



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Tim Case
NAICC
President

Season Winds down – Time to Re-energize with Colleagues, Friends

As usual, time keeps marching on and for us here in the Texas Panhandle it's time to prepare for the end of the season. We had an unusually hot September so our "end of season" has been extended. Our cotton and sorghum is coming around really well, and our corn yields were up this year, too. I always enjoy a successful season for the growers in our area.

With the winding down of time in the field I would like to encourage everyone to start looking forward to the annual NAICC convention, which will be held in Tucson, AZ, this January. This year we will be at the

brand spanking new Marriott Starr Pass Resort. I encourage you to go to the hotel Web site (www.starrpassmarriott.com) for information on this wonderful location.

Also, the education committees for both the researchers and consultants are finishing up what looks to be an excellent program for the Annual Meeting. There will be a special meeting with Burleson Smith of the USDA regarding soybean rust and its effects this year, and he will also serve as our keynote speaker on Thursday. Both the consultant and researcher sessions will highlight the international aspects of our industry as well as down-home practical ideas that everyone can put into practice.

Looking forward to 2007, I recently attended the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers and the American Society of Agricultural Consultants Annual Meetings in Austin. There we had the opportunity to discuss co-locating our 2007 Annual Meeting with these folks in Atlanta. The educational opportunity this three-group meeting offers to our membership is phenomenal.

Our groups' interests overlap in many areas and it will be possible for NAICC members to attend almost all of the other groups' sessions – and they'll be invited to

participate in ours. The diversity of the group in Atlanta should allow us to obtain information that has not previously been available to us, plus it will provide us with an even broader network of colleagues and friends.

This joint meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta from February 13-17, 2007. It will be a wonderful opportunity for our association members so go ahead and mark the dates for this meeting.

A final note...

The friendships and acquaintances I've made through this association are some of the best benefits I've gained from membership in the NAICC and I would like to express that to all the members. Some of my best friends have come from this organization and it wouldn't have been possible if I didn't attend the annual convention. Yea, it costs a little time and money to attend, but the network that I've established has turned into one of the best business assets that I have. No matter what I run up against in the field, I know someone I can contact who has either faced the problem or knows someone who has.

Make plans to attend the Annual Meeting – I guarantee you won't be disappointed with the experience.

Saddle Your Horses to Take on a Full Agenda at the Tucson Annual Meeting!

NAICC members get ready! The 2006 Annual Meeting promises plenty of thought-provoking discussion, exhibits and information.

With the Desert Southwest as a backdrop, the Annual Meeting will take place at the Marriott Starr Pass Resort in Tucson, AZ, January 18-21.

Hot agenda items will include a key note address from Burleson Smith, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture; return of the concurrent breakout sessions; and an overview of biotech and its future, the potential for increased pests and more.

Topics for consultant sessions will range

from GIS Software and Improving Ag Production System Efficiency to the economics of VRT application, using gypsum blocks to manage water and Brazil's impact on U.S. agriculture. One of the sessions – Soybean Rust – will even be led by Burleson Smith!

Researcher topics will include harmonization, field regulatory studies in the U.S. and Europe,



APHIS audits, grant writing and much, much more.

Speakers at the Tucson meeting will include President **Tim Case** as well as the Foundation of Environmental Agriculture Education Jensen Memorial Speaker, Robert McGovern, Ph.D. He will give a review of the Doctor of Plant Medicine program.

Ray Brownfield, Incoming President of the **American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers**, and Dave Harms, Past President of **American Society of Ag Consultants**, will be on hand to speak about sharing common ground – literally – at the 2007 Annual Meeting.

Meeting attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy the ever popular consultant and researcher roundtables led, respectively, by Roger Carter and Bill Tarter. (Consultants will also be able to participate in crop-specific roundtables – wheat, vegetables and sugar beets or corn, soybean and cotton.)

For members needing to address specific research and work initiatives with sustain-

ing members, Sponsor Interaction Centers will be available. And there will again be a special session for new members called the New Member Boot Camp, inaugurated in 2005 to educate new members about the benefits and resources the Alliance offers.

While the main thrust of the Annual Meeting, as always, is furthering our industry through education, information exchange and networking, there will be plenty of opportunities to relax, too! Mark Schnepf of Schnepf Farms will be on hand for some Agri-tainment, and you're sure to have a cowboy good time at the wild, wild west dinner (hone your bull riding and steer roping skills now!).

A tour of the Old Tucson Studios and Desert Museum, a farm tour and the NAICC Classic Golf Scramble also promise to be interesting and memorable.

From political news to research results and new technologies to better business practices, you'll certainly find whatever you're seeking at the 2006 Annual Meeting –



and then some! So if you haven't already registered, go to naicc.org – and saddle up. We'll have a pot of coffee awaitin'...

Giving Time for Personal, Professional Gain

(Many thanks to Lori A. Ropa, CAE's "Volunteering - A No-Cost Improvement Program", on which the below article is based. Ropa is senior membership marketing manager at the American Water Works Association in Denver, Colo.)

The word 'volunteer' summons up thoughts of giving. And that's absolutely correct - but many forget how much can be gained through volunteering, from enhancing your professional image to affecting change.

In the case of NAICC, volunteering your time is integral to the success of the organization, naturally, but it's also a perfect avenue for members to grow both personally and professionally. (Talk with any NAICC member who's been active over the years and he or she will give you numerous examples of how their involvement has changed their business, their relationships with others, even their communities!)

From a professional standpoint, being active in an organization designed to enhance the climate in which you do business – as well as your day-to-day skills – just makes sense for your success. NAICC is the ideal "meeting place" for consultants and researchers throughout the U.S. to share their knowledge, to seek solutions to problems together – whether grassroots or national in scope – and to celebrate successes amongst those who understand the work and dedication this industry requires.

It also enhances your professional image to customers, potential clients and influen-

tial members of your community. Taking the time to invest yourself in sharing knowledge and affecting change at a larger level speaks loudly!

Another benefit of investing yourself in NAICC is the opportunity to connect with others. Let's face it – the beauty of our industry lies in our 'independence' – but working solo can be lonely. (Plus we need the stimulation and information others offer to ensure our skills are continually enhanced!)

NAICC offers numerous ways to network, and not only with consultants and researchers but also with manufacturers, local, regional and national political leaders, potential clients and others who are integral to our business success.

Volunteering is personally enriching. By jumping onto an NAICC committee, you'll be sure to pick up new skills (whether it's event planning or lobbying) and round out your experience. (After all, doing the same thing day in and day out can be a bit dull!)

Participate in NAICC and you'll be a part of something larger. Whether it's on the local, regional or national level, NAICC was designed to affect change – to help steer agricultural processes forward to meet growing and changing demands. You can be a part of that change but only if you're an active participant.

What else can be gained by putting more of yourself into the NAICC? You can even gain experience outside of your daily responsibilities. Whether it's honing writing

Send In Ballots for 2005 Election!

NAICC voting members: the deadline for casting your ballots to elect 2006 candidates is October 24.

Please take time to make informed voting choices by studying the information you received, and be sure to postmark your ballot by the deadline so the process can move smoothly and efficiently.

Nominations for Consultant of the Year Award Due October 31!

NAICC and BASF will again bestow the coveted Consultant of the Year award upon three deserving crop consultants at the 2006 NAICC Annual Meeting.

The chosen top consultants, representing various regions of North America, will be honored with plaques and special recognition during NAICC's President's Lunch and Awards Ceremony at the Annual Meeting in Tucson, AZ.

As part of the award, BASF will cover each winner's travel, hotel, convention meal and registration costs for the meeting. The winners will also receive editorial recognition in *AgProfessional* magazine and in *NAICC News*.

Applications for this year's Consultant of the Year Award are available at www.naicc.org and must be submitted to NAICC headquarters by October 31, 2005. Members can nominate themselves or other members, and all applications will be reviewed by the NAICC Awards Committee and the NAICC Executive Board.

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skills by contributing to the newsletter or helping to plan or promote an activity or event, you can grow your repertoire of skills for use in other areas of your life.

So how do you get started investing more of yourself in the NAICC? Take a look at our revised committees structure listed below. Think about what skills you offer or want to grow and see if there's a "fit" with one of them. Talk with others on the committee to learn more about its goals. If they apply to your skill set or a skill you want to develop, then join – and participate fully. NAICC

needs your commitment to succeed at all levels.

So what are you waiting for? Help yourself both personally and professionally while helping others – and the industry as a whole. It's the most cost-effective personal improvement program you'll find!

To sign up for a committee, contact **Dan Easton** at dan@eastonag.com or 641/427-5268 or Allison Jones at JonesNAICC@aol.com or 901/861-0511.

2006 NAICC Committees

Administrative Services
Allied Industry

Annual Meeting Coordination Committee which includes oversight of Consultant and Researcher Educational sessions
Awards
Certification
Ethics and Grievance
GAC with oversight of NAICC Crawfish Boil on the Hill
Marketing
Membership Retention, Recruitment & Rules, which includes Membership Services and Newsletter Involvement
Nominating
Regional Education

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Grow Your Business with Information from DTN Advisor™

As a crop consultant, there are a number of questions you face every day – when is it going to rain, which insects are becoming a problem, how has weather affected production in the past and how can you succeed in reaching potential clients – just to name a few.

Luckily, with the recent launch of DTN Advisor, many of these questions can be answered quickly and easily. Designed for the unique needs of crop consultants and agronomists, DTN Advisor gives you the tools and real-time information you need to be successful, operate more efficiently and gain a competitive advantage.

From site-specific weather, world-class news and current markets to access to a nationwide network of professional agronomists, DTN Advisor can help you build customer loyalty through targeted communication, and it can increase your visibility to future customers as a local expert.

DTN Advisor lets you improve your visibility to producers in your trade area with your own page on the DTN Community. On this page, you can post your biography – including your background, expertise and the services you offer – and be known as the "Local Agronomy Expert" in your area. DTN subscribers will be able to view your general crop observations and contact information when they are making important production decisions.

With your own DTN page, you'll also be able to build customer loyalty by communicating through a private setting on the DTN Community. This private communication mechanism will allow you to convey specific recommendations and updates to your customers via a platform they use daily.

If you're looking for a way to tap into a network of your peers, DTN Advisor has everything you'll need. With its nationwide network of professional crop consultants and advisors, you can access real-time agronomy information including crop growing conditions, weather damages, insect and disease outbreaks and comments on time-critical events that can help you make more informed decisions.

As a consultant with multiple clients, being able to monitor weather at multiple locations would definitely make your business more effective. DTN Advisor lets you receive weather information tailored to all of your farms with site-specific, four-day hourly and 10-day forecasts, plus the tools to show you where a weather system is in relation to each of your clients' operations.

You can also help reduce weather-related risks with PrecipTimer™. This innovative technology predicts precipitation intensity along with start, stop and duration times for rain, ice and snow for the locations you specify. With this RainFast Monitor tool, you'll never again recommend applying a

costly chemical application just hours before a rainstorm hits. Notification of this and other significant weather changes is available with Alert Manager™. This feature, based on 40 custom thresholds, is delivered via e-mail, cell phone or pager so you'll stay current on possible weather events at all locations you define.

And finally, DTN Advisor gives you the market and news information you need on local, national and international levels. Comprehensive fuels and fertilizer data features futures and cash analysis on the opaque and volatile market, advice on where prices are going and the ability to track current prices against DTN's extensive listing of historical prices. Up-to-date ag news from the largest newsroom in the industry includes current production issues, government policies, key industry events, market forecasts and international market updates.

A complete agricultural information service, DTN Advisor is tailored to your specific need for time-sensitive information, allowing you to maximize profitability, create more economical recommendations, communicate to producers and market yourself to potential clients.

For more information, call 1-800-290-9162 or visit www.dtn.com.

NAICC MEMBER PART OF AG DELEGATION TO CHINA

By Marvin Kauffman

In August of 2005, I was invited by the People to People Ambassadors program to be part of an agricultural delegation for a 12-day visit to China. There were 17 in the group – 12 ag professionals and five spouses. The group included soil fertility specialists,

plant breeders, agronomists and a cotton fiber specialist.

We all met in Los Angeles and made the LONG flight to Hong Kong. From Hong Kong we flew immediately to Beijing where we were met by our in-country guide, Tony

(adopted English Name). Tony shared a lot about Chinese history and culture.

First, I will share some general observations. For this country lad, there were people, people and more people. In the three cities we were in, everywhere you looked,

there was construction of buildings and roads. The contrast between the new and the old, particularly in apartment buildings, was very great.

An apartment with 1,000 square feet would be almost unheard of. Most of the new apartments were 700 to 800 square feet in size. An apartment this size could be occupied by a family of three or an extended family of five or more. A couple is legally allowed to have only one child so the extended family could include one or both of the spouses' parents.

The parents and elders are very important to the children. Our guide, Tony, and his wife have a four-year-old boy who's been in boarding school since he was a little over two years old. They feel that the boarding school is better for him than their parents would be!

The food was great and a LOT of it. The most exotic food we were served was a scorpion, which was very crispy and crunchy.

Beijing: The first full day in the city we visited the Research Institute of Crop Science, China Academy of Agriculture. The emphasis of the meeting was on corn and soybean cultural practices and develop-

ment of improved cultivars of corn and soybeans. The next day was a cultural day. We visited Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City (Palace compound of one of the Early Emperors) in the morning and walked the Great Wall in the afternoon.

On Friday we visited the Barenburg Company China Office. Barenburg is a Dutch seed company which buys grass seed in Oregon and sells it all over the world. I may even have stood on some turf grown from seed produced by a grass seed grower who attends our church!

In the afternoon we visited the Agronomy professionals affiliated with the Potash and Phosphate Institute and the Soil and Fertilizer Institute, China Academy of Agricultural Science.

On Saturday, we traveled to Xi'an. Sunday was a cultural day. We visited the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, originally built in 652 A.D., and the Terra Cotta Warriors site. I believe the National Geographic magazine did an article on this site. On Monday we visited the Northwest Sci-Tec University of Agriculture and Forestry. In the afternoon we visited the Corn Farm of Yangling Agricultural High-Tech Demo Zone. We saw large

areas planted with corn. In the planting, there were many different kinds and colors of tassels.

It is my understanding that a Chinese person is allowed to use one-third of an acre of land to plant a crop. This means for a family of three, they would be allowed to use one acre of land. I think that what I was seeing, with the different tassels in the large planting of corn, were the areas individual farmers controlled. You could see the same pattern in the rice patties. I understand that the Chinese plant breeders select corn hybrids not only for their yield potential but also for the way they look. The darker green the color, the better.

Our last stop was the city of Kunming. There we visited Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Science. This is a new, beautiful facility. We had the privilege of visiting a corn production area, a rural community and a rural family. Our cultural visit was to the Yunnan Stone Forest, which is an area of unique limestone formations.

I found this trip very interesting and educational.

2006 Biopesticide Grant Program

The IR-4 Biopesticide Research Program announces a request for grant proposals for funding of efficacy research in 2006. The primary objective of the IR-4 Biopesticides Research Program is to further the development and registration of biopesticides for use in pest management systems for specialty crops or for minor uses on major crops.

With newer, targeted conventional chemicals there is interest in resistance management to maintain the utility of those products. Therefore, IR-4 is especially interested in proposals containing biopesticides as resistance management tools, rotated with conventional products.

While resistance management is an important interest, the proposal must still

have a major focus on biopesticides. Selection of treatments and experimental design should be considered to elucidate the contribution of each component in the pest control system.

Project proposals will be accepted in three different stage categories: Early, Advanced and Demonstration. Grant procedures and applications (in Word format) are available at

<http://ir4.rutgers.edu/Docs/Early,%20Advanced%20&%20Demo.%20Guidelines%20&%20Forms-2006.doc> and should be submitted via email.

NOTE: The three project stages (Early, Advanced and Demonstration) have specific proposal forms. If you are submitting a

proposal for the Early or Advanced stage project, please use the forms on pages 13-24. If you are submitting a proposal for a Demonstration project, please use the forms on pages 25-34. Proposals will be due November 18, 2005.

The total amount of funding available will be around \$400,000. Most successful grants have generally ranged from \$5,000 to \$10,000 with the largest grants around \$20,000.

For more information, contact Michael Braverman, Ph.D., manager of the Biopesticide Program, IR-4 Project, Rutgers University. His email is braverman@AESOP.Rutgers.edu.



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