



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

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



By
Matt Winslow
NAICC
2020 President

NAICC Marches On

By Matt Winslow, with James Todd

Once again, as I am writing this article, I should be somewhere else. This time of year, the NAICC Executive Board and Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC) is in Washington, DC visiting with our Representatives and Senators as well as officials from USDA, EPA, and other agencies. Due to COVID, DC is still not open for face to face meetings. This also precludes us from having our annual Crawfish Boil on the Hill again. We hosted this reception for 22 straight years but had to cancel in 2020 and 2021. We hope to get back in 2022, if not sooner.

The Executive Board is discussing meeting in DC in the fall when it is estimated that people will be back in the office and not working from home. But until then, we are still very active interacting with officials on Zoom and conference calls as well as submitting comments to EPA. We have several policymakers participating in our webinars that run through the end of March. Check out our [NAICC ACADEMY](#).

James Todd, GAC Chair, presented in the first Consultant Education Committee webinar and outlined NAICC's activities

from 2020. His presentation entitled 2020 NAICC GAC: Year in Review & Where to Next is summarized below.

In 2020, the committee focused on Imidacloprid Support, Bt PIP Refuge Requirements, Paraquat aerial label crop restrictions, FIFRA Reform and Dicamba. NAICC submitted comments to the U.S. EPA in support of reregistration of imidacloprid. The decision is expected in the first quarter of 2021. In November 2020, NAICC submitted comments to EPA on the draft proposal to improve lepidopteran resistance management for Bt plant-incorporated protectants (PIP). NAICC agrees with EPA's proposal to establish a system to categorize UXI (Unexpected injury level) reports as Practical Resistance to facilitate improved communications among stakeholders and timely implementation of mitigation actions around the UXI location based on standardized BMP's. Several members contributed examples of why compliance with block refuge requirements is difficult as well as why eliminating VIP3 traits in corn in the south will be potentially harmful to corn growers.

EPA was proposing to limit Paraquat aerial applications only to cotton for defoliation/desiccation. NAICC submitted comments to EPA in support of the aerial application of paraquat to several crops including soybeans, wheat, sorghum, and dry beans. The Neguse/Udall FIFRA Reform Bill that is being considered for introduction in the House of Representatives would significantly change key parts of FIFRA and would replace EPA's science-based risk/benefit system with a more European Union type hazard-based process. Crop Life America is in the process of individual virtual calls with the staff of every member of Congress explaining the risks of this type of shift.

NAICC has participated in several of these calls. On October 28, 2020, EPA approved new five-year registrations for two dicamba products and extending the registration of an additional dicamba product. NAICC also submitted comments to EPA in favor of these registrations.

Issues we are currently following are Worker Protection Standard, Endangered Species Act, IR-4 funding and Organophosphate (OP's) reregistration. Stay tuned and watch for updates in the NAICC column in The Scoop.



March 23, 2021

2:00pm to 3:30pm EDT
Emerging & Evolving Technology
FREE! No Registration Required
[CLICK HERE](#) to Join the Webinar Live on March 23
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March 24, 2021

2:00pm to 4:00pm EDT
Virtual Auditing Webinar
Sponsor and CRO Perspective
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March 25, 2021

2:00pm to 4:00pm EDT
Focus On Precision Webinar
Using Technology to Better Serve Our Clients
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Happenings on the Hill

By Rick Kesler, Governmental Affairs Liaison

AG LEADERS OF 117TH U.S. CONGRESS NAMED

Secretary of Ag

The Senate voted 92-7 to confirm Tom Vilsack. He is the 32nd Secretary of Agriculture. Vilsack previously served for eight years as head of USDA under former President Obama. Vilsack's priorities include: Climate change and initiatives to lower carbon emissions from farms, response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and racial justice and equality.

Senate Ag Committee Chairman

Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) stated that her priorities are: Climate change, response to COVID-19 by improving access to food assistance, the supply chain, and preparing for the next Farm Bill.

House Ag Committee Chairman

David Scott (D-GA) said he plans to prioritize: Food security, Racial equality, the Farm Bill, and Climate change.

ATRAZINE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA)

NAICC submitted comments to U.S. EPA supporting the continued use of atrazine as a foundation for weed control programs and as a key ingredient in herbicide mixtures. Atrazine is also a critical resistance management tool for water hemp and palmer amaranth. Comments on the broader issue of compliance with the ESA and critical habitat were also included in the paper. Such as identifying critical habitat on a county wide level does little to improve or develop critical habitat. Mapping critical habitats on a voluntary basis into a GIS system would be a better method for pinpointing, protecting and developing these areas.

Chlorpyrifos Comments

NAICC signed on with the Pesticide Policy Coalition (PPC) and submitted comments to EPA in support of the reregistration of chlorpyrifos. The continued need was pointed out on major crops along with several minor crops like cherries, sugarbeets, citrus, strawberries, asparagus and many others. One of the key issues that will determine if chlorpyrifos receives its reregistration is if the 10x FQPA safety factor is adopted. Current registration is based on a 1x safety factor and the studies that suggest that a 10x safety factor is warranted are in question. If a 10X safety factor is adopted, reregistration on several crops would be in question.

Paraquat Comments

NAICC submitted comments to U.S. EPA on the Paraquat Proposed Interim Reregistration Review. The comments focused on the benefits of continued registration in many crops including dry beans, sorghum, soybeans, alfalfa, cotton, wheat stubble and sunflowers. Aerial application for cotton desiccation and other uses was also supported.

Glyphosate Comments

NAICC is cooperating with the PPC preparing draft comments for the glyphosate biological evaluation to be submitted by the March 12 deadline.

Executive Orders

President Biden has created Executive Orders at an unprecedented rate. Comments from his administration indicate that the following are areas where EO's have already been made or are areas of interest for future orders: Climate change (this is a biggie), chlorpyrifos is mentioned, "dangerous chemicals and pesticides" is mentioned, creation of a Civilian Climate Corp., creation of more union jobs, review of Navigable Water of The U.S., and cancellation of the Keystone Pipeline.

NAICC PARTICIPATED IN VIRTUAL MEETINGS ON ACEP AND RCPP FINAL RULES

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program Final Rule (ACEP)

The ACEP provides assistance to landowners to help conserve and protect agricultural lands and wetlands by directly acquiring or assisting the purchase of conservation easements on private or tribal lands. The 2018 Farm Bill authorizes a 5-year total of \$2.25B between 2019-2023. So far, they have restored easements on just under 4 million acres.

There were 70 respondents during the public comment period, and they made over 500 individual comments. NRCS responded to and incorporated many of those comments into the Final Rule. Most of these changes seemed small and many of them were just clarifications of the original program, along with some additional clarifications around definitions.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Through RCPP, NRCS and state, local, and regional partners coordinate resources to help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. RCPP furthers the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife, and related natural resources on eligible land.

FEAE 2021 Scholarship Winners

Congratulations! Agustin Nunez from Colorado State University is the recipient of the \$3,000 Edward H. Lloyd Memorial Scholarship, and Clayton Nevins from University of Florida is the winner of the \$2,000 Wilbur Ellis Graduate Scholarship.

Audrey Pelikan from University of Wisconsin is the 2021 FEAE \$3,000 Richard Jensen Scholarship winner. Two students were awarded a \$1,500 FEAE Scholarship sponsored by Belchim Crop Protection: Forest Hanson from North Dakota State University and Cristina Griffith from Mississippi State University.



Agustin Nunez



Clayton Nevins



Audrey Pelikan



Forest Hanson



Cristina Griffith

FEAE Promotional Video

View the FEAE's video on scholarships and plans for 2021 and the future by [clicking here](#). The Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education (FEAE) supports the education goals and activities of the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC) by providing financial assistance for quality educational training for independent crop and research consultants, by sponsoring the annual Richard L. Jensen Memorial speaker at the annual meeting, and by providing scholarship endowments to students pursuing careers in agriculture.

You can support the FEAE by mailing the form printed from FEAE website: www.thefeae.org, or you donate electronically at naicc.org/donate.

Belchim USA and LACA Honor Award Annual Scholarship

Belchim Crop Protection USA (Belchim USA) has announced it has awarded a \$2,000 LACA Scholarship in conjunction with the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association to Peters Egbedi, a Louisiana State University doctoral student in agronomy. This is the third year in which Belchim USA and the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association have come together to honor students based on academic achievement, leadership qualities, and active research in row crop agriculture. Egbedi first earned a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, then a Master's degree in Environment, Health, and Safety from the University of Sunderland, United Kingdom. Egbedi's third degree is a doctorate in agronomy with a focus on cover crops and conservation tillage as sustainable crop production practices for improving soil health and crop productivity. He hopes that he adds to the noble goal of achieving food security in a sustainable manner through such research.

Leon Lucas Receives IPM Award

Congratulations to Leon Lucas District Manager, Glades Crop Care Inc., who was a recipient of a 10th International IPM Achievement Award! Lucas was recognized as IPM Practitioner – Non-Academic. These awards celebrate individuals and groups that have made outstanding achievements in IPM adoption, implementation, and sustainability. Check out the webpage for more information on the winners: <https://ipmsymposium.org/2022/awards.html>.

Spotlight On Sustaining Member



Soiltech Wireless aims to take the guesswork out of improving crop production.

Inspired to overcome the gaps and challenges in a crop's production cycle, Soiltech was founded in 2017 to help farmers improve crop production by providing actionable insights through wireless monitoring.

Taking a grassroots approach to innovation, Soiltech worked hand-in-hand with growers, agriculture scientists, and industry researchers to make sure its technology solution was addressing real pain points, as well as being simple-to-use, affordable and of high-value for all farmers. Thus, the Soiltech solution evolved into a multifunctional device with features that provided value across an entire crop production cycle (growth, harvest, transport, storage).

Originally conceived on potato farms in Idaho, Soiltech's Solution is now used across a wide variety of crops around the world. From its unique wireless sensor design that travels with a crop from soil to storage, to its expansive cloud platform and services for turning data into actionable insights, Soiltech and its clients continue to uncover new use cases and value creation almost daily.

How it Works

The solution consists of a wireless sensor device, cloud platform, cellular service and mobile app. It comes pre-activated and ready to use making it simple to get started. Unique to the industry, the wireless device is designed to travel with a crop throughout the whole production cycle. At each phase in the cycle, the device monitors and wirelessly transmits data to the cloud utilizing existing cellular towers. The data is then transformed into actionable insights readily available to view anytime, anywhere, via the mobile app or web platform.



For example, during the growth phase the device is buried in the ground with the crop at planting. Once buried, the sensor monitors conditions (soil moisture, soil temperature, humidity) throughout the growing season. At the end of the season, the device can be harvested together with the crop and monitors for impacts (gforce, location) in real-time to alert farmers for quick mitigation and help avoid crop damage. During post-harvest transport, the device tracks a crop's travel (location, route, temperature, humidity, impacts) from field to the storage facility. During storage the device monitors the environmental conditions (location, temperature, humidity) to minimize crop damage and waste.



More of the Device and Data

The wireless device utilizes CAT-M1 and NB-IOT LTE technology that allows for greater reach in range, bandwidth, and data load over existing cell towers. The device is designed to wirelessly transmit data even while buried in ground and through crop cover. This eliminates the need for a farmer to install his own gateway or other devices to aid with the connectivity. And it is designed to go through a full production cycle on a single charge (11-12mo).

The device, which can be recharged and used over multiple seasons, costs \$420 plus an annual \$79 fee for the cellular service and cloud access. All the data collected is stored securely in the cloud where it is always accessible by the client.



Looking into the Future

The ultimate goal for Soiltech is automation. A near term focus is automating pivots and the irrigation process - so that growers can pre-set moisture thresholds which, when breached, will automatically communicate with irrigation systems to take action. Soiltech has been busy working on this with growers and water irrigation system manufacturers to derive a solution that is simple-to-use, affordable and of high-value for all farmers.

About the Company

Founder: Ehsan Soltan

Headquarters: Rupert, Idaho

Website: soiltechwireless.com

NAICC Mourns the Loss of Two Members

Bruce L. Blankenship, age 63, of Kearney, passed away Sunday, December 27, 2020 at CHI Health Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney. Bruce served as the Executive Director for the Nebraska Independent Crop Consultants Association (NICCA) for 30 years.



Blankenship was born on January 16, 1957 in Superior, Nebraska to Alvin (Dale) and Virginia Blankenship. The family moved to Kearney in the spring of 1966. He married Tammy Davenport on March 15, 1986. He was a graduate of Kearney High School and Kearney State College (UNK). His professional career spanned 40 plus years and includes stints as a staff member and President of the Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce, York Chamber of Commerce, Buffalo County Visitors Bureau, Executive Director of the Kearney Catholic High School Foundation and Business Development Officer at Farmers and Merchants Bank. He had further professional relationships with the Nebraska Independent Crop Consultant Association, Ward Laboratories, Inc., Nebraska Charolais Association, Nebraska Seed Trade Association and others through a part time consulting business.

However, he took the most joy in his 34-year marriage to Tammy and watching the achievements of his sons Brett, Brock and daughter-in-law Chloe. There was never enough time for his grandsons Titus and Asher who he loved so dearly.

Olan Kenney Moore, born March 26, 1947 passed away on February 17, 2021. Olan was a member of NAICC for a brief time and attended several NAICC meetings.



Olan graduated from Wellington High School and obtained a Master of Science degree in Entomology from Texas Tech University. He worked as an entomologist for the county extension agent's office in Castro County then went into business for himself working with farmers in that area. Olan and his family moved back to Lubbock in 1990 but he continued to work with the farmers in Castro County. Olan also taught school in Nazareth, TX and at Lubbock Christian University. Olan lived life to the fullest, was an avid outdoorsman, and loved to fly his plane. He was devoted to his family and friends and always looking out for everyone else. He had a love for tinkering in the shop with his grandsons and cooking his grand meals for the family.



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The correct answer from the October
newsletter was The Great Pumpkin.

Congratulations to Albert Kertho
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 animated and
deliriously confused leporid?



Submit your answer here:

<https://forms.gle/3JL2GLdcBCjmJL4p6>

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

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.



2021 Newsletter Committee:

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**National Alliance
of Independent
Crop Consultants**

Allison Jones Executive Vice President
Donna Landis Director of Member Services

700 Wood Duck Drive
Vonore, TN 37885
Phone: 423.884.3580 Fax: 423.884.3199
E-mail: AllisonJones@naicc.org
memberservices@naicc.org
www.naicc.org

Matt Winslow, M.S. President

Tidewater Agronomics, Inc.
313 Turnpike Road
Belvidere, NC 27919
252-297-2010
matt.winslow@tidewaterag.com