



## NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

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

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

#### **2023 A Wild And Bumpy Ride**

By Clark Poppert

This year has become a nightmare for some U.S. farmers while others are enjoying the reprieve from drought. The last several years have featured higher than normal commodity prices but much of that price has been offset by record high input prices. Inflation took its toll, as did supply issues and weather phenomena.

In 2022 the High Plains were the epicenter of the drought. Non-irrigated corn in areas that usually receive less than 19" of rain per year annually received far below that with the corn not reaching appropriate growth stages before dying. In many cases cutting for silage was not an option because of high nitrate concerns in the crop. Many of these areas have received normal to above normal rains so far in 2023 and have been lowered to abnormally dry or the moderate stage of drought.

Kansas continues to suffer from heavy drought conditions that have affected their crops for at least 2 years. This year specifically, has seen the drought area move east to include the majority of the corn belt. At the time I am writing this article the Midwest or Eastern Corn Belt has gone from 80% of the area being normal to 85% showing some level of dryness to drought. The High Plains region or Western Corn Belt has regressed from 80% in an area of abnormal dryness to drought all the way back to 40% in that category. Kansas and Nebraska remain the most affected.

Eric Richardson, a row crop farmer and cattle rancher, owns a feedlot close to Lake City, IA. He has been debating what to do with the corn stored in the elevator. He would have liked to have priced it earlier but saw the dry conditions spreading from the High Plains into the Midwest. "I wanted to market the corn before the prices dropped but I am considering bringing it home from the elevator to feed cattle this winter." he said "it all depends on the weather this year. As of now, we have about 4" of moist soil on top but it gets very dry below that." If there is not much of a crop this year, he will have to feed what he has stored in town at the elevator and then faces the problem of what do you do with next year's calves.

The last two years have brought about immense supply chain issues that range from chemicals to equipment. The issues seem to be sorting themselves out, but delays and parts are still an issue. Chemicals were not immune to the shortages as we did not have the product inventory that we were used to in the past. The prices of some of the chemicals increased dramatically while others only increased a small percent.

Inflation has leveled off to some extent, but prices will probably never return to the ones to which we are accustomed. Demand has dropped, commodity prices have dropped, weather has turned dry and input prices have increased. This is mostly due to fertilizer costs. The year has been a wild ride so far and

looks as if that will continue into 2024. Not too many people want to depend on insurance or any form of government help, but we must have a safety net. Hang on folks, it could get bumpy.

## HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL

### **EPA Marks Endangered Species Day by Publishing Maps to Help Pesticide Users Better Understand Risks to Endangered Species**

Today, in recognition of Endangered Species Day, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is publishing a group of StoryMaps to raise public awareness about protecting endangered species from pesticides. These StoryMaps use an interactive format to describe 11 endangered and threatened (listed) species, their habitats, and why they are at risk from pesticide exposure.

Through its [Vulnerable Species Pilot](#), EPA has been identifying endangered species that are vulnerable to pesticides, developing mitigations to protect them from pesticide exposure, and will apply the mitigations to many types of pesticides.

The species included in this pilot are:

- listed as endangered or threatened species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- located in areas where pesticides are likely to be applied; and
- have relatively small ranges (where they live, are suspected to live, and areas that impact the species' survival in some way).

As described in EPA's [Endangered Species Workplan](#), the pilot focuses on implementing protections for 27 vulnerable federally listed endangered and threatened (listed) species.

The StoryMaps released today include descriptions of 11 of the pilot species and their habitats and explains why they are vulnerable to pesticides. These StoryMaps offer the unique ability to convey geospatial information about the

location of these species and the protections they need from pesticides. For example, users can zoom in on the maps to view specific locations that may be of interest to them (e.g., where pesticide restrictions may apply to protect each species). Engaging the public and stakeholders through maps, other visuals, and narratives can help convey complex information in an easy-to-understand manner, offering a greater sense of place-based mitigations to protect species from pesticides.

EPA plans to propose mitigations and its implementation plan for all 27 species included in the Vulnerable Species Pilot in June 2023. At that time, the Agency will update the StoryMaps released today to include mitigations and will release StoryMaps for the 16 remaining species.

EPA and its federal partners are committed to developing tools for pesticide users to better understand pesticide risks to listed species and designated critical habitats, not just on Endangered Species Day, but every day.

View the StoryMaps page [here](#).

### **Herbicide Resistance Action Committee**

The Herbicide Resistance Action Committee has released a Global Resistance Management App. This app lists modes of action for fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. You can check it out [here](#).

## **SUSTAINING MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

### **Elevate Your Soil Health Expertise with BeCrop® Technology**

As an independent crop advisor, it is crucial to have access to the latest technology and tools to elevate your crop advising services. One such company that has revolutionized the agricultural industry is Biome Makers, with their patented [BeCrop® Technology](#).

Soil health is of utmost importance in agriculture, and **Biome Makers** understands that soil is alive, harboring an abundance of life forms that perform functions on a community level. BeCrop® Technology decodes soil biology to optimize farming practices and improve soil health. With the largest global taxonomic database of microorganisms, BeCrop® Technology uses advanced genomics, microbial networks, and machine learning to provide insights into specific functions being performed by the entire soil microbiome.

What sets BeCrop® Technology apart from others is their use of amplicon sequencing, ecological analysis, and machine learning to predict how microbes will function and interact based on decades of compiled research. This provides a more detailed understanding of the ecological dynamics of the soil microbiome. This technology is useful for farmers and advisors, retailers, and input companies to understand soil-plant interactions, for product placement, and as a recommendation tool.

The BeCrop® Test provides critical insights on soil nutrient cycling, health, and biodiversity to improve soil functions, increase crop yield and quality, and optimize farming costs. By connecting soil needs to practical inputs, the BeCrop® Test illuminates the path toward regenerating farmland soils. This is crucial for sustainable agriculture, and independent crop advisors can use this technology to make informed decisions for their clients.

BeCrop® Technology has become a new standard in soil biology analysis, and as farmers demand more access to specialists in this field, Biome Makers created the [BeCrop® Advisors Program](#). This program aims to qualify Biological Crop Advisors, bring BeCrop® experts together, and provide them with exclusive membership benefits. BeCrop Advisors can also make informed decisions based on up-to-date information, benefiting their clients and improving crop yield and quality.

BeCrop Advisors can also access exclusive BeCrop® Tools like agronomic recommendations based on yield, disease, and management problems, client management tools, and real-time tracking of soil sample processing. These tools allow advisors to manage their clients efficiently and effectively, providing them with up-to-date information and insights.

**BeCrop® Technology** is a game changer in the agricultural industry. Independent crop advisors can use this technology to elevate their services and make informed client decisions. By joining the BeCrop Advisors Program and receiving their BCA Certificate, advisors can access exclusive membership benefits and connect with BeCrop® experts.

Join our community of [BeCrop® Advisors](#) and become a leading expert in soil health management.

Learn more [here](#).

## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Welcome New Member Paul Beamer

By Hope Jones

NAICC would like to welcome Paul Beamer with Loam Bio as a new member. Paul joined NAICC as an Associate member at the 2023 Annual Meeting which was held in Nashville, TN this past January. He is from St. Paul, MN. Paul is a researcher and works with corn, soybean, barley, wheat, oats, rye and canola.

When asked what inspired him to be where he is today in the industry, he explained that networking, meeting with CROs and taking workshops on ARM helped get him into the Ag industry. We look forward to watching Paul Beamer's relationships grow through being a NAICC member with all the networking and learning opportunities NAICC provides!

## NAICC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

**NAICC Leadership Program: A candidate's view half-way through**

## **By Samuel Bledsoe**

For those of you who may not know about the NAICC Leadership Program, this is a yearlong program consisting of four modules that provide the participant with a holistic view of NAICC involvement. Module I entails contributing in the yearly meeting by participating in committees, new member welcome, and working with the foundation to help raise support for scholarships. Module II involves accompanying the Executive Board and members from the Government Affairs Committee to visit policy-makers in Washington, DC to raise awareness on issues of interest to NAICC. Module III is a visit to another NAICC member's facility to see the industry from a different perspective. The program concludes with Module IV at the next annual meeting in which the participants give a talk during the opening session about their experiences.

The highlight of the program up to this point has been the trip to Washington, DC. At first, I felt a little bit overwhelmed at the thought of being a lobbyist as this was never something that I envisioned myself doing, and I did not have a clue how to go about it. I was pleasantly surprised to learn how easy being a lobbyist actually is. At first, I was not sure if I would be presenting or observing, as I was the new person, but that question was answered very quickly. Everyone would be trained and expected to participate. The team did an excellent job of preparing the material and reviewing the content with everyone beforehand. Thanks to this training, I felt empowered and comfortable engaging in the meetings. One of the main points that we emphasized during our meetings was that we are an educational resource to our policy-makers rather than lobbyist. For two days, I accompanied teams of two-to-five members as we presented the NAICC's positions on three main issues concerning the Endangered Species Act, continued funding of the IR-4 Project, and issues related to the Farm Bill. We met with staff from representative and senator offices, members of the House Ag Committee, The Fertilizer Institute, and had lunch with Francis Liem from the EPA.

The greatest eye-opening experience of the DC visit was how receptive and approachable legislators and their staff are to visitors. It was surprisingly easy to set up appointments with our legislators and they seemed generally interested in meeting with us. We usually met with the staffers and not the Representatives or Senators themselves as they have busy schedules when they are in DC. I learned that in general, it is the staffers that you want to meet

as they are the ones that do most of the information gathering. I also saw first-hand that our efforts can and do make a difference as the legislators are listening and they do want our input. I also did not realize the impact and importance of the NAICC Crawfish Boil on the Hill. Many of the staffers that we visited were already familiar with the event and look forward to the boil yearly as it has been a regular event for about 25 years. The crawfish boil had a great turnout and was packed for most of the 2-hour event.

I am greatly appreciative of the NAICC Leadership Program and the Executive Board for providing this unique experience and for the encouragement that they have shown me along the way. I look forward to Module III and ultimately sharing my experiences at the 2024 annual meeting. I encourage our members to take advantage of the Leadership Program or nominate someone that you know who desires to become more involved with NAICC.



## FARMERHOOD PROGRAMME

*NAICC Member Allen Scobie has been doing great work in Ukraine. Allen reached out to introduce NAICC to the Farmerhood Programme.*

Farming is hard. It is a constant struggle with external and internal factors. Today Ukrainian farmers face one more violent enemy to fight against on top of other challenges – (the Russian cruel invasion).

Farmerhood is a charity project developed to help small private Ukrainian farmers in war-torn areas maintain their business operations, restore farms and support the agricultural workforce. The initiative has established a global



farmer-to-farmer donation model and a digital platform to enable easy and reliable support. Thousands of Ukrainian farmers have an opportunity to register via the Farmerhood platform and, once validated, receive help from farmers around the world.

Alight ([wearealight.org](http://wearealight.org)) is a fiscal sponsor of the project to receive tax deductible contributions on the project behalf for use in carrying out its charitable activities in Ukraine.

The Project focuses on Ukrainian farmers with a landbank up to 1,200 acres (500 ha) located in the regions impacted by the war that are eligible to receive sustaining services to support their critical work as they grapple with the challenges of hostile military invasion.

Through funds raised by the project, Farmerhood provides support to Ukrainian farmers across five key focus areas:

- Agricultural inputs such as seeds and crop protection.
- Precision farming services that support the efficient use of limited resources.
- Fuel to enable field operations.
- Restoration to help repair facilities and machinery.
- Financial support to cover additional needs such as rent, salaries and taxes.

We invite you to trace the real stories and pictures of Ukrainian farmers at our website [www.farmerhood.org](http://www.farmerhood.org) – to understand their fears, losses, challenges, and needs. They all are united by a desire to survive and save their family and farm. Sometimes at the cost of their own lives, because they did not leave their land.

Even a small donation will allow them to feel understood and supported; not to lose faith in the goodness and brotherhood of farmers.



## NAICC ACADEMY WEBINARS

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**

The graphic displays the NAICC Academy logo on the left, which includes a green shield with a leaf and the text 'NAICC ACADEMY'. To the right, the text 'THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS' is written in green. Below this, a collection of sponsor logos is arranged in a grid. The logos include: Bayer CropScience (with a Bayer cross logo), eKonomics™ (with the tagline 'THE BUSINESS OF CROP NUTRITION'), LANGE (with the tagline 'RESEARCH + CONSULTING'), SGS, Tidewater Agronomics, Inc. (with a green 'TA' logo), Great Lakes Agricultural Research Service, Inc. (with a blue globe logo), Servi Tech (with a red and blue logo), Agrauxine by Lesaffre (with a green leaf logo), Ag Services (with a green leaf logo), BELCHIM CROP PROTECTION (with a green leaf logo), and I-State Agricultural Research (with a red outline of the state of Indiana).

**TRIVIA QUESTION**

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

One quarter of your bones are located where?



**Submit your answer [HERE](#)**

**Last Month's Answer:**

**Decoration Day**



**Congratulations**

**Jason Sweeney**

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

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

Karla Jensen, *Chair*, Jo Gillilan, *Co-Chair*,

Laurie Bennett, Amalia Easton, Rachel Lighfoot, Walter Albeldano

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

**[NAICC](#)**

**Your professional society representing the nation's crop production,  
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