's not often we consultants and researchers get together, so we need to make the most of it. Programs like the Annual Meeting's Networking Lunches help ensure we connect with friends, new and old, and share ideas, methods, jokes and more.

This year's lunches will be held from

noon to 2:00 p.m. on January 19, with NAICC again soliciting topics and coordinating sign up.

To submit topic suggestions, complete and fax the following form to Allison Jones at NAICC headquarters. (You can also call or email the information.)

NETWORKING LUNCH SIGN-UP FORM

Name _____

Company _____

Phone _____

Topic _____

Short on Time? Make Your Annual Meeting Arrangements On Line!

For quick and easy registration, airline reservations and hotel accommodations for the 2006 Annual Meeting, just reach for your computer.

Meeting registration is available at <http://www.naicc.org/meeting/index.cfm>.

For hotel reservations, visit www.starrpassmarriott.com or call the Starr Pass

directly at (888) 527-8989. You can also call Marriott Toll-free Worldwide Reservations at (800) 228-9290. (Rates are \$135 single/double. Be sure to mention NAINAIA to

receive discount). Make your reservations soon – rooms will not be available after cut off date which is December 27!

Be Sure to Check out All that Tucson Offers!

Touring Annual Meeting destinations is always popular, as attendees can experi-

ence the history, beauty and cuisine of a new area – while letting someone else do the driving and guiding!

Starr Pass' Arnold Palmer Signature Golf Course a Spectacular Setting for NAICC Scramble

Whether you're an accomplished golfer or you reach for your clubs occasionally, you'll enjoy the 2006 NAICC Classic Scramble at Starr Pass. The 27-hole Arnold Palmer

Signature golf course offers delightful views, with a challenging 7,000 yard course and a less demanding 5,213 yard course.

Sign up for the Scramble by submitting

the attached form (a minimum of 16 is required for the event). Meeting attendees can also enjoy the course with discounted green fees during the week.

Special Outings for Guests

Spouse/Guest Tours

To help ensure attendees' guests enjoy their time in the Tucson area, NAICC is again sponsoring a Spouse & Guest Coffee on January 19, which will feature insight on the area by the Starr Pass Concierge.

Participants will then travel to the San Xavier Mission, which was founded in the early 1700's and remains an active spiritual center today. They will also visit Tubac, a village rich in art and history. This little city boasts 80+ unique businesses and working studios and offers a wide variety of shopping possibilities, from sterling silver to original fine art and prints.

Lunch for the group is scheduled at the Border House Bistro, a casual southwestern restaurant offering mesquite roasted chicken, salad, freshly prepared vegetables, home-baked flat bread and lime and pecan cookies.

Group Tours

This year, in keeping with the Wild West theme, tours of the Old Tucson Studios and the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum are on the agenda for Saturday, January 21.

Tour participants will enjoy Old Tucson Studios, an authentically re-created frontier town built in 1939 for the western film "Arizona." Dapper Dan will give attendees the low-down on the site, where John Wayne, Kirk Douglas, Clint Eastwood and others exercised their talent.

The Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, a world-renowned zoo, natural history museum and botanical garden, is sure to captivate attendees as the facility abounds with desert wildlife (reptiles, mountain lions, Mexican wolves, black bears, a hummingbird aviary and more!).

Attendees will enjoy a western BBQ lunch and will return to the hotel by 6:00 p.m. – in plenty of time to re-group for an evening outing!

To sign up for the tour, simply submit the registration form.

Farm Tours

One of the best aspects of having Annual Meetings in diverse locations is the opportunity to experience agriculture at work in a different climate. The 2006 Annual Meeting

offers not one but two farm tours for attendees to gain insight on Arizona's ag industry.

On Tuesday, January 17, the University of Arizona will host a tour of their Controlled Environment Agriculture Center (CEAC). Participants will view and learn about the Center's greenhouse structures and other protective techniques, environmental controls, seedling production, greenhouse crop physiology, plant nutrition and more. The tour is limited to 15 attendees. To learn more about the CEAC, visit www.ag.arizona.edu/ceac.

The second tour is scheduled for Saturday, January 21 at Eurofresh Farms in Willcox, AZ.

Eurofresh Farms is the leading year-round producer and marketer of greenhouse tomatoes in the United States. With more than 265 acres in state-of-the-art glass greenhouses, demand for the Farms' tomatoes still outpaces its current production capacity! To learn more about Eurofresh Farms visit www.eurofreshfarms.com.

To sign up for either tour, please fill out and submit the registration form.

EDITORIAL

Why NAICC Members Should Support the DPM Program

by Don Jameson

In the September newsletter, I wrote a column on why I thought we consultants should support the DPM (Doctorate of Plant Medicine), a four-year Post Bachelor degree program without a thesis. (The goal of the program is to develop broadly trained, capable general practitioners by use of internships and integration of disciplines.)

Before writing my column, I'd written to Jeff Pack, a DPM student at the University of Florida. Late this summer he sent me answers to the questions I asked him regarding his views of the worth of a DPM to us rank and file NAICC members.

While Jeff's entire letter can be read by linking to <http://www.naicc.org/FEAE/Letter.cfm>, below are excerpts from his cor-

respondence:

Why should NAICC members hire graduates of such a program?

"I believe the value of DPM graduates to individual companies and industry in general should not be underestimated. Graduates are trained in a uniquely broad manner. For example, by the end of my program, I will have had full courses (not just brief overviews) in nematology, fungi, bacteriology, virology, agricultural law, acarology (mites), plant nutrition, weed management, irrigation principles and practices and plant propagation.

"In addition to these in-depth classes, I will have had many classes with broader emphases: plant disease diagnosis, plant

disease control, epidemiology, IPM techniques, biological control of insects, insect toxicology, agricultural ecology, soil ecology, adult and immature insect identification (2 classes), integrated plant medicine, plant physiology and insect pest and vector management.

"Finally, I will have had numerous applied internships — insect diagnostics, plant disease clinic, soil and plant testing, nematode diagnostics and 16 semester hours of elective internships in which I gain experience in my field(s) of interest. (By the way, I am still looking for places to do these internships; if you are able/interested in having me as an intern, or know of somebody who might, we might talk further.

Responsibilities More than Meet the Eye

By Randy Darr

As independent agricultural consultants, we have the unique opportunity — possibly even the responsibility — to be involved with more than the nuts and bolts of making crops grow for our clients.

It is our duty through our independence to be a voice for agriculture. As part of Farm Bureau's Adopt a Legislator program, agricultural consultants can be involved in the process of getting the word out about agriculture.

The Illinois Farm Bureau affiliate in Macoupin County has been involved in the "Adopt a Legislator" program for the 2005 year. The program is geared for county Farm Bureaus to invite one state legislator from a more urban area to meet throughout the year to discuss agriculture issues and give the representative a hands-on look at farming.

This year the Macoupin County Farm Bureau was involved with the program, adopting State Representative Eddy

Washington from Waukegan, IL. The first visit was conducted at Representative Washington's Waukegan office in spring, 2005. Rep. Washington expressed strong interest in agricultural issues, as well as the desire to bring agriculture to his largely urban district.

As a member of the Macoupin County Farm Bureau's Board of Directors, I was involved with the program. Rep. Washington was very interested in the concept of independent agricultural consulting and asked many questions, especially regarding the potential of bringing a more urban agriculture to his district.

October 12, 2005 – Rep. Washington made a trip to southern Illinois, enjoying the hospitality of the Macoupin County Farm Bureau. During his visit, Rep. Washington rode in a combine, learned how GPS is used on the farm and toured hog and cattle facilities in the area.

Rep. Washington said he thoroughly

enjoyed his whirlwind tour and is anxious to help agriculture where he can. Macoupin County Farm Bureau is also interested in helping Rep. Washington with his dream of bringing more agriculture to the Waukegan area.

With small steps such as these, maybe we can eventually bridge the gap of educating the public about the importance of a strong agriculture.



Randy Darr shows Representative Eddy Washington how and why GPS is used.

Viator Named King Sucrose LXIV



NAICC joins in congratulating member **Calvin Viator, Ph.D.** for being named King Sucrose LXIV! The award is in honor of Calvin's dedication and service to the Louisiana sugar cane industry

and the cane growers in the Thibodaux, LA area. Viator is the first non-grower to be crowned King, a testament to his consulting skills and the respect he's earned from the sugar cane industry.

Calvin is a graduate of Franklin High

School and the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics-science. He earned his Masters and Ph.D. degrees in plant pathology from Louisiana State University.

Dr. Viator taught at Nicholls State University from 1966 to 1996. He then retired from his position as Full Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences.

Since 1959 Dr. Viator has been active as an agricultural consultant for Louisiana sugarcane growers. He is the owner of Calvin Viator, Ph.D. and Associates, LLC, an agricultural consulting service.

A member of the National Alliance of independent crop consultants, Dr. Viator was named the Alliance's "Consultant of the

Year" in 2002. He is a charter member of the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association (LACA) and has been involved in the organization for 20 years. Dr. Viator has served as LACA's charter president and secretary-treasurer.

Other organizations Dr. Viator belongs to include ASSCT, the American Sugarcane League, the Louisiana Farm Bureau and the Louisiana Soybean Association.

Dr. Viator is married to the former Barbara Jean (Jeanie) Resweber. They have four children: Van Viator, Beth Viator Barrilleaux, Miriam Viator Patient and Blaine Viator. Calvin and Jeanie reside in Thibodaux, La. and are members of St. Joseph Catholic Church.

Researcher Humor: Research Experiences North and South of "The Border"

By Dennis R. Hattermann, Ph.D., Director of Research, Landis International, Inc.

I am a research director with Landis International, Inc. and have served as study director/project manager for a number of different field and laboratory projects since I joined the company 15 years ago.

In the years I've served this function, there have been a number of changes in my company and in the industry in general. The work has been challenging and stimulating, at times routine, but never boring.

I thought I would take time to share some of my more unusual, unexpected,

frustrating and humorous experiences (not necessarily in that order). Although the complexity of the research projects serves to keep me stimulated and fight boredom, there are other unplanned circumstances that serve to keep boredom at bay as well.

One of the more humorous experiences occurred in a project that required the use of a mouth-operated aspirator for collecting insects. For those who are having trouble with the visual image (i.e. non-entomologists), the apparatus has a rubber tube that

you put into your mouth. The other end is attached to a vial with a stopper in the top. Another rigid tube emerges from the stopper; this is placed in close proximity to the insects.

To collect insects in the vial you merely provide suction to the rubber tube with your mouth. In this instance I was in a "less desirable" neighborhood (urban entomology), hunched over with my head near the ground sucking on the apparatus. The scientist I was working with came up and

whispered, "I don't think I would do that any longer than necessary here." Puzzled, I asked why. He replied, "In this area people will probably think you are smoking crack and come over to join you."

I must admit I did not waste any time finishing my task (while looking over my shoulder from time to time). I had one scare when a police car drove by and I needed to hide the "apparatus" to avoid any trouble. I didn't think about this problem beforehand since this is not something you typically need to worry about when collecting insects in the middle of a cotton field.

It is nice to be able to "get your hands dirty" in your job and my job has a good mix of "deskwork" (i.e. paper pushing) and field experience. Even though I usually do not get that dirty in the field, there are some experiences that I did not bargain for or at least did not expect. More of these experiences occurred in Central and South America than anywhere else due to inherent difficulties in this part of the world (not to mention language barriers). And while we're on that topic, I don't feel so bad about the language barrier when I find people from the same country speaking the same language having trouble communicating because of their accents (i.e. one accent northern, one southern).

The list of surprises includes experiences like walking to the field plots in waist high grass for a mile or so with the thought of poisonous snakes in the back of my mind. Now I can handle snakes, or so I thought, but upon getting back out through the grass, my celebration of avoiding snake bite was short-lived upon finding ticks all over my body.

I had to go back into the grass for a quick (private) check since I heard a story from one of my colleagues who took a similar trip. He had ticks invade his pants and some were drawing blood! Luckily I escaped that level of excitement and did not get bit, as far as I know. (And I thought my biggest health challenges would be avoiding Montezuma's revenge, malaria and dengue fever...)

Speaking of malaria, there was an experience of packing fruit in the field on dry ice near dusk in rural Mexico. Do you know what attracts mosquitoes? I will give you a hint, what do mosquito traps use? You guessed it, CO₂. And what is dry ice? Yep, it's frozen CO₂.

As you can imagine once these little buggers woke up and smelled the coffee, I mean the volatilizing dry ice, they were all over us. I heard so many mosquitoes buzzing around my head I thought I was at the O'Hare International Mosquito airport. Luckily I had enough DEET applied to nearly kill me (i.e. just below the LD₅₀, an advantage of knowing some toxicology) so I did not get one bite (again as far as I know).

It was not too far from that site that our native technician lost enough blood from mosquito bites to nearly require a transfusion (he was well below the LD₅₀ for DEET, i.e. untreated). He was also stung by a wasp in his mouth, making the side of his face swell up and causing him to spend the night vomiting and restless. He sprayed the plots the next morning, looking through the eye that wasn't swollen. At this site I also saw a scorpion an inch or so from the front of my boot and leaf cutting ants carrying a tree into a hole in the ground one small piece at a time. Wild! Too bad we were spraying a fungicide!

There was also the time when we were examining plots in Florida with client representatives and other contract research people. As we were talking about the study and everyone was looking up at the orange trees, one consultant inadvertently stepped into a fire ant bed while still looking up. I have never seen a man of his age move so fast to drop his pants at the blink of an eye in public.

Now y'all from the South know what kind of damage fire ants can do. You really don't want them climbing up your pant leg. Although this guy was from the North he had relatives in Florida so was somewhat familiar with fire ants or had at least heard about their reputation. This probably explained his zeal. A person unfamiliar with

fire ants would have sustained much more damage, or maybe even died!

If I had more time I would tell you about:

- The pit bull attacking the backpack sprayer (or was it the operator) while treating the plot (makes pass times difficult).
- The soldiers forcing their way into a building with automatic weapons drawn as we drove down a street in the morning on Palm Sunday.
- The roaches in my hotel room (the last straw was when they got on my toothbrush).
- The roach in my beer in the restaurant (poured from the bottle into my glass, after I had consumed half the bottle!).
- The truck breakdown where we filled the radiator with "tap" water that looked like watered-down skim milk (I guess you can't contaminate a radiator this way even though Japanese cars require distilled water).
- The tree fruit that was picked before we arrived to harvest the plots to a height of an average man's reach despite the skull and crossbones sign (international language).
- Avoiding a mudslide driving around a blind mountain curve.
- The rats outside my hotel window bigger than cats (this last one might be a fish story but it sounds impressive). This is the same hotel where the restaurant decided to vent the smoke from the grill into the dining area rather than outside. I guess they thought it added to the atmosphere. I was ready to get the respirator out of the truck. Instead we took our food out of the restaurant and ate in the hotel lobby. By the way, I did not see anyone smoking cigarettes at dinner, even though it was allowed.

Hopefully this has been entertaining, indicating how spoiled I am or at least has given you a new appreciation for insecticides. Wait a minute, I am preaching to the choir...



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