



A professional society representing the nation's crop production and research consultants

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By  
*Steven A. Hoffman*  
NAICC  
2017 President

# A Table, a Dozen Turtles and a Pile of Bricks

Let's see if I can describe your job in agriculture. You start with the items described in the title. The bricks are in a jumbled pile in the center of a large table. There are a dozen lively turtles crawling in every direction oblivious to the fact that the table is three feet above a hard surface. The rule maker tells you that the turtles must not fall off the table, so you start to grab bricks to build a small wall around

the perimeter. Progress is slow because for every brick you grab, you must redirect two oblivious turtles. Eventually your wall begins to take shape and just when you think that you have the situation under control, the rule maker adds another rule like "The bricks must be aligned so that their combined center of mass is inversely proportional to the net velocity of turtle movement". Say what?? Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

I often feel this way about my career. Just when I think that I am making some order out of chaos, I get smacked with a new rule that seems to employ questionable logic. Our job duties have definitely gotten more complicated, and I do not see that trend changing. "Progress" has delivered us to the point that we are so consumed with the day to day that we do not have time or energy to provide input to the "rule makers" as to what makes sense and what does not. I suspect that this is by design. This is not an acceptable position for Agriculture to be in. If we care about the future of Agriculture, we must find a way to write that letter, send that email, make that phone call, volunteer for that committee etc.

I know that many of you already do these things and I commend you for that. Let's all resolve to work together and be proactive with the rule makers. It will work better than throwing bricks at them. Trust me.

Fortunately, we have another short window of opportunity to comment on the re-registration of several important synthetic pyrethroid insecticides that our clients depend on. Don't forget to mention the relative safety factor these active ingredients provide to people and mammals compared to previous classes of insecticides.

If your clients use bifenthrin, Force, lambda cyhalothrin, Mustang Maxx, Baythroid, Fastac, Tempo, permethrin or Asana - I urge you to visit the Federal Register website at [www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-09179](http://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-09179). You can read the submitted comments on-line and submit your own comments by clicking on the green bar in the upper right hand corner. The process is painless and will make a difference. Comments will be accepted through July 7th, 2017.

Thank you for what you do. It really matters.

# The Top 5 Worst Days on the Farm

We all have bad days at work. Days that we want to throw our hands up in the air, questioning if this is what "living the dream" truly means. Most of us are passionate about our industry and, for the most part, love what we do. But sometimes that passion can be sorely tested. Welcome to the first installment of "Are You Living the Dream or Surviving the Nightmare?", where we can all laugh at each other's expense. In this issue, enjoy some memories from a Midwestern research farm. Have a good laugh, relate, and hopefully learn from our mistakes as well.

A soybean bulk-up trial seems very easy: three plots, spray one with test product and collect yield on all three. After application, sprayed plot is dying. What happened? Did we spray the wrong plot? Only one had the herbicide trait, did we switch the seed? How could this happen? After many gene test strips, photographs, visiting from the client, finger pointing and sleepless nights, it's determined the seed lab switched the labels. Lesson for us all? Retain seed tags! This is the only way it was determined why the soybeans died.

The summer help was irrigating corn that was about V5 with a 1500 gallon tank, pipe and sprinklers on risers. It had been a

very long day of hauling water and watching it "rain". After one particular load of water was emptied on the trial, he turned off the pump and jumped in the tractor. What he failed to do was disconnect the pump from the pipe running to the sprinklers. You can imagine what happened when he pulled away! This damage to the corn was fondly called "Hurricane Jeremy" for the aftermath and the summer help's namesake. Try explaining that in your notebook!

This research farm also has a herd of beef cattle. While the fences are maintained well and are the best high tensile one could buy, occasionally slip-ups do happen. The cows are kept in the "back 40" for portions of the growing season, so they may only get checked on twice or three times a day. Needless to say, cows tromping through your trial is not a welcomed sight! These cows have big hooves and are not considerate about where they do their business. So the finger pointing starts as soon as the cows are "secured" again. Did someone leave the gate open? Do we have a short? Thankfully, the use of testers is implemented to check to

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see if the fence is “hot” instead of drawing straws as to who gets to touch it (that, would be another “worst day” entry!).

A warm day in June, everything is bustling and a client is expected to step foot in the door for a plot tour any minute. The office manager turns on her computer to find it infected with ransomware. What?! What is ransomware, and who wants money? Talk about violation of privacy. Then, one by one we realize all our files (tens of thousands) have been encrypted through Dropbox, and we’re at a standstill. Client walks through the door and we have to pretend it’s business as usual. Fast forward two weeks, and we finally have our files back.

EPA inspection eight years back. This was when the inspections lasted two or more days. The inspection was going well until the silo cap started flapping in the breeze. Mind you, this silo has been abandoned for 20+ years, and of all DAYS for something to happen, it was while the EPA Inspector was here. Lucky for us, after the first day of the inspection, the cap blew off overnight so there was no need for distraction the next day. No cattle, humans or buildings were injured! The silo has since been taken down, making more room for a building to house the freezers.

**Do you have a worst day you’d like to share? Submit to: Bree Goldschmidt at [bree@moarkag.com](mailto:bree@moarkag.com)**



## *Happenings on the Hill*

*Glenn Luedke, NAICC Legislative Assistant*

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The President signed an Executive Order that declared a desire to see prosperity in rural America. The Order stated that “A reliable, safe and affordable food, fiber and forestry supply is critical to America’s national security. It is further in the national interest that regulatory burdens do not necessarily encumber agriculture production, harm rural communities, constrain economic growth, hamper job creation or increase the cost of food for Americans and our customers around the world”. The Executive Order established an “Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity” with three key goals: remove barriers to economic prosperity and quality of life in rural America, advance the adoption of innovations and technology for agricultural production and long-term sustainable rural development and strengthen and expand educational opportunities for students in rural communities, particularly in agriculture education, science, technology engineering and mathematics. The Administration’s advisor to the President on agriculture, trade and food assistance outlined the top priorities for agriculture: trade, access to labor, regulatory reform and rural infrastructure.

### **USDA**

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue recently announced changes being made within in the department, including: Creation of the position of undersecretary for trade and foreign agricultural affairs in the USDA; Rural Development agencies will now report directly to the secretary of agriculture recognizing the need to help promote rural prosperity; Created a new position, Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation with the purpose of creating a one-stop shop for USDA customer based people who are involved in farming, ranching and forestry. The undersecretary for natural resources and environment will maintain supervision of the U.S. Forest Service.

A reduction of the USDA workforce is not part of the reorganization plan.

### **SCHOOL NUTRITION STANDARDS**

The Secretary of Agriculture rolled back the current school nutrition standards and stated the change will provide greater flexibility in nutrition requirements for school meal programs in order to make food choices both healthful and appealing to students. Schools have been facing increasing fiscal burdens as they attempt to adhere to the existing stringent nutrition standards. A USDA report stated the current standards cost school systems an additional \$1.2 billion in F/Y 2015.

### **EPA**

#### **Regulatory Reform**

EPA recently submitted a notice that it was soliciting comments on agency regulations. This comes after the new EPA Administrator launched the “Back to Basics” agenda that is intended to refocus the agency’s core mission. The “mission” includes returning power to the states and provide an environment where jobs can grow. The EPA Administrator stated that the emphasis of the “mission” is to show the importance of engaging with state and local partners to create sensible regulations that enhance economic growth.

#### **Clean Water Act “Waters” Definition**

EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers are requesting state governors to weigh in on how federal agencies should define the scope of the Clean Water Act. The request is a two-step process that includes returning the status prior to the Obama Administration and revises the rules to conform to the current Administration’s executive order that directs federal agencies to roll back the Obama era rule.

#### **Pesticide Applicator Rule**

The EPA Administrator announced a twelve-month extension for implementation of the final revised Certification and Training of Pesticide Applicators rule. The extended timeline will enable EPA to work with states and provide adequate compliance and training resources. The extension is also designed to prevent unnecessary burdens from overshadowing the rule’s intended benefits.

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## **PRIA-PESTICIDE REGISTRATION ENHANCEMENT ACT**

H.R.1029 was introduced and builds on the positive traditions of PRIA. Maintenance fees in H.R. 1029 provide funds to EPA to accomplish the registration reviews required by law in a timely fashion. H.R. 1029 increases and clarifies categories of EPA actions covered under the law and protects funds for research and grant programs for worker safety and training. In addition, the legislation provides funds to address new issues and helps to ensure that companies continue to have access to export markets for their products.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATOR RULE**

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## **FARM BILL**

Food/nutrition issues (the largest budget items in the farm bill) will add to the intense debate as the new farm bill is discussed in the Congress. Projected spending for the Supplemental Food/Nutrition Program portion of the 2014 Farm Bill was \$756 billion, approximately 79% of the budget. Aside from food/nutrition issues, other key areas of discussion include conservation reform and funding, Conservation Reserve program, and commodity programs. The deeply divided Congress also faces pressure from environmental groups as well as budget cutting interest groups. Farm organizations have called for unified efforts to face the challenge.

The Senate Ag Committee Chair continues to hold regional meetings regarding the pending Farm Bill. Primary issues of concern stated at the meetings include labor issues, crop insurance and over regulation.

## **NAFTA**

Plans are to renegotiate NAFTA in the next six months. The Secretary of Agriculture stated NAFTA has been good for agriculture but not good for all of U.S. industries.

## **HOUSE/SENATE**

H.R.244. The House/Senate passed F/Y 2017 omnibus appropriations legislation that will fund government spending through September 30. An agreement on assistance programs for dairy and cottonseed could not be reached and are not included in the appropriations legislation. H.R.1628. American Health Care Act-Repeals the Affordable Care Act and replaces it with a patient-centered approach that lowers premiums and increases access to quality, affordable health care.

## **FDA**

The Food and Drug Administration announced an extension to the comment period, June 19, for a Request for Information

related to new plant varieties developed using genome editing. Organizations representing farmers, the science community, food companies and agribusiness stated they needed more time to address the complexities of the questions presented by FDA. USDA had published a proposed rule titled "Importation, Interstate Movement and Release into the Environment of Certain Engineered Organisms".

FDA announced a \$3 million campaign to promote genetically modified organisms in food under a bipartisan agreement. The appropriation is to be used to "tout the environmental, nutritional, food safety, economic, and humanitarian impacts of biotech crops and their derivative food products.

## **LABOR**

In a recent speech, the new incoming Secretary of Agriculture stated that trade was the key issue after meeting with over 75 U.S. Senators. The ag labor and regulation areas were stated as next most important. The Agriculture Secretary stated that the Administration's focus on immigration deals more with the criminal element related to illegal immigration. The President and Agriculture Secretary want to find ways dedicated farm workers can serve U.S. agriculture. In recent weeks, agricultural groups have stated they support the Administration and Congress' two-prong approach to correct issues with the current H-2A program for agricultural guest workers and address issues dealing with falsely documented ag workers. The groups feel the H-2A issues can be corrected with regulatory adjustments and the Labor Department should review their regulations and eliminate those that are not necessary.

The U.S. Attorney General has recently stated the Department of Justice does not intend to target illegal immigrants who have not committed crimes beyond legally entering the country.

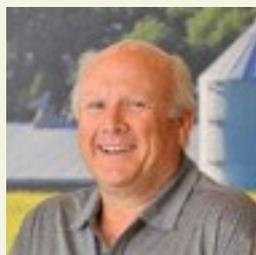
Legislation has been introduced that would shield farmworkers from deportation. The legislation titled "Agricultural Workers Program Act", states farmworkers who have worked in agriculture for at least 100 days in each of the past two years may earn lawful "blue card" status. Farmworkers who maintain "blue card" status for the next three or five years, depending on total hours worked in agriculture, would be eligible to adjust to a green card or legal permanent residency.

## **TAX REFORM**

Agricultural groups have stated they support many of the provisions in the House proposed plan for tax reform. Some of the provisions include reduced income tax rates, reduced capital gains taxes, immediate business expensing and estate tax repeal. Producers need a flexible tax code that gives them freedom to grow and also to be able to respond quickly to changes beyond their control.

Most farmers/ranchers aren't affected by the estate tax because of the existing exemption of \$11 million for a couple in 2017. Farm groups, however, maintain the tax should be killed completely as the rules fail to meet the misguided goals set by Congress.

## Spotlight on Sustaining Member FMC



FMC is a Platinum Member of NAICC. Since Rick Kesler's retirement, NAICC Executive Board, Governmental Affairs Committee members and staff have had the pleasure of getting to know Mike Harper, FMC's Industry Relations Manager. Harper will lead the company's industry association

relationships, facilitate industry stewardship and advance FMC industry goals.

Harper joins the marketing team from the company's Agricultural Solutions sales team where he served as a retail market manager in Missouri for 37 years, selling and servicing retail and wholesale accounts in the crop protection sector. Over the years, he has supported various FMC marketing segment teams and assisted with intern training and coordination. Harper has been actively involved in the MO-Ag Industries Council board and the Certified Crop Advisors State Board of Missouri. Harper is a graduate of Purdue University. He and his wife Bobbi will continue to reside in Columbia, Mo.

Mike hit the ground running and attended the NAICC Crawfish Boil on the Hill in March. We welcome Mike and appreciate the partnership we have with FMC.

## NAICC Photo Contest

A picture is worth a thousand words, and we want to see yours! We know our members have great photographs to share, and we are giving you the chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card for sharing yours. In each NAICC newsletter, we will present a theme. Submit up to three photographs per contest, and our photo committee will anonymously choose a winner. Use your imagination – we want to see some creative interpretations on the monthly theme!

## Farmers'/Consultants' Voices Needed to Defend Pyrethroids

The EPA's latest regulatory actions could further infringe on your freedom to farm by limiting your access to one of the most affordable and effective pest control products on the market: bifenthrin.

Every 15 years, EPA reassesses all pesticides, ensuring that crop protection chemicals continue to meet the standards established under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. In this process, known as registration review, EPA is required to use the latest science to evaluate the environmental impacts of pesticides and crop protection products. However, in its latest review for pyrethroid insecticides, EPA is relying on insufficient science. Crop protection industry groups and other key stakeholders provided EPA with volumes of additional information, data and risk refinements, but so far, EPA hasn't fully considered these important contributions in their risk assessments.

Bifenthrin is a pyrethroid and an active ingredient in products like Capture® LFR® Insecticide, Ethos® XB Insecticide/Fungicide and Brigade® 2EC insecticide/miticide. Used to control insects on more than 14 million U.S. acres annually, bifenthrin is an essential tool for integrated pest management. When used in rotation with other chemistries, bifenthrin helps protect biotech traits from insect resistance.

To prevent losing access to this vital pest management tool, you must inform EPA how bifenthrin is critical to your agronomic practices. No one knows better than you how to safely and effectively apply crop protection products on your farm. Please take the time to urge EPA to use sound science and accurate data in their decision-making by submitting a personalized comment. Visit [defendbifenthrin.com](http://defendbifenthrin.com) by July 7 to submit your comment. Click on crop consultant button. Additional information can be found using the links: <http://naicc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Pyrethroid-Grower-Summary.pdf> and [http://naicc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Crop-Consultant-Sample-Comments\\_5\\_22\\_17.pdf](http://naicc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Crop-Consultant-Sample-Comments_5_22_17.pdf)

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## NAICC Photo Contest

**The current theme is: FIELD PREP/PLANTING**

**Upload your photo at: <http://naicc.org/photo-contest-upload-form/>**

**Photos must be uploaded no later than 11:59 pm on June 21, 2017 to be included in the current contest. Please submit no more than 3 photos per person.**

**Look through the next newsletter to see the winning photo.**

*By submitting contest photos, you agree to give NAICC permission to use your photos as marketing and/or advertising for the organization.*



# QA Corner:

## EPA GLP Updates

By Torrance Lee, QA Specialist III, Valent U.S.A. LLC

### New EPA Guidance for Routing QA Reports and Status Reports

In March, NAICC met with Francisca Liem (GLP Program Director, EPA) and other EPA managers their Washington, D.C. office. During this meeting, findings from 2015 EPA GLP inspections of CROs were discussed. The following is a summary of the findings and suggestions on how your facility can comply.

1. EPA Finding: Quality Assurance (QA) Reports were sent to the Principal Investigator (PI) first instead of the Study Director (SD) and Testing Facility Management (TFM) first or simultaneously.

Response: F. Liem stated that QA audit/inspection communication is not considered an official QA report until it is submitted to SD and TFM. Therefore, any communication between the QA and other study personnel prior to submitting the report to SD and TFM is internal communication, and part of the audit/inspection. Previously, many of us considered the date reported to PI to be the date that we initially shared findings or problems. This, as the group has learned, is not how EPA interprets the date. Below are some ways to revise your QA report routing process to meet the expectations of EPA. Any new procedures or changes in vocabulary should be outlined in the appropriate facility SOP(s).

Suggestions on how to meet EPA expectations:

- A. Internal, informal communication of findings or problems found during the audit/inspection may be written or verbal between the QA person and the individual audited/inspected. It is perfectly acceptable to use the draft QA report (i.e., QA report prior to finalizing) as the method of internal communication used to obtain responses to QA findings.
- B. The QA should verify any responses to findings or problems before submitting the official QA report.
- C. The official QA report submitted to the SD and TFM will have all the elements required in GLP § 160.35 (b) (3): the date of the inspection, the study inspected, the person performing the inspection, findings and problems, action recommended and taken to resolve existing problems, and scheduled date for re-inspection.
- D. The official QA audit/inspection report should include, at a minimum, the date sent to SD and TFM in support of the QA Statement. Additional reporting dates should be included, if required by your clients, such as the date sent to PI and PI Management.

E. If clients require the date the report was sent to the PI and PI Management on the QA Statement, the date the official report was submitted shall be used. The date the PI was informed of findings or problems (internal communication) is not to be used as the date reported to PI on the QA statement.

F. Keep in mind, any problems which are likely to affect study integrity found during the course of an inspection shall be brought to the attention of the SD and TFM immediately. This may need to occur before a QA Report is submitted, in which case the immediate communication should be documented and maintained in your QA records.

2. EPA Finding: CRO doesn't submit QA Status Reports to management and study director per GLP §160.35 (B) (4).

Response: F. Liem stated Status Reports are the responsibility of the Testing Facility QA in multisite studies, such as field studies, e.g. the sponsor or management company, not the field or lab CRO QA. Suggestions on how to meet EPA expectations:

- A. If the CRO QA currently submits Status Reports, you are not out of compliance if you choose to continue.
  - B. If you, as a CRO QA, choose not to submit Status Reports, it is imperative everything listed under letter C in the section above is found on the official QA audit/inspection report submitted to SD and TFM. You may also want to consider indicating in your QA SOP that this responsibility is fulfilled by the Testing Facility QA (e.g., sponsor) for multisite studies.
  - C. Status Reports are intended to notify TFM that during a certain period, any findings and problems of studies inspected by QA have been resolved or there are still outstanding issues in the study. The report is intended for all studies inspected by QA during a certain period and should come after the initial report was issued.
3. EPA Finding: CRO needs to dispose of test substance containers after study completion.

Response: It is not an EPA GLP requirement to dispose of test substance containers. Retention of containers is required for the duration of the study (until SD signs final report). F. Liem stated when an EPA Inspector visits a site he/she may comment or report on other potential environmental issues. F. Liem will ask her inspectors to identify recommendations vs. GLP compliance issues in the future.

The NAICC representatives were pleased and positive on the outcome of the meeting. We thank Ms. Liem and the other managers for their time and continued relationship with our organization. If your facility has any questions on the above information, please contact Allison Jones at [allisonjones@naicc.org](mailto:allisonjones@naicc.org) who will submit your question to this group.



## NAICC PRIDE

Show your NAICC pride by adding a tag line promoting your profession and the Alliance. In-coming President Steve Hoffman has issued a challenge to all NAICC Members! The person who promotes NAICC now through the end of 2017 in the most unique way or using the most different types of media will win complementary registration for the 2019 NAICC Annual Meeting in Savannah, GA! Winners will be announced at the Saturday morning group breakfast during the 2018 Annual Meeting in Tucson.

**Voting Members** – if you would like to use the NAICC logo and need a jpg file, email [allisonjones@naicc.org](mailto:allisonjones@naicc.org). Sustaining Members can also request the NAICC Sustaining Member's logo (shown above).

Below are a few suggestions for tag lines on your email, business cards, letterhead, etc.

1. Proud Member of NAICC Since \_\_\_\_
2. Proud Member of (logo) Since \_\_\_\_
3. (just logo)
4. Join me in Tucson in January 2018 for the NAICC Annual Meeting and AG PRO EXPO

These are just a few of the many ways we can promote NAICC and agriculture. Get creative!

Be sure to send a photo or your "NAICC Pride" tag line to [AllisonJones@NAICC.org](mailto:AllisonJones@NAICC.org).

The correct answer from the April newsletter was Rosie (the Robot).

Congratulations to Susan Dorsey for winning the gift card!

Answer the following question for a chance to win a \$50 Visa Gift Card:

What is the name of this mad scientist?

Please provide the character's name, not the actor!



Submit your answer here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/25kT6MQDPJvZfXvi2>

One winner will be randomly selected from the correct answers and announced in the next newsletter.

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