



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

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Matt Eich
NAICC
2019 President

22nd Annual Crawfish Boil On The Hill

As a member of the Executive Board, one event I look forward to every year is our Spring Board Meeting and Crawfish Boil on the Hill (CBOH) in Washington, DC. It is a time for the Board to meet in person to cover the affairs of the NAICC, visit with EPA, USDA, and other policy-makers in Washington and continue to forge relationships so that our voices and concerns can be heard.

Those who attended the President's Luncheon at the Annual Meeting in Savannah heard that the Executive Board awarded Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue with NAICC's Service to Agriculture award. This honor is not given every year, so to receive the award has been noted as a great honor. Unfortunately, Sec. Perdue had to cancel as our Keynote Speaker at our Annual Meeting. Allison Jones was able to secure an appointment with The Secretary a few days before the board was due to arrive as he would be gone the entire week we were there. Allison, James Todd, Matt Winslow and I were able to meet with Sec. Perdue and present him with the Service to Agriculture Award. It was a great honor to have the opportunity to meet him and his staff, and to briefly discuss with him the pressing issues that concern the NAICC membership.



Secretary Perdue receives NAICC's Service to Agriculture Award

The 22nd annual Crawfish Boil on the Hill was held March 27, 2019 at the Longworth House Office Building in Washington DC. The Executive Board along with representatives from the Government Affairs Committees, the Leadership Program participants, and several volunteers hosted 364 attendees, six of which were Congressmen from our member states. It was the largest crowd I've witnessed in the four years attending the CBOH, and an excellent way to reach out to our policy-makers and their staff. This year marked the 26th Executive Board visit to Washington DC. Every year I attend, I see the benefits of our visits to DC. With WOTUS, the potential to lose chlorpyrifos,

Bt refuge, and many more hot topics, we must continue to keep our positions known as we in the ag community are the experts. Unfortunately, we live in a nation that has a large rural to urban disconnect, and being our own advocates is crucial to continue our way of life and keep the technologies we depend on.

A belated thank you to all who participated in the Poker Club fundraising event hosted by The Carringers and Research for Hire at the Annual Meeting in Savannah and their generous donation of \$1200 made to the CBOH to help make our days in Washington a success. We appreciate your support.

In Memory Of Dr. Ed Lloyd

NAICC Charter Member Ed Lloyd, Ph.D. of AGVISE Research in North Dakota passed away on Sunday March 17th. Derek and Ted Lloyd are the proud sons of Ed.

Bob Deutsch, a former co-worker of Ed's sent an article about Ed and adds, "With the passing of Dr. Ed Lloyd, I thought you may enjoy reading an article I save from an interview with Ed in 1978. He talks about the future of crop consulting and the need for national organization of crop consultants. Ed was on the ground floor of a national organization as he was a charter member of NAICC."

Link to Agri-fieldman and Consultant, Vol. 34 No. 5 Summer 1978 is <https://naicc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/Agri-fieldman.pdf>



Happenings on the Hill

by Glenn Luedke, NAICC Legislative Assistant

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The House/Senate continue to debate the funding to be made available to areas recently affected by hurricanes, fires, floods and other natural disasters. In early April, the House Appropriations Chair introduced an expanded disaster bill (\$3 billion) that will address floods in the Midwest. A total of \$17.2 billion in appropriations would cover all disasters. Several House members stated it was time for the Administration and the Congress to put partisan politics aside and support the farmers/ranchers they seem to have abandoned.

RURAL BROADBAND

Over 70 House members joined ranks and joined together in requesting the House Appropriations committee to fully fund two initiatives designed to improve service in underserved rural areas. Requests include \$550 million for USDA's ReConnect Program and \$350 for the new rural broadband loan and grant program (authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill).

FARM BILL IMPLEMENTATION

The House Ag Committee Chair stated that he was pleased how the new Farm Bill is being implemented. He noted that there are only 30 to 40 representatives from "rural districts" in the entire U.S. House of Representatives. The one issue not moving forward in a bi-partisan fashion is the Supplemental Nutritional Aid Program (SNAP). Commodity export declines and the price of commodities not covering production costs are a major concern. Market Assistance Programs have been maintained and consideration is being given to increasing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to take land out of production.

USDA

The Census of Agriculture was released on April 11, 2019, revealing many new trends, including:

- There is now a total of 2.04 million farms/ranches (down 3.2% from 2012) with an average size of 441 acres (up 1.6%) on 900 million acres (down 1.6%).
- A continued increase in consolidation and a greater reliance on government assistance programs.
- Ninety-six percent of farms/ranches are family owned.
- Fewer farms with aging producers and consolidation into larger operations. Average age of all producers is 57.5 years (an increase of 1.2 years from 2012). Thirty-six percent of all producers are female. Eleven percent of all producers served in the military.
- The number of younger farmers (35 and under) grew and now account for 8% of all producers.
- The largest operations (\$5 million minimum sales) accounted for 35% of all sales. The number of middle-sized farms in all sectors fell.

The American Seed Trade Association has endorsed a ruling approved by the Commission of Phytosanitary Measures that develops a System Approach for the international movement of seed. Countries currently have many different rules regarding seed testing requirements for import and export that cause unnecessary delays, additional costs and repetitive testing requirements.

A recent review of the Farm Credit System shows that economic factors remain favorable, despite many challenges, including tariffs on US products and weather disasters in some regions. If the current situation continues, production cutbacks are forecasted and should boost producer prices. On the other hand, farm land values have remained stable. Investor demand for quality land remains strong.

STATE LAWS

Agriculture interests in many states are pushing for the expansion of laws governing "right to farm laws" in order to shield agricultural operations from being sued by their neighbors. (A recent case in North Carolina awarded millions to neighbors near a large hog feeding operation concerning air pollution.)

LABOR

The release of Census data illustrates the need for a quick resolve of the agricultural worker shortage. In addition, legal issues centered around guest worker programs are far from settled. Joint liability rules passed in recent years, changes in overtime rules, wage minimums and worker protection rules are making it more difficult to farm.

EPA

State pesticide regulators in many states have expressed concern that EPA officials are considering the possibility of limiting state's ability to impose additional restrictions on the use of pesticides beyond federal guidelines. In recent communications, EPA stated that they may review the provisions in federal law that govern pesticide regulators. EPA stated that some state rules "narrow the federal label" that govern chemical applications. Under current rules, states take an additional step and require additional training for pesticide applicators, impose a later cut-off date for when chemicals can be applied to crops or require more accountability regarding local issues regarding pests and environmental concerns. According to a statement, The Association of American Pesticide Control Officials believe the current system works well.

WOTUS

April 15 was to be the final day for comments to be submitted regarding a proposed new definition of "Waters of the U.S." The action would clarify regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act. Many groups are expected to have expressed opposition to any changes and at the same time working harder to preserve the over-reaching 2015 WOTUS rule. NAICC as well as The Pesticide Policy Coalition (PPC) submitted recommendations regarding clarity and improvements to key definitions and concepts in the proposed rule.

2019 Leadership Program Update

NAICC Leadership Program participants John Gottula, Anna Meszaros, and Melissa Nelson completed their second module of the program this spring. They had the opportunity to travel to Washington, DC with a delegation of NAICC members, meet with lawmakers, and attend the 22nd annual Crawfish Boil on the Hill event.

This module of the leadership program was focusing on advocating for the professions NAICC serves and on how to be an effective resource for lawmakers and government agencies. The delegation formed small groups and visited Congressmen and their staff. The groups also met with personnel of different agencies and associations such as EPA, USDA, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NADSA), and CropLife America. Informally, everybody had a chance to interact at the crawfish boil, which was a great success. Approximately 300+ enjoyed the homemade food and cooking from Louisiana's finest!

Anna, John, and Melissa actively participated in the program. They attended a variety of meetings and interacted with lawmakers and agencies.

Anna is originally from Hungary where she obtained her Master's degree in Crop Protection, Entomology. She also studied in France and then moved to the United States in 2006. She worked as a research associate in the Department of Entomology at Louisiana State University. For the past 7 years, she has worked as a Research Scientist and Quality Assurance Auditor conducting multidisciplinary

studies on a variety of crops, first with Barbara and Grady Coburn in Central Louisiana, and then with Madeline and Charlie Mellinger in South Florida. Anna has always been passionate about agricultural research and education. Her goal is to continue to work with consultants and researchers to be able to serve better the NAICC and the agricultural community.

Melissa lives in Great Bend, Kansas and obtained her Master's degree in Agriculture from Colorado State University. Six years ago, she began her research career at Diamond Ag in Larned, Kansas working on GLP Residue Studies, Efficacy and GMO trials. Melissa also spent time working and traveling around Australia completing studies with Eurofins and Peracto. Now, she has opened her own facility, Performance Crop Research where she continues residue, efficacy and GMO studies and has expanded to begin hemp research in Kansas. Melissa's ambitions are based upon a foundation of the importance of agriculture and educating people about its significance. Melissa works with her husband, Aaron on their large family farm and has two children. She looks forward to continuing to grow and work within the NAICC community and is thankful for all the connections and mentors made throughout the years.

John grew up in West Texas as a fourth



Leadership Candidates Anna Meszaros, Melissa Nelson, John Gottula

generation Lubbockite. He also has roots in Elk Creek, Nebraska where he grows a high-density apple orchard. John studied horticulture at Texas Tech University and obtained a doctorate in plant pathology at Cornell University. He has published on a wide range of subjects from drought tolerance testing to evolutionary theory. John spent several years at Bayer supporting biotech safety assessments under Good Laboratory Practices before joining Croda. Croda is a background partner that develops, improves and supplies many familiar chemistries. At Croda, John contributes to product development, alliance management and technical service, supporting Plant Impact and other businesses. John currently resides in Raleigh, North Carolina with his wife Kelly and infant daughter Chloe.

Measuring Our Influence

by John Gottula, Ph.D.

I've lived in the country, town and city and fancy myself that I've grown up and outward by walking several paths in life. When my wife and I first moved to North Carolina we lived in a run-down neighborhood where the scene included a few destitute hangers-on. One of them named Arthur (who went by 'Bama) often stopped by for conversation and sometimes a meal. Once he contrasted his life experience to ours, saying "You see, I don't have a direct line to my Senator or Congressman," and proceeded to draw a connection between that and his hard life.

Few among us have a direct line or even a rapport with our elected federal representatives. I had never considered trying to contact my representatives before being invited to join many of NAICC's leaders for the Crawfish Boil on the Hill. Before joining the DC events, I spent time reading, watching videos and in a classroom lecture setting. I learned how to approach Senators or their staff (with a certain formality), what expectations to bring (build the relationship), and of course a dose of homespun wisdom you can't help but assimilate in an NAICC crowd (for example, "you're not learning anything if you're talking").

Having prepared a list of agenda items, rehearsed certain

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Continued from page 3.

talking points, and confirmed the scheduled meetings, we broke into groups and scattered to the offices of our elected officials. As a several time DC. tourist, I scarcely noticed the heavy but inconspicuous federal office buildings surrounding the Mall where the senatorial and congressional offices are located. We stood in line, passed a metal detector, and went to open offices where staff members greeted us with refreshments and chit-chat. Then, we sat with our elected official or a staff member delegated to meet on their behalf. Yes, it was that easy!

For these DC meetings, it is hard to gauge our level of success and perilous to set an expectation that includes a definite outcome. I certainly learned a lot about the regulatory cutting edge and think I helped others make new connections between a policy proposal and facts-on-the-ground. Although I discerned a correlation between NAICC policy preferences and a certain political affiliation, I had excellent dialogue with folks from Democrat and Republican offices.

What's more, I now find myself reading the tomes of public information provided by our Federal Government with less

cynicism and more interest. For example, a bill is being introduced to eliminate a certain chemistry critical for pest control on several crops. When I spoke out against this bill, a staff member of my Congressional representative told me they were following this issue "very closely". As of this writing, my representative has not been listed as one of 89 co-sponsors on that bill. His lack of co-sponsorship bucks the trend of his fellow urban and suburban representatives from his political party. That is something.

Having returned from DC., I still do not have a direct line to my Senator or Congressman. But we talked with people representing both parties, reconciled our wants with those of related interest groups, and perhaps tilted a needle in the mind of a staffer just enough to convince a member of Congress to act in the interest of the US farmers and their crop consultants. At NAICC, our diversity of experiences improves our collective credibility and geographically distributed membership expands our influence. We live in the country, towns and cities, and having walked many paths; we have something important to share with our elected officials – including our homespun wisdom.

Consultants Cultivating Excellence Harvest Awards

NAICC consultants have been recognized throughout the agriculture industry by receiving awards this spring to honor their hard work and dedication. Ray Young of Wisner, Louisiana was honored by the Southern Cotton Ginners Association with the Vandergriff Pioneer Award. Dr. Grady Coburn of Cheneyville, Louisiana received the Louisiana Agriculture Hall of Distinction Award from the LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Radio Network,

Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. COTTON FARMING magazine awarded Mark Scott from Slaton, Texas it's 37th Cotton Consultant of the Year. RICE FARMING magazine announced Richard Costello from Oak Grove, Louisiana as it's Rice Consultant of the Year. MID-AMERICA FARMER presented Amy Beth Dowdy with Consultant of the Year distinction. Congratulations to all.



Mr. Ray Young of Wisner received the Vandergriff Pioneer Award



Dr. Grady Coburn received the Louisiana Agriculture Hall of Distinction Award



Mark Scott



Richard Costello



Amy Beth Dowdy

USDA Launches New Farmers.gov Features To Help With H2A Applications, Managing Loans

(WASHINGTON, D.C., April 3, 2019) – Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched two new features on farmers.gov to help customers manage their farm loans and navigate the application process for H2A visas.

“Customer service is our top priority at USDA and these new features will help our customers as they manage their farm loans and navigate the H-2A temporary agricultural visa program,” said Secretary Perdue. “In my travels across the country, I have consistently heard people express a desire for greater use of

technology in the way we deliver programs at USDA. As we adopt new technology, we are introducing simple yet innovative approaches to support our farmers, ranchers, producers, and foresters as they support the nation every day. It’s my goal to make USDA the most effective, most efficient, most customer-focused department in the entire federal government, and farmers.gov is a big step in that direction.”

To read the full press release click <https://bit.ly/2vpE47J>

NAICC Welcomes New Sustaining Member Farmwave

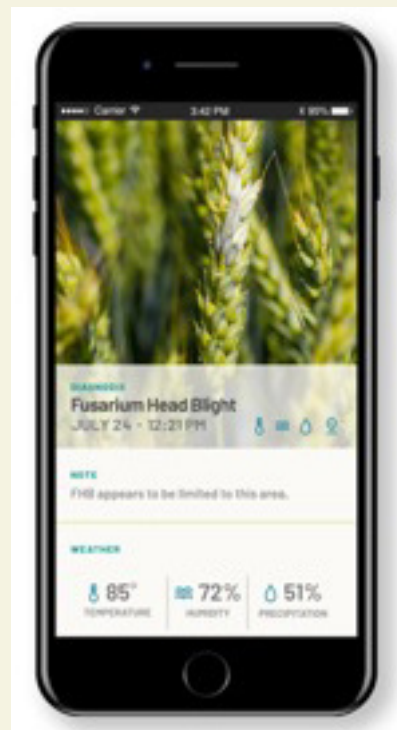
We are a seasoned team of visionaries, technical engineers, designers, and strategists working together to put advanced technology to practical use. We build smart software to help agriculture get the most out of the industry and those that empower food, giving them the data they need to make better decisions. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=13&v=m1xDEiO2Mm0

Our mission is to transform the world’s agricultural information into AI data models that power decision-making and preserve the future of farming; it’s about building a legacy.

Our vision is to build the new decision support ecosystem for agriculture- transforming information from technology, people, and data into decisions to reduce crop destruction and to increase yields by 20-30%.

We’re out to solve problems. Growers are using ad hoc social media platforms instead of a dedicated, ag-focused solution. Cross-platform integrations between drones, sensors, and software are non-existent. Time-based decisions are not automated, contain

bias, and do not promote predictive model-based decision support. When it comes to the large organizations, Communication doesn’t align, Integration into 3rd party SaaS does not exist, High volumes of data with no AI-specific model built to provide decision support to customers.



Tech

Pest and pathogen identification powered by Farmwave’s powerful AI CORE- developed specifically for agriculture and validated by PhD SMEs.



People

Farmers can connect with one another in a agriculture-focused communications medium.



Data

Farmers and their team can connect Farmwave to the technology they already use, reaping the combined might of a comprehensive data picture.

Member Corner

1. Name: **Grif Vlietstra**

2. Company Name:
Centrol Crop Consulting

3. Location (City, State):
Baltic, SD

4. Years as a NAICC Member:
17

5. 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 grew up on a grain and swine farm in NW Iowa and was always involved on the farm. Initially, I had thought I would go back and farm, but at that time the farm could not support 2 families, so I went to work for Centrol and 21 years later I'm still here!

6. What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Sorting through the quickly changing technology world and do/will the changes benefit myself or my clients.

7. What is the one piece of technology you wouldn't want to be without in your business?

Cell phone (although it would be awesome some days to not have it!)

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

You need to have a passion about what you do.

9. What have some of your contributions to NAICC been (including committee service, board membership, any traditions or programs you've helped to establish, etc.)?

Chairman of the certification committee. Director on the FEAE board.

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

My wife Summer and I have a pot belly pig sanctuary called Happy Pig Haven and currently have over 90 pot belly pigs. We discovered 7 years ago there was a growing need for a safe and nurturing place for these pigs, especially the older ones. Many are relinquished by an owner because of size, or the fun wears off, etc., and most people don't realize how long they can live.

Midwest Flooding

The states of Nebraska and Iowa suffered a serious blow with the heavy flooding that started on March 13th. The damages were the result of a string of unlikely events that fit together to cause great hardship and economic loss to the citizens of these states. Click <https://naicc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/Ag-Advisory-3-28-19.pdf> for the full article from Ag Advisory and <https://bit.ly/2vqP194> for a video FDWB - 4/3/19 Post-Flood - Elkhorn River rerouting

AGCHEM Summit 2019: Focusing On Discovering Environmental Solutions With Precision

The long-anticipated agenda for AgChem Summit 2019: Focusing on Discovering Environmental Solutions with Precision is here! The agenda will highlight the environmental regulatory landscape, ecotoxicology, biocontrol agents, big data and more. The 2019 program with feature speakers from Syngenta, BASF, Brandt iHammer, AgBiome, Corteva Agriscience, Produce Marketing Association and more!

Register: <https://www.agrochemicalsummit.com/register/event-sessions>

Website: <https://www.agrochemicalsummit.com/>

Speakers: <https://www.agrochemicalsummit.com/speakers>

Agenda: <https://www.agrochemicalsummit.com/agenda/day-1-june-12th>

Business For Sale:

Florida Pesticide Research, Inc. located just NE of Orlando, twenty five minutes from Orlando International Airport. This twenty eight acre research farm is planted in citrus, peaches, sugarcane, bananas, etc. The irrigation comes from artesian well and is set up with overhead as well as drip for vegetable production. There is paved road frontage. There is fully enclosed barn on slab with electric. Property is fully fenced. We are also selling assorted tractors, trucks, farm machinery, and various office equipment. We have been in business for over 32 years and have GLP and efficacy trials in progress.

Please contact Tom Minter at 407-921-7827.

NAICC Canvasses Capitol Hill



Anna Meszaros, Senator Ralph Abraham (Louisiana), Auston Stroschien, Melissa Nelson, Ray Young, John Gottula



Brady O'Callahan, Congressman Mike Johnson (Louisiana), Ray Young



Bert Pena (Troutman Sanders), Sandy Mackie



Congressman and Mrs. Don Young (Alaska), Dennis Hattermann



John Gottula with Sandy Mackie Hill Visits Washington D.C.



Ray Young, Congressman Doug LaMalfa (California), Debra Keenan



Steve Hoffman and James Todd



Congress Jim Baird (Indiana), Matt Eich



Donna Landis, Deb Fischer (Nebraska), Clark Poppert, Grant McMillan, Steve Hoffman



Grant McMillan, Ray McAllister (CropLife)



Executive Board, Government Affairs and Leadership Program members prep for meetings on Capitol Hill.



Dennis Hattermann, Ray McAllister (CropLife), John Gottula, Jim Steffel



Kevin Norton (NRCS), Matt Eich, Representative Dusty Johnson (South Dakota)



Roger Musick, Congressman Austin Scott (Georgia), Dennis Hattermann, Melissa Nelson



Senator Ben Sasse (Nebraska), Clark Poppert



Dennis Hattermann, Ray McAllister (CropLife), John Gottula, Jim Steffel



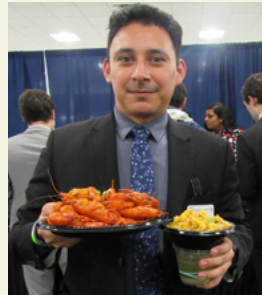
Crawfish Boil on the Hill 2019



CBOH Welcome Table



*Congressman Tim Burchett (Tennessee),
Ray Young*



Good Food!



James Todd, Mike Seyfert (FMC)



From left: Jim Steffel, James Todd, Tim Ford, a.k.a da' Chef, and Steve Hoffman



*Leadership Candidates Melissa Nelson and Anna Meszaros at the
CBOH Welcome Table*

Snapshot in Time

2019 April Families in Consulting/Research



Insect Counting in a hotspot. WI



Checking to make sure the planted stuff comes up. LA.



Interning Nephew in Sugarcane LA.



Farm Kid 2 NE



Inspecting young corn planted into soybean residue. LA



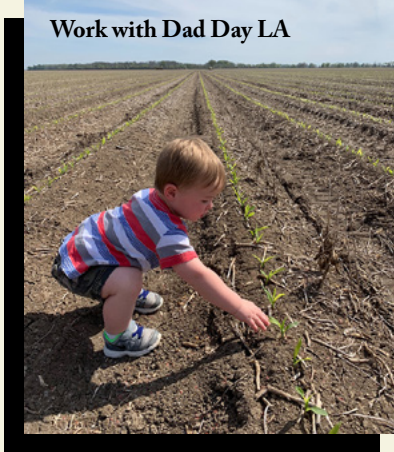
Farm Kid NE



Working with Dad Day LA



Work with Dad Day LA



Work with Dad Day LA



Counting aphids ID



Young Transplant Crew CA

The original intent of Snapshot in Time was for a single picture to be taken from April 1st thru the 7th in your location. There was not much was happening in the states that still had winter temperatures as “old” pictures were submitted so the committee has opted to include one photo for every entrant in this round. Congratulations to Blaine Viator of Calvin Viator, Ph.D. and Associates in Louisiana as the winner of the random drawing for a \$50 gift card.

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Agriculture Education.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

amazonsmile

Always log onto smile.amazon.com
for your purchases to qualify

The correct answer from the February
newsletter was Blinky (from The Simpsons).

Congratulations to Renee Daniel for winning
the gift card!

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

**What is the name of the movie that features
the iconic scene shown below?**



Submit your answer here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/Fm4rljtsRcdEuwBr2>

copy and paste link in browser

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

Quote to Ponder

**You can't go back and change the
beginning, but you can start where you
are and change the ending. ~C.S.Lewis**



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