



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

A Professional Society Representing the Nation's Crop Production, Research Consultants and Quality Assurance Professionals

IN THIS ISSUE

[From the President](#)

[Happenings on the Hill](#)

[Women in Agriculture](#)

[OPMP Requests Your Input on Atrazine Usage Practices](#)

[2023 Annual Meeting & AG PRO EXPO](#)

[NAICC ACADEMY Adds New Webinars](#)

[New Member Spotlight](#)

[Trivia Question - Win a \\$50 VISA Gift Card](#)

From the President Short Staffed - The New Pandemic

by Grant McMillan

As we exit the pandemic, every industry is struggling with staffing issues. The job boards are filled with postings, and owners/managers are voicing concerns about how these staff shortages are impacting services and performance. The Ag consulting industry is not sheltered from this new pandemic.

In my area during the height of the pandemic, there were many media reports about restaurants struggling because COVID-19 restrictions were impeding patrons from visiting

their establishments, which in turn reduced revenue. At the time, I felt for this industry, but as the pandemic rolled along, my viewpoint changed when I picked up food at a local Greek restaurant where the place was packed as much as it was allowed to be, they had a full complement of staff, I counted 22 orders sitting on a table for pickup, and there were 4 food delivery persons waiting as well.

I quizzed the owner about how they are being so successful while others are struggling. He said as a small family-owned operation, they have learned that they must pivot to stay relevant and that staying rigid only leads to downfall, and that good food and service will drive success.

It made me realize that the establishments crying hard times were likely ones that were not very good prior to the pandemic, and when patrons had a choice, they decided to go with the better options available.

As we exit the pandemic, I hear a lot of comments about how people don't want to work anymore and that the blame is put on the workforce for why positions are not filled. Even though advertised rates are above industry pay rates, they are still not attracting candidates. However, what we may need to consider to be happening, is maybe the workforce is becoming more selective with their career choices. For many people, the pandemic created a circuit breaker affect for their work life and allowed individuals to restructure their priorities. Yes, people still have bills to pay, but they seem to have raised the bar on how they will make money to pay those bills.

As a consultant in agriculture, I have had many conversations with fellow consultants and managers about the acknowledged drawbacks to our industry, such as periods of long hours, always busy in the summer, high stress periods, time away from family, and workload because we are trying to make 12 months' income in 6 months. It seems that the conversations always end with a similar phrase, "Ya, but we are in agriculture, we need to expect that".

This statement has been true, but what we may be seeing now is a shift in staff expectations as we move forward. What has worked for past generations and individuals, may not work for new individuals coming into the industry to fill these positions. What the pandemic has shown them is that "Life-Work Balances" are important and that employees will be expecting more of that in the workplace. As someone who has worked in the industry for 20+ years, I have become accustomed and numb to the hours we work, but I must realize that others may not be willing to have that level of commitment, no matter how much we pay them.

Our goal as managers is to hire people that are more skilled and diversified than us to move our companies forward. However, if we don't listen to these employees when they bring solutions to the workforce problems which the company is facing, then this impedes

progression. Sometimes as managers and owners, our pride gets in the way in making the correct decision. We need to set this aside and realize that the feedback we need from our top performers is not what we want to hear, but what we need to hear. The way the work has been done will possibly not work for the next generation.

I once watched a documentary on the US Dust bowl. In it, a farmer commented, “We didn’t change, we just did the same thing over each year, just harder, and look where that got us.” In 2022, we are at an industry crossroads again. Are we going to dig our feet in and continue to work harder or listen to feedback and adapt change, new methods and technologies for a better Life-Work balance and success?

Happenings On The Hill

by Allison Jones

Earlier this month, the EU notified to the WTO (TBT/N/EU/908) a proposed draft Regulation that will reduce existing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for clothianidin and thiamethoxam to the limit of quantification and noted that the proposal addresses “an environmental concern of global nature,” the decline of pollinators worldwide. See: [notification to WTO on](#) these proposed changes.

MRLs for clothianidin and thiamethoxam include some MRLs which were based on Codex maximum residue limits (CXLs). The EU announced its intention to delete MRLs based on obsolete EU uses and CXLs currently set out in Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005.

The EU noted that “a reasonable period would be allowed to elapse before the modified MRLs become applicable in order to permit operators in third countries, especially in least developed and developing countries, and food business operators to prepare themselves to meet the new requirements which will result from the modification of the MRLs. Such adaptation can be reasonably expected to be achieved after three growing seasons in both hemispheres (equivalent to 36 months).” The draft regulation will apply 36 months after entry into force.

Women in Agriculture

Women in Agriculture is a new series in the NAICC News, spotlighting female NAICC members who have contributed to NAICC and US agriculture. Our second article focuses on Debra Stroschein (Keenan).

The Power of a Woman's Determination

by Ronda Payne

Starting with Bollworms, Debra Stroschein (Keenan) always knew she'd be a researcher.

Many women grew up in an era when they were told they couldn't succeed because they were female. Fortunately for Debra Stroschein (Keenan), her parents didn't buy into that trope and instead taught her that because she was smart and determined, she could do anything she wanted.



And she did.

She had her first research contract at age five. Written in crayon with help from her mom, she agreed to continue checking the pink bollworm traps in her family's cotton fields if she would pay for her education in the future. The deal was struck, both signed it – though it can't be recalled what color crayon was used for the signatures.

"I worked for free all the way up to when I was a freshman in high school," she explains.

But Debra felt that contract had her committed when another opportunity came around. Researchers from the University of California had learned about her focus and determination in monitoring cotton pests and wanted her to take on the cotton modeling program.

"I said, 'I'm sorry, I've had a contract since I was five and I can't break the contract,'" she says. "They chuckled."

Her dad let her modify her contract terms.

Things didn't always flow along so easily for Debra, mind you. In grade five she knew she wanted to be in ag research and an entomologist, but her teacher said she couldn't because she was a girl. Much the same thing happened when she applied to college.

Despite having the intelligence, the dedication and the drive, she was again told that it was because she was female that she should hedge her bets and apply for other colleges. She wanted Cal Poly and it didn't inform students of acceptance until February.

Of course, she was accepted. She graduated with honors and proceeded to University of California Riverside for the grad school program in pest management.

To say Debra is a smart cookie is an understatement and she's never shied away from speaking honestly about her intelligence, her love of farming and her persistence.

After graduation she worked for Chemtech for 10 years. From the outset, she faced the challenges of working in research and development in a male-dominated industry. However, she became the manager of the department up until it no longer worked for her. On January 1, 2000, she started her own business called Research 2000 that has been going strong in Chico, California for 23 years.

Now, she splits her time between the 1,400 acre family farm in Blythe, California and Chico. After her dad passed away in 2012, she stepped in to help her mom and the farm. Now that her mom has departed as well, Debra is managing the family's legacy on her own.

"We mainly do alfalfa now for hay," she says.

Her passion for agriculture comes out in various ways including educating youth about where their food comes from as well as the numerous agricultural careers available.

"All they need is to be told," she says. "I have a careers talk that I give to the kids at our high school."

She's also been part of NAICC for about 25 years, holding various executive roles. Other executive positions were held with the California Weed Science Society, and the California Women for Agriculture. She's going to be running for president elect of the latter in 2024.

Although she faced severe gender bias in her career, Debra sees that as a benefit that she can share with girls interested in ag careers. She can prepare them to be just as strong and determined as she is.

OPMP Requests Your Input on Atrazine Usage Practices

REMINDER:

[USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy \(OPMP\)](#) requests your input to inform our response to a recent **EPA amended atrazine interim decision for registration review** that includes **ecological mitigation measures**. You can learn more about the decision on the Regulations.gov site [here](#). If you are or have been involved in **corn and/or sorghum production in the past three years** and **would like to participate in this important data collection**, please [click on this survey link](#).

What is this survey about? EPA recently proposed a picklist of conservation measures to add to atrazine labels. Your input will give valuable information about mitigation and conservation practice options on corn and sorghum acres and inform OPMP's input to EPA.

Who we'd like to hear from: If you are involved in or have experience relevant to corn (field or sweet) and sorghum production in the past three years, we would greatly appreciate your participation in the survey. You do not need to have experience using atrazine on corn and/or sorghum to take this survey.

The survey takes about 10-15 minutes and can be saved and re-entered if you are interrupted while responding. **Please respond by July 31st, 2022**, for your voice to be counted.

Why your input matters: It's in everyone's interest for regulators to understand what practices growers already implement and what practices are most compatible with their operations. Your responses help inform regulators and USDA about what options are most workable for farmers and why. A previous example of this was our outreach last year on malathion use in vegetables. We will soon be sending a fact sheet about that effort, but please contact us if you have questions.

To participate in this important data collection, [please click on this survey link](#).

2023 Annual Meeting & AG PRO EXPO



Registration Opens August 15th

Visit with old friends and make new ones as NAICC continues to grow our membership and meeting attendance. Come join our talented ag professionals...our industry's greatest and most influential leaders.

Looking for a way to increase you Company's brand awareness? We have several sponsorship opportunities to fit any size budget. [Click here](#) to see a complete list or email allisonjones@naicc.org for more information.

TOURIST HOT SPOTS IN NASHVILLE

By Karla R. Jensen

Part of the excitement of traveling to new places is scheduling time to be a tourist. Like most larger cities, Nashville also has some fabulous attractions for those who wish to immerse themselves in the country music experience, history and fun Music City has to offer. Here's a range of the inexpensive to indulgent possibilities that Nashville holds for you and your family next January during the NAICC.

Free to Browse:

Opry Mills Mall on 12th Avenue South. (433 Opry Mills Drive) Enjoy the ambiance of a full upscale mall with a variety of shops including two separate Nashville merchandise stores (The Nashville Store) plus a Rainforest Café for the kids or new Cheesecake Factory. Enjoy free samples at the Pepper Palace or wine at Amber Falls Winery and Cellars. Open 10 am-9 pm, 8 pm on Friday and Saturdays.

McKay's Bookstore & Record Store Nashville. Located at 636 Old Hickory Blvd, Nashville, this is a massive 31,000 square feet of music, movies, books and more. Open daily 10 am-9 pm.

Broadway – No visit to Nashville is complete without stepping foot on Broadway, the main downtown thoroughfare and entertainment district. Discover live music in multiple locations, retail shopping and restaurants. Broadway includes museums, hotels and other tourist attractions including the Johnny Cash Museum and Café, which opened in 2013, and boasts a nice gift shop. Nearby, find the Patsy Cline Museum, Glen Campbell Museum and Rhinestone Stage, or the Tennessee State Museum, which is free and open 10 am-5 pm.

Special downtown feature is at 5th & Broadway - Yes this is on Broadway but definitely has its own vibe. A giant high end food court and great shopping make for a fantastic visit here.

Paid Popular Attractions:

Nashville Hop on/Hop off Trolley tour. This sightseeing experience is less than \$50 for 1 to 2 hours with 14 stops. Enjoy live commentary with history, trivia and fascinating information with over 100 points of interest. Trolleys run every 20 minutes. See Country Music Hall of Fame, Ryman Auditorium, Belmont Mansion, The First Center and more. Check out the Nashville evening Trolley tour as well, which is 1-2 hours among the buzzing nightlife. \$47 per adult.

Grand Ole Opry. 2804 Opryland Drive. From \$69.00. Weekly American Country Music Stage Show, founded in 1925. Authentic acts, 120 to 150 min. This is the longest-running radio broadcast in US history. See a show or take a backstage tour.

General Jackson Showboat Lunch or Dinner Cruise in Nashville- \$106 per adult. Four hours. Combines live entertainment, a Southern Style meal, and lovely views of the Cumberland River. This is one of the country's largest paddle wheel boats that includes hotel pickup and drop off.

Bluebird Café. If you hang out in Nashville long enough or even ask others what might be a must-see, inevitably the famous Bluebird Café will be mentioned. Over 70,000 visitors step inside each year to catch a glimpse of up-and-coming talented musicians. Two shows are offered each night at 6:00 pm and 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. There's a cover charge and food/drink minimum. Reservations are a must. Check website. If you've got what it takes, head on over for Open Mic night (no reservations) and strut your stuff. Located at 4104 Hillsboro Pike.

Ghosts of Nashville Walking Tour- A family friendly/all ages tour with lots of great history, visiting some of Nashville's most haunted places, many featured on Ghost Hunters & Ghost Adventurers. 8 pm departure. Multiple companies offer packages of varying prices.



NAICC ACADEMY Adds New Webinars

In addition to the four 2022 Webinars, the NAICC ACADEMY now has seven webinars from 2021 available for viewing. Click on the links below or go to <https://naicc.org/naicc-academy> to sign up!

2022 On-Demand Webinars

Basic GLP Training – \$125

Carbon Markets 101 – \$75

Inside Out – What Goes on Inside the Mind of an Auditor? – \$75

New Technologies in Agriculture – \$75

Free Videos

Worker Protection Standards:

How to Comply

WPS Training Videos

2021 On-Demand Webinars

2021 Hot Topics in Midsouth Ag – \$25

2021 Hot Topics in Midwest Ag - \$25

Efficacy Research Workshop – \$100

GAIAC Presents: Fall Armyworm/Precision Ag/Business Management– \$75

Nutrient and Carbon Trading – \$25

Virtual Auditing – Sponsor and CRO Perspective – \$50

What's the Deal with GLP Equipment? – \$50

Become an NAICC Academy Sponsor

NAICC is looking for 2022 Academy Sponsors. Gain exposure for your business by having the opportunity to showcase your Company's name and products/services in front of over 700 independent crop, researcher, and quality assurance consultants. This is a great way to make the most of your advertising dollars while giving back to our organization and allowing members alike to further educate themselves on our great industry other professional development topics.

[Sponsorship Information](#)



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

New Member Spotlight

This month's New Member Corner Spotlights **Funmilayo Adebessin, Ph.D.**, of Bayer CropScience. Dr. Adebessin is the Study Director in the Regulatory Sciences, Human Safety Division of Bayer CropScience in Chesterfield, MO. She has experience in field residue studies, in plant biochemistry, metabolism, and analytical chemistry. Funmilayo joined NAICC in 2022 and was kind enough to fill out our questionnaire at the New Members' Boot Camp at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

How did you end up working in agriculture, research/quality assurance/consulting, or your current position? In other words, what inspired you to be where you are today?

I've long been interested in food production/agriculture due to the high rate of hunger around the world.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Not being able to control the weather.

If your friend, child, sibling wanted to follow in your footsteps, what is one piece of advice you'd want them to know?

Be open to change and new opportunities even if you think you don't know what you're doing.

What is something about you, your job, your hobbies, or your experiences that most NAICC members do not know about you?

I work as an administrative Assistant for the Red Cross in my free time.

If you could take one week off during your busiest time of year, what would you do and where would you go?

Bora-Bora

What is a favorite quote of yours?

"A man travels the world in search of what he needs and comes back home to find it. George Moore

TRIVIA QUESTION

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

What are people with Alektorophobia afraid of?



Last Month's Winner



**Congratulations
Juan Martiren
Agrality**

for knowing the answer to May's trivia question. The answer is: David Bowie. Allegedly, Presley turned the track down.

Submit your answer [HERE](#)

You are the winner of a \$50
VISA Gift Card!

Click the [AmazonSmile](#) image for a direct link to support the FEAE from your mobile device or computer.

FEAE provides five scholarships each year to deserving students with a major in Agriculture. To learn more and to apply, visit the [FEAE Scholarship page](#).

Support
Foundation for Environmental
Agriculture Education.

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](#),
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](#)

amazonsmile

FEAE



Buy and Sell Equipment on the NAICC Website

Have something to sell? Looking for a specific piece of equipment? Check out the [NAICC Member Marketplace](#). Log in to [Members Only](#) portal on the NAICC website and scroll down to the NAICC Member Marketplace. Choose **Items for Sale** or **Items Wanted**. It is just that easy.

Thank you to the Newsletter Committee for putting this issue together:

Rachel Lightfoot, *Chair*, Amalia Easton, *Co-Chair*,

Laurie Bennett, Jo Gillilan, Karla Jensen, Renee Minion

If you would like to submit an article or have a suggestion for the *NAICC News*, please contact [Rachel Lightfoot](#) or [Allison Jones](#).

NAICC

**Your professional society representing the nation's crop production,
research consultants and quality assurance professionals.**

National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants
700 Wood Duck Drive, Vonore, TN 37885
Phone: 423-884-3580 Email: AllisonJones@naicc.org

[Unsubscribe](#)

