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**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**



By  
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NAICC  
President

## The Cupola On My Barn

As I stroll out of my house at the start of each new day, the first thing that catches my eye is the cupola on my barn. It stands prominently on the top of the barn that serves as the centerpiece of the farmstead. I presume that it was placed there long ago by the man who built the barn. The large, weathered landmark has stood the test of time and torment, through wind and rain. Its prominent location has called it to serve as the lightning rod through decades of thunderstorms to protect the surrounding buildings through the course of history. In the time that I have lived here, the cupola watched safely over the greatest flood in 200 years when the tiny, little 5 ft creek below its view became a quarter mile wide.

I find it particularly intriguing the way this barn feature sorts out the weather

elements, rejecting the bad and allowing the good. Its venting feature expels the summer heat from the loft to effectively moderate the temperatures of the items sheltered within its beams while blocking the rain from entering. It will not yield a single flake of snow during a winter blizzard, yet allows enough light to permit a round of barn-loft basketball with my daughters amid the snowstorm.

The cupola also serves many other functions. I have on occasion observed the "directionally challenged" field technician glance at the N-S-E-W indicator on the cupola below the wind vane on their way to check that plot located "100 feet EAST of the barn". As a researcher, it is the last thing I look at before making a spray application to make sure the wind direction is away from the control plot. At all times, it brings a certain polish to the structure, dressing up the barn like a Sunday morning necktie. Through our heritage, the cupola has become an icon to the field of agriculture.

The builder of this barn made a signifi-



cant investment to install the cupola many years ago during the construction project. But the builder was able to see the value and he took the risk, and just as he appreciated the benefits of that investment during his lifetime, so do I today, nearly a century after the fact. During the 15 years that I've lived here, I have grown to rely on the information, direction, and benefits it provides to my business.

The other day I was pondering some NAICC business as I glanced up at the cupola, and was suddenly struck by the similarities of the two. The NAICC requires an investment, and yields many returns currently and into perpetuity for both self and others. It reveals trends in our profession, provides direction for the wondering, filters out approaches to our cause, shields us from undesirable elements, proclaims our mission, polishes our professional image, and vents our frustrations. The NAICC stands tall, proud, and willing, like the cupola of our profession.

OK, I've rambled on with apparent frivolity about the cupola on my barn. But before I lose you completely, please take time to read the article again, only this time replacing the word cupola with the acronym NAICC and see if it doesn't paint a familiar and more meaningful picture for you. I know it did for me.

## Seeking Participants for Western Corn Rootworm Pilot Project!

Farmers wary of "do not treat" recommendations for Western Corn Rootworm in moderate risk areas will soon have an opportunity to test the approach – without risk of financial loss.

Agren, Inc. (Carroll, Iowa) is coordinating a pilot project, funded by the North Central Region IPM program, to help increase farmer acceptance of university-recommended scouting procedures for the pest.

Participants will grow two soybean strips side-by-side for comparison – one untreated for rootworm, the other treated with either an insecticide or a GMO hybrid of the same genetics. End-of-season yield comparisons will be made, and if there is a yield loss, farmers will be compensated for the yield loss minus the rootworm treatment savings.

The program will be available for crop year 2007, and will involve up to 10 farmers whose soybean fields have been monitored

during summer 2006 with trap counts below threshold (5 beetles per trap per day).

To be eligible, farmers must meet the following criteria:

- Have a soybean field scouted in 2006 by an approved crop advisor and according to a university scouting protocol for Western Corn Rootworm beetles (using sticky traps)
- Have beetle counts under the treatment threshold (less than 5 beetles/trap/day)

- Will plant corn for grain in the same field in 2007
- Be concerned that they will lose yield if they do not treat for rootworms in 2007
- Willing to put in a comparison test strip using a rootworm treatment (either insecticide or GMO of the same genetics)

### Details of the Research Pilot:

During the summer of 2006, a crop consultant will determine the degree of corn rootworm beetle infestation in a field according to a university protocol. Agren will review the scouting reports to determine if the beetle counts are low enough for the research pilot program.

If a field is eligible and the corn rootworm IPM advice to "not treat" is not effective, Agren agrees to reimburse the grower for the net loss caused by corn rootworm infestation for the 2007 covered crop in the manner and conditions described below. On the other hand, if the grower's income increases by using the BMP, they will be asked to contribute one-third of the savings.

- **To maintain eligibility, the grower must**
- Apply an acceptable rootworm treatment to a test strip for yield comparison purposes. The test strip will be approximately 50 feet wide but can be adjusted to fit planting equipment. A test strip using root-guard genetics is acceptable if the same genetics and seed treatment is used on the rest of the field.
- Permit a representative of Agren to examine production records and crops and/or collect soil, plant and other materials as often as reasonably required to assess crop performance, management activities and crop consultant recommendations.
- Permit an acreage measurement survey of any covered field or portion thereof to be completed.
- Permit the use of weigh wagons for yield verification and work with Agren to complete yield checks when it is convenient

for both parties. (Agren will make an attempt to be present on the day of the planned harvest but requires flexibility if Agren has a scheduling conflict.)

- Allow Agren to dig roots in the field/s to determine the amount of feeding by rootworm larvae. This will consist of 5 to 10 plants from each of 3 to 5 locations throughout a field.
- Participate in one telephone interview and two written surveys to provide feedback to Agren regarding general acceptance of this risk management tool, comfort level with the "no treatment" recommendation, reliability of the adjustment procedure and the perception of risk reduction.

#### **This pilot demonstration does not cover damage to the 2007 corn crop:**

- Due to failure to provide adequate care for the crop;
- Due to crop damage that is caused intentionally;
- Due to non-compliance with a written agreement;
- Due to damage caused by corn rootworm adult beetle feeding on above-ground portions of the corn plants;
- Due to damage caused, directly or indirectly, by environmental pollutants including improper use or application of agricultural chemicals, whether accidental or intended; or
- That is covered by any contract of insurance or recoverable under a manufacturer or seller warranty.

#### **Payment Loss Calculation:**

Agren will pay any disbursement it determines is due to growers by December 15, 2007, providing harvest has been completed. Payment will be based on yield loss minus rootworm treatment savings.

If the grower's income increases by using the BMP, they will be asked to contribute one-third of the savings – up to a maximum of \$6.00/acre.

For the following two examples, assume a rootworm treatment cost of \$18.00/acre.

#### **Check Strip**

##### **BMP Strip**

##### **Situation 1: Yield loss w/ BMP**

180 bu/acre x \$2.20/bu = \$396.00/acre

165 bu/acre x \$2.20/bu = \$363.00/acre

##### **Net Yield loss**

\$396.00 - \$363.00 = \$33.00/acre yield loss

##### **Net Economic Return**

\$33.00 loss - \$18.00 savings = \$15/acre net loss

\$15/acre guaranty paid to grower

##### **Situation 2: Yield gain w/ BMP**

175 bu/acre x \$2.20/bu = \$385.00/acre

180 bu/acre x \$2.20/bu = \$396.00/acre

##### **Net Yield loss**

\$396.00 - \$385.00 = \$11.00/acre yield gain

##### **Net Economic Return**

\$11.00 gain + \$18.00 savings = \$29.00/acre net gain

\$29.00/acre gain - \$6.00/acre contribution = \$23.00 net gain = \$2,300 on a 100-acre field

Agren emphasizes that it is not an insurance company, nor an insurance agent. Agren does not offer nor sell insurance or provide insurance advice. The company emphasizes that this pilot project does not replace a grower's comprehensive crop management program, which may include the purchase of state or federal crop insurance from a licensed and authorized insurance agent.

To learn more about Agren's Western Corn Rootworm pilot project, contact either Stan Buman, Agren, Inc. at (712) 792-6248, stan@agren-inc.com, or Tom Green, IPM Institute, (608) 232-1528, tom.green@agflex.com. For more information regarding the variant itself, visit <http://www.ipm.uiuc.edu/wcrsurvey/index.html>.

## Ag Professionals Sharing Common Ground...

That's the theme of the 2007 Annual Meetings of ASFMRA and NAICC set for February 14 - 17 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. Yes, this is a first!

NAICC has been working closely with the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers (ASFMRA) for a number of years to develop a program where members of both organizations can benefit. And we've finally done it! Just what does this mean?

It means that nearly 1,000 of the country's top independent agricultural consultants, farm managers, independent agricultural researchers and rural appraisers will be in

the same place, at the same time, under one roof! NAICC President Elect **Bob Glodt** with his counterpart ASFMRA President-Elect Ray Brownfield have already spent countless hours shaping what promises to be a spectacular convention.

The 2007 meeting will offer the same format of educational sessions as past Annual Meetings, along with the **Pioneer**-sponsored Ag Tour (Pioneer is also sponsoring the printing of the annual meeting materials), traditional President's Luncheon and Awards Ceremony, Foundation Raffle and Friday night Networking Dinner.

Bigger and better than ever before will be the Trade Show – billed as AG PRO EXPO. Together with ASFMRA, we are anticipating 100 vendors to be on hand to meet and greet meeting attendees. What's more, the trade show will be open for more hours throughout the meeting, providing you with more opportunities to talk with the companies about their products and services.

### **Joint Luncheon to Feature Orion Samuelson!**

One of the meeting's many highlights will be a luncheon hosted by ASFMRA and NAICC with America's #1 Agricultural

Broadcaster – Orion Samuelson – invited to serve as keynote speaker.

Orion has served as Agricultural Services Director of WGN Radio, Chicago, since 1960 and was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 2003. A man with a life-long commitment to agriculture, Orion is heard daily on 240 radio stations with his syndicated National Farm Report. His weekly show, Samuelson Sez, is broadcast on 160 stations, offering opinions and observations on the agricultural community. NAICC and ASFMRA appreciate **Monsanto Company's** generosity in sponsoring this special joint luncheon.

Details on other program sessions and educational offerings for the '07 meeting



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**AG PRO EXPO and**  
**the Annual Meetings**  
**of ASFMRA and NAICC**

**February 14-17, 2007 • Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, GA**

will be available in the coming months. We encourage you to plan NOW to be a part of Ag Professionals Sharing Common Ground

– the 2007 Annual Meeting and Trade Show in Atlanta, Georgia. It's where everybody in the ag advisory business is going to be!

## First Time at the Crawfish Boil on the Hill (Formerly Dads in D.C.)

*By Dennis Hattermann*

As a member of NAICC for several years I'd heard of Dads in D.C. (now known as Crawfish Boil on the Hill) but like many of our members did not know much about it. It has nothing to do with taking your kids to the Capitol and spending time with other Dads and kids of other NAICC members, as was my first impression. When I found out what it really was I was intrigued but still did not have a true understanding of the event.

The recent name change has made it clearer. However, in the Midwest, where I was born and raised. "Crawdads" or "Dads" as they are covertly named in this event, are kept as pets but never eaten (except by young people, college students on a dare or people stranded in the wilderness in survival mode).

I could not understand why people in Washington, D.C., only a portion of whom are from "crawdada eatin' country", would attend this event for the sole purpose of eating potential (or actual) pet crustaceans.

Aside from our members in the D.C. area who can conveniently (and inexpensively) attend, it is more challenging for many of our members to participate. The event is usually attended by NAICC Board members in conjunction with their spring meeting as well as local members who take the time to go and others who spend their own money to be present. The fact that any of our members would sacrifice the time and expense to attend indicates the importance of this event to our organization, at least in the



Dennis Hattermann visits with Burlinson Smith, USDA's Special Assistant for Pest Management Policy.

eyes of those making the effort.

As a first-time member of the Board this year, I had the opportunity to see what a crawfish boil at our Capitol was all about. I had a little more information prior to arrival than I had in the past (i.e. I knew it was about meeting people in D.C. rather than just eating crawfish or other activities I had previously imagined). Although I was going with people who had attended several times (Allison, Ray Young and other long-time Board members) and they described it to me beforehand, I still did not know exactly what to expect until I actually arrived.

Things are never exactly as you imagine and this was no exception, at least as far as the layout of the room and other small details were concerned. At first there were not many people present and we were concerned there would not be much of a turnout. We discussed possible reasons for our disappointment. We were soon relieved, however, when people started checking in at a

steady pace. The Board members got busy meeting with guests and making sure they had what they needed to be comfortable.

As the night progressed a good number of people came to eat crawfish. They were a mix of White House staff members, EPA people, Congressmen, local business people and local NAICC members. We were pleasantly surprised at the arrival of EPA Administrator Steve Johnson. A number of people were able to talk with

him and he spent a good deal of time mingling.

I was personally surprised at the number of people I met from the Midwest, mostly Illinois and Indiana, since I did not think many of these people had the "crawdada eating gene." Although I had eaten crawdad meat before in jambalaya or something like that in Memphis and New Orleans, this was actually the first time I had eaten whole crawdads (or the tails I mean). I was not brave enough to suck the heads on my first experience. Although I consider myself to have an adventurous palate, I just couldn't do the heads, I think it had something to do with the eyes.

I did, however, learn quickly how to remove the meat from the tails and proceeded to "teach" these other neophytes from the Midwest to do the same. It was a discussion point and an "ice breaker" in a laid back atmosphere that is rare in Washington.

Comments of appreciation were received and someone noted they never have people



come to talk with them and provide them with anything like this in such a relaxed atmosphere with time to talk among themselves as well as with NAICC members. Hopefully it will be remembered favorably by a number of people for years to come.

Despite our original fears, the event was a huge success with a near – if not actual — record number of attendees. Over 300 were counted. The food was excellently prepared by our regular Cajun Chefs from Louisiana and I heard only compliments about its quality.

I enjoyed the experience very much and came to understand the importance of this annual event at our nation's Capitol. In a nutshell, this event allows NAICC members to meet with people in Washington who decide and shape our agricultural laws and policies. And it helps keep our organization on their minds by providing a meet-and-greet experience in a relaxed, non-threatening environment that's rarely experienced in their world.

For the White House staffers and other young people who attended, the free food

was appreciated, although I imagine they got more than expected from their "free food" experience. (I remember how much free food meant to me when I was starting my career, especially if it was as good as what we enjoyed.) Wait a minute! I still appreciate good free food, even at my age, especially if it is mixed with good company.

This was a rewarding experience that will not be forgotten by people who attended. I cannot wait to go next year! What about you?

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## Spotlight on the States

As a national association, NAICC recognizes the value of state crop consultant organizations and appreciates their support through information, education and resources.

One of the many membership benefits NAICC offers is the opportunity for state organizations to have an affiliate Web page on the NAICC site. That is, state associations can have their Web site hosted by the well-established and well-trafficked NAICC Web site — for a fraction of the cost of most Web site providers.

Go to <http://www.naicc.org/Affiliates/invitation.cfm> to learn more. Already the **Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association** ([www.laagcon.org](http://www.laagcon.org)) and the **Kansas Association of Independent Crop Consultants** ([www.naiccaffiliates.org/KAICC](http://www.naiccaffiliates.org/KAICC)) have recognized the value of this membership service!

Many thanks to the following state associations that support NAICC through State Affiliate membership. (Each pays up to \$500 in dues yearly.) If your state association is not listed below, contact NAICC headquarters to learn how your group can benefit by becoming a NAICC State Affiliate!

### Arkansas Agricultural Consultants Association

**Georgia Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants**  
[www.georgiacropconsultants.org](http://www.georgiacropconsultants.org)

### High Plains Association of Crop Consultants

### Indiana Association of Professional Crop Consultants

**Kansas Association of Independent Crop Consultants**  
[www.naiccaffiliates.org/KAICC](http://www.naiccaffiliates.org/KAICC)

**Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association**  
[www.laagcon.org](http://www.laagcon.org)

**Minnesota Independent Crop Consultants Association**  
[www.mnicca.org](http://www.mnicca.org)

**Nebraska Independent Crop Consultants Association**  
[www.nebraskacropconsultants.org](http://www.nebraskacropconsultants.org)

**North Carolina Agricultural Consultants Association**  
[www.naiccaffiliates.org/NCACA](http://www.naiccaffiliates.org/NCACA)

**Ohio Association of Independent Crop Consultants**  
[www.oaicc.org](http://www.oaicc.org)

### Texas Association of Agricultural Consulting

**Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants**  
[www.wapacinfo.org](http://www.wapacinfo.org)



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