



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Jim Steffel
NAICC
2008 President

Memphis Is Calling

In a few short weeks we will meet in "River City" to connect with old friends, make new acquaintances and update ourselves with the information needed to maintain a leadership position in our industry.

Today, everyone's attention is on the volatile economy and the impact financial and geopolitical events will have on the businesses of our clients and their need for our consulting services. With the combined support of our education foundation, FEAE, we will hear a timely keynote address from the noted Agricultural Economist, Dr. Bruce Scherr.

Dr. Scherr will provide a current assessment of the global financial crisis and the anticipated impact on agriculture in North America. The business theme will continue on Friday morning with speakers addressing the perpetual issue of identifying qualified employees and providing the atmos-

phere needed to motivate them and to help them build the skill set needed to excel in our specialized niche businesses.

The program around these two general sessions is filled with topics we all face daily. Crop consultants will hear about water issues and irrigation technology critical to using this shrinking resource as we face increasing demand from other sectors of our society. Another critical agricultural input, fertilizer, has experienced remarkable cost inflation and a Friday morning program will review the current status and discuss new technologies and practices designed to reduce fertilizer inputs while maintaining optimal nutrient levels.

Research and QA members will choose from a variety of topics discussing regulatory issues in North America and Europe and discussions of a number of subjects relative to regulatory field studies. Progress in the development of electronic field notebook systems will be reviewed by a cross section of experts from industry, project management and computer software.

Field study needs for worker exposure and water quality will be presented by members experienced in those specialized areas. Biotechnology and the regulatory framework developing around responsible stewardship of this controversial science in the research and crop production segments of agriculture is becoming increasingly relevant to all members. Representatives from industry and government will discuss the

responsible oversight critical to global acceptance and continued advancement of this technology.

Presentations on specialized equipment and techniques for field trials and the always popular crop-specific roundtables will address a wide array of attendee interests. Accredited QA sessions will provide valued updates and training in the ever-changing landscape of regulatory compliance and oversight.

After all this mental overload we will unwind with an entertaining Friday evening Networking Dinner, which will include a tongue-in-cheek fashion show presenting the latest PPE we all enjoy on those hot summer days.

You will recognize statuesque models as your friends and colleagues, no snide remarks please. Following the fashion show and a traditional Memphis barbeque with all the fixins', we will continue with an evening of live blues/Texas swing provided by Teresa James and the Rhythm Tramps from Los Angeles.

And on Saturday morning – after all this fun, music and food – everyone should be adequately uninhibited to express those pent-up opinions at the Saturday morning roundtables!

Now how could anyone even think of missing this meeting! I look forward to seeing you in Memphis.

Looking Good in 2009

By Allison Jones, Executive Vice President

Happy New Year! NAICC is off to a great start in the New Year and 2009 looks to be very rewarding for the Alliance, continuing on the heels of 2008's success. Many thanks to all of the great NAICC members who supported us through membership, time and hard work. I hope to see everyone in Memphis later this month!

Jim Steffel and I discussed the best way to update the membership on what 2008 held in store for me, as well as my plans for

2009. No, I am not going anywhere! I am here to stay – in more ways than one.

AUGUST

August is a bittersweet month for me. Here in Tennessee school begins the first week of this hot summer month, signaling the end of summer freedom. It's also a time when the majority of you are still in the heat of the growing season. (Translation: my phone lines are relatively quiet and I

crank it up a notch preparing for the next annual meeting.) The end of August signals the time to put the finishing touches on the preliminary program and send the speakers and members' invitations!

This August was very different. By mid-month, while I was preparing for the meeting, I was diagnosed with diabetes. One week later I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Talk about putting the brakes on all your plans for the next several weeks.

The good news is that after two surgeries (one radical) and seven of eight chemo treatments later, I am doing great. The lump that was found through two routine mammograms was less than two centimeters and was found early. However, while the cancer had travelled to only three lymph nodes, it was an aggressive form, which necessitated chemotherapy.

Charlie, my wonderful husband, accompanied me to my first chemo treatment. I was scared, nervous and had no idea what to expect. After the blood work and seeing my doctor, I was escorted to the chemo suite where 25-30 people were getting their treatments. My session would take two hours.

After the first 45 minutes, I realized that it was not so scary. I sent Charlie off to get me lunch, and I made friends with the other patients around me. The lady next to me was my age and grew up in my hometown! We had never crossed paths before but did so during chemo, of all times. After connecting with her and others in the chemo wing, I gave Charlie a break and brought my friend Cookie to the rest of the treatments since she is much more into socializing than he is.

Every two weeks we have a blast and have designated ourselves as the welcoming committee for new patients. You will meet Cookie at the Annual Meeting, along with Rhonda, both who held my hands through the initial diagnoses and surgeries. I am blessed with great friends.

Interestingly enough, my seventh treatment was the Monday before the conven-

tion and my last is the Monday afterwards. So that means I will still be sporting designer scarves (on my head) and will be resting more this year and not running from room to room every few minutes. (Did I mention that Cookie and Rhonda will be there and love to run...)

On several occasions, the thought of writing a breast cancer survival guide came to mind. I have a top 10 list on how to beat cancer that would serve as the outline:

1. Pray.
2. Find good doctors. Do this by praying, searching the Internet and asking other cancer patients. I had a fantastic surgeon who prayed with me before and after each surgery. My plastic surgeon is awesome and my oncologist is so encouraging.
3. Pray.
4. Take advantage of the love and devotion of your family and say a prayer of thanks every day for having them by your side.
5. Pray.
6. When your friends and neighbors offer to cook, clean or run errands, take them up on it and be grateful for every chicken noodle casserole – they freeze well! Ask God to bless your friends and neighbors just as you have been blessed.
7. Did I mention pray?
8. Think positive and don't give up. Even in the darkest moments you are not alone. Pray for strength. Charlie and my daughter Hope have been my rocks. They have helped me every

step of the way and both have been so brave. When I would even begin to get down, they were there to pick me up and give me a reason to try harder.

9. Pray.
10. Be grateful that you have a great support system at home and at work.

The NAICC Executive Board has been a tremendous support group for me and my family. After calling Jim Steffel to give him my news, he immediately contacted each Board member and told them about my situation. My hospital room looked like a florist after the Board members helped spread the word. I am overwhelmed with all the cards, gifts, calls, e-mails and even food that all my friends at NAICC sent to me. I am truly blessed to have the best job – which has delivered the best colleagues – in the world!

According to my daughter's 4-H speech on chemotherapy, "Cancer and chemotherapy are tough roads to travel. However, with the advances of medicine, it can be tolerated and the outcome can be good. My mom, my dad and I know that the most important things you need to get through this are faith in God, great family support, faithful friends and great doctors."

Wise words so often come from children – I'd only like to add that I believe NAICC will look great this year and in many more to come, and I plan to enjoy them all, hopefully with all of you!

Think Auction! Think Raffle!

The NAICC's next Annual Meeting is just around the corner, and one of the highlights of this annual event is the Foundation's raffle and auction. Get your creative juices going and start thinking about what items you can donate to this important fundraising event. This year's chair is **Bruce Nowlin** of Lake Crystal, Minnesota. According to Nowlin, auction items can be photographed and a written description provided for the process of bidding at the annual event.

"We've started our list, and are looking forward to hearing from you for more great items!" Bruce also reports that this has been a great year for terrific raffle prizes. "Ticket sales should be brisk this year" he says. "We have extraordinary prizes, and the ticket prices are just \$50 each, so bring your checkbooks, credit card and cash works, too—and get in on the fun!" Raffle items include a fantastic bird Hunting Trip, a NASCAR Package for two, a \$1,000 Cabela's

Gift Certificate, a one-week get-a-way at Bethel Ridge Retreat in the foothills of Mt. Rainier, and a \$500 shopping spree at Macy's.

Contact Bruce Nowlin with your silent auction items for the Annual Meeting. Let's all pitch in to raise more money than ever before!

Bruce@BlueEarthConsulting.com

2009 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS – WE APPRECIATE YOU

Together we can shape agriculture today and tomorrow!

On this inaugural year it's particularly auspicious to salute our 2009 Annual Meeting sponsors and exhibitors. We realize the contributions you make are significant, particularly in these challenging economic

times, and we are honored that you choose to partner with us. May you have a successful 2009 as together we seek ways to improve our industry.

NEW DIRECTORIES HELP MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH

A great networking tool, the 2009 NAICC Directory will be distributed at the Annual Meeting. For those who can't attend, look for your copy in the mail next month!

SPONSORS

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NAICC and MNICCA Sponsoring Focus on Precision Workshop NEW! Precision Ag Software Vendor Training Added!

The Focus on Precision Workshop will be held Thursday, February 12 through Friday, February 13 at the Ramada at the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN. The workshop is hosted by NAICC's Educational Outreach Committee (EOC) and the MN Independent Crop Consultants Association. See attached agenda and registration forms or visit www.naicc.org to register online.

The cost for NAICC members and members from all state crop consulting association members is \$200. Fees for non-members are \$250.

We have recently added software vendor training on Wednesday, February 11. An additional fee of \$50 and can be charged with the Thursday-Friday workshop fee.

The participating software vendors will be offering training:

- Ag Leader
- Ag Renaissance
- Farm Works
- MapShots
- Precision Partners
- SST

Each vendor will conduct two training sessions from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. and again from 3:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. allowing attendees to choose an alternate session. These sessions will be interactive with ample time for questions. They will not be in workshop fashion but attendees are welcome to bring computers if desired.

ELECTRONIC NOTEBOOK QUESTIONS WELCOME

Friday afternoon at the NAICC Annual Meeting in Memphis there will be a panel discussion of Electronic Notebook systems, with representatives invited from each sponsor company using this type of technology. This session will have a question and answer period open to the audience, however if any member would like to submit questions in advance to be read by the moderator, or to submit questions anonymously that they may not want to be identified as asking, they can email them in advance to NAICCHQ@aol.com.

Optimum[®] AcreMax[™] 1 Insect Protection Hits Regulatory Milestone

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published official notice of its intent to convene a Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) Feb. 23-25, 2009, on Pioneer Hi-Bred's Optimum[®] AcreMax[™] 1 Insect Protection regulatory submission, which means critical commercialization milestones are progressing as planned for this novel product that will increase farm yields for growers.

"We are encouraged by this decision," said William S. Niebur, DuPont vice president, Crop Genetics, Research and Development. "The EPA carefully reviews and considers all regulatory submissions and often asks for help from an SAP whenever there is new science, a significant change requested or a truly novel product – all of which apply to Optimum AcreMax 1 Insect Protection."

Under current rootworm refuge require-

ments, growers must plant a 20% insect refuge in, or adjacent to, their corn fields with Herculex RW or Herculex XTRA traits to help prevent the development of resistance to in-plant insect protection traits. These refuge acres are at risk of yield loss from rootworm damage, as well as increased corn insecticide costs. Pioneer's regulatory submission to the EPA includes a request that Optimum AcreMax 1 Insect Protection would use a 2% to 5% refuge integrated in the bag that includes not more than 98% of a Pioneer[®] brand hybrid with Herculex[®] XTRA insect protection and no less than 2% of a Pioneer hybrid with the Herculex I trait, which serves as the corn rootworm refuge.

The SAP will provide advice to the EPA on the science supporting Optimum AcreMax 1 Insect Protection. It is composed of seven

members representing a breadth of scientific disciplines and is augmented by additional experts who assist with reviews. Pending the expected 2009 regulatory approval and ongoing field testing, Optimum AcreMax 1 will be the first reduced AND integrated corn rootworm refuge product in the marketplace that will offer growers an opportunity to reduce rootworm refuge, raise overall farm yields and ensure the durability of in-plant insect protection traits.

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Optimum[®] AcreMax[™] insect protection is not yet available for sale or use. Products, benefits and concepts described above are subject to full regulatory approval.

Herculex[®] insect protection technology by Dow AgroSciences and Pioneer Hi-Bred. [®] Herculex is a registered trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC

An Online Resource to Support Crop Consultants

The Plant Management Network, a nonprofit online publisher and a partner of NAICC, has developed a free online webinar that has been widely viewed among certified crop professionals. The purpose of this webinar is to introduce crop consultants and other certified professional agronomists to the Plant Management Network's internet-based information resources, which include the peer-reviewed journal Crop Management, efficacy trials for various pest controls, searchable databases of extension documents, and other important

science-based information that help consultants with their everyday work.

The webinar was co-presented by Dr. Howard Brown, current Chair of the International Certified Crop Adviser Board, and Phillip Bogdan, Communications Manager of the Plant Management Network.

At the end of this 30-minute presentation, you will find a coupon code worth 50% off a first-year personal subscription to all Plant Management Resources. That's only \$22.50 for a full year of access to 12 resources. Go here to view the webcast.

<http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/edcenter/seminars/AnOnlineResourceToSupportAgriculturalPractitioners/player.html>

The Plant Management Network is a nonprofit publisher whose mission is to enhance the health, management, and production of agricultural and horticultural crops. It achieves this mission through its suite of resources, which have been used by nearly 360,000 researchers, consultants, growers, and other interested parties during 2008 alone.

SEEKING INTERESTED NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

It's that time of year again...time to start thinking about how you want to invest your time in the Alliance in 2009.

One avenue is by serving on the Nominating Committee. We're seeking people to volunteer to serve on this important committee (in the past members have been nominated without having had an opportunity to consider the role). By asking for members to express their interest in

advance, we can be assured those placed on the committee have the time to fulfill their obligations.

Committee members will still be nominated and elected from the floor – we're merely seeking interested candidates in advance this time!

Per our by-laws, our nominating committee must be made up of a Past President (who will chair the committee), the

President-Elect, a minimum of two other prior Alliance Presidents and a minimum of two members from west of the Mississippi River and two from east of the Mississippi.

If you fit the bill and are interested, please contact NAICC Headquarters prior to the meeting, visit with Jim Steffel, or drop by the registration desk at the Meeting to convey your interest.

NAICC – Only Way to Certify Your Independence
Applications at NAICC.com

Register Early – and Save – for Sixth International IPM Symposium

Online registration is now available for the Sixth International IPM Symposium, “**Transcending Boundaries**”, to be held March 24-26, 2009, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, OR.

By registering before March 2 you can take advantage of a special early bird price of \$225. This fee includes symposium admission and materials, three continental breakfasts, Tuesday awards luncheon and two poster session receptions. The special price is only good until March 2. For registration and information regarding accommodations, visit <http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmsymposium09/registration.cfm>.

ABOUT THE EVENT

To kick things off, an optional opening reception is scheduled for Monday, March 23, at the World Forestry Center Museum. The 20,000 square foot museum is located in Portland’s beautiful Washington Park. Built in dramatic Cascadian style architecture, you’ll marvel at the intricate hand carvings and grand entry outside, and delight in all new exhibits inside. Take advantage of the opportunity to visit this must-see attraction and enjoy great food and drink with your colleagues. *(This activity requires a separate fee; check the Registration Information page on the Web for details.)*

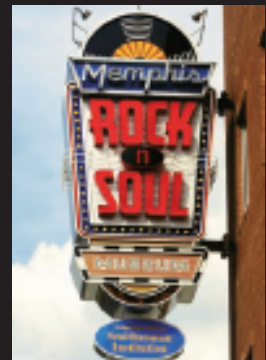
On Tuesday, March 24, the Symposium plenary session will begin at 8:00 a.m. An awards luncheon will be held, with concurrent sessions scheduled for the afternoon,

followed by a poster session and reception. Concurrent sessions will fill the day on Wednesday, followed by another poster session and reception. The symposium will end at noon on Thursday, March 26.

For a complete symposium schedule and ongoing updates, visit <http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmsymposium09/>.

Last, consider enjoying a special post-symposium bird watching opportunity, scheduled for March 28. As you visit the above link for details on the symposium, go to the Related Meetings/Activities page to learn more about this custom pelagic birding trip departing from Newport, OR. (Or contact Rob Wiedenmann at rwieden@uark.edu to learn more.)

Come Join Us In Memphis!



2009 NAICC ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 28-31, 2009

The Peabody Hotel • Memphis, Tennessee

For information call: (901) 861-0511 • www.naicc.org



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