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Upcoming events

December 10-13, 2013

ASTA Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Research
Chicago, IL

December 24-25, 2013

ICIA Office Closed, Christmas

December 31 - January 1, 2013/14

ICIA Office Closed, New Year

January 14-16, 2014

IPSA Annual Meeting
St. Louis, MO

January 25-28, 2014

ASTA Vegetable & Flower Conference
Monterey, CA

February 4-6, 2014

Corn Belt Seed Conference
Indianapolis, IN

March 12, 2014

Illinois-Indiana Seed Conditioning Workshop
Champaign, IL

Conaway's Column

by Aaron Conaway, President, ICIA

As fall continues, everyone in the seed industry takes this time to prepare for winter, as well as reflect on the crop year, and just like every other year, there are several different topics to assess. The industry as a whole got a late start to planting, some areas had more challenges than others, but for the most part acres were planted quickly, just really late. The growing season went well for most areas, although the summer was cooler than average, most areas had adequate rainfall. During late summer and early fall, the rain became scarce and the heat kicked in. The heat was a welcome sight, as it was a big factor in helping mature the late crops. Overall, the year had its traditional peaks and valleys, and most people are putting finishing touches on harvest. In most cases yields and quality have turned out to be extremely good, which has been helpful for the industry since it started with a short supply.

Harvest might be finishing up for some, but the lab at ICIA is in full swing. The staff continues to work hard, but they have been working even harder since the board finalized and approved the new strategic plan in August. The new plan is challenging, yet at the same time exciting because it outlines 4 specific goals, including measurements and timeliness for each goal. The document is structured to be a living and active document which gives the staff, management, and the board of directors objectives to work towards. It is not only structured for the current staff and board, but it will be used to provide some continuity between board meetings, as well as year after year. The board will review and monitor 1 goal at each board meeting, as well as review and discuss the timeline and measurements that go along with each goal. This strategic plan has been in the works for over a year, it has been a large undertaking, and I want thank all who have invested their time in making this plan a great success. It is an important document which will guide the organization for many years to come.

As you prepare for winter, I remind you to mark your calendar for the Corn Belt Seed Conference (CBSC) on February 5th & 6th. This year is slated to be another fantastic conference. If you have never attended the CBSC then this year is a perfect time to start. No other conference delivers these types of relevant topics and caliber of speakers all at one time. The conference will kick off with a pre-conference workshop on February 4th, which will focus on employee development. This is a one of a kind opportunity to provide education and training to all levels of your organization which will help improve the overall success of your organization.



Aaron Conaway, President
Total Seed Production
Tipton, IN



ISTA Board President, ICIA Board member, weightlifter, golfer and on a motorcycle somewhere in the Corn Belt!



Bruce Searle, Operations Manager
AgReliant Genetics, ISTA
President, ICIA Board Member

B Rooted in Ag from the Start

ruce Searle grew up on a farm in western Illinois so agriculture has truly been a way of life since birth. He continued on this path by pursuing a bachelor's degree in Ag Science and then a Master's in Agronomy from the University of Illinois.

Bruce is the Corn Operations Manager at AgReliant Genetics. He oversees all of the corn manufacturing done by AgReliant; from contract growers and planting to harvest and processing at the nine AgReliant facilities. Prior to that role, he was the Field Operations Manager before transitioning to Production Location Manager at the company's Kankakee, IL plant.

Over the years, Bruce has experienced all the weather conditions with which Mother Nature can surprise a corn grower. Through it all he has managed each unique challenge while staying focused on the farmer. After college, Bruce went back home to farm for a few years, an experience that sets him apart and helps him understand the perspective of a grower. He keeps that farmer-focus top of mind every day.

There are a multitude of challenges in the seed industry today. In Bruce's opinion one of the biggest challenges is the sheer level of competition within the industry and then navigating a successful path through that sea of competition. There are so many companies with competitive products and access to vast resources. "As

an independent organization we need to find our niche, do what only WE can do and do it well," said Bruce. Another challenge becoming more evident in our industry, Bruce noted, is finding qualified job candidates who also understand agriculture. Individuals with an agriculture background who want to work in industry versus returning to their family farm can be hard to come by.

It is People that Make the Difference

At AgReliant Genetics, the philosophy of surrounding yourself with great people and building a company based on valuing and utilizing the unique talents they bring to the table has been an effective way for AgReliant to navigate the dynamic nature of our industry. "By hiring the right people, like we have at AgReliant, in every area of the business, from sales and marketing to operations and research to internal support, we are all a part of the team and can all contribute to our success," Bruce said.

Opportunities to Give Back

Bruce is the current President of the Indiana Seed Trade Association (ISTA). The ISTA keeps an eye on legislation that could potentially impact the agricultural community and industry. Bruce values the role of ISTA, as they are the representatives for the state's seed industry - there is strength in numbers and together with their members, the ISTA has the ability to make an impact. It is through his role as the ISTA Board President that Bruce also has an ex-officio position on the ICIA Board of Directors. Bruce's take on the role of ICIA, "it is critically important in terms of seed quality assurance. Their role in maintaining the high level of Indiana seed quality is of great benefit to our industry and our farmer customers."

At the End of the Day...

What is most important to Bruce? Professionally, at the end of the day knowing the customer opens a bag of AgReliant corn and sees a product that he can be confident in and he's done his part to create that feeling. On a personal level? "Personally, at the end of the day, I want to go to bed each night knowing that I've done the best that I can to uphold Christian values in my actions," Bruce said.

A Vision Realized

“It is with great enthusiasm and pride that we announce our new and improved website launch, says Liz Pestow, ICIA Marketing Director. This has been an ongoing project for quite some time and it’s very exciting to see it come to fruition.”

Same address, New look

Current members who visit the indianacrop.org on a regular basis will still find all the resources they are accustomed to utilizing. The navigation is improved; much more intuitive than the previous design and the content is organized in a manner that clearly outlines the services we provide to the industry. New visitors will also benefit from the updated look and functionality of the website. “Just the redesign of the homepage will help give first time visitors an idea of who we are and what we do,” says Alan Galbreth, ICIA, CEO.

Dynamic and Flexible

The new site was built around a Content Management System tool to be used by ICIA staff. This will make it easier to share industry news, quality information updates and add more educational resources in a timely fashion. It will also allow us to customize some of the content based on member feedback. Liz adds, “The website will become a living, breathing thing that we tweak and enhance on a regular basis in order to stay current and be a go-to for the seed industry.”

Visit www.indianacrop.org today - tell us what you think of our new look!



Indianapolis Marriott North, Keystone



PLAN TO ATTEND!

Mark your calendars now for the 2014 Corn Belt Seed Conference.

This major seed meeting is scheduled for February 4-6, 2014 at the Indianapolis Marriott North, Keystone. The pre-conference session on Tuesday, February 4 is a must-attend for management and their staff! We have a line-up of industry leaders focused on improving your workforce. These sessions include: Creating an Organizational Culture, Working with Multiple Generations, Career Path Development and Accountability in the Workplace.

The CBSC will feature keynote, Clyde Fessler, retired VP, Harley Davidson Motors on Wednesday, February 5. The afternoon continues with the Impact of Commodity Prices on Today’s Farming and Building Trust in the Food Industry. The conference session continues on Thursday with updates regarding Health Care Reform and Immigration in the Workplace and a Farmer Survey.

The Corn Belt Seed Conference offers a great opportunity to learn and network with your colleagues in the industry. Visit the conference website at www.cbsconference.org or for further information contact Susan Overdorf at 765-523-2535.

“Doing what is best for the customer”



**Barb McMullan, Vice President
Product Research, Illinois
Foundation Seeds, Inc./SGI,
ICIA Board Member**

Despite growing up on a grain farm in Northern Illinois, Barb McMullan had early aspirations of pursuing a career as a forest ranger. However, her later experience of detasseling and pollination in a research nursery and the influence of Dr. Bob Briggs took her down a career path in the seed industry.

McMullan, VP of Product Research with Illinois Foundation Seeds, Inc./SGI says there is great excitement and many opportunities in the seed industry. “We continue to see new start up seed companies in the midst of consolidation and I think that is very good for those of us who provide services.”

Most days, you might find it difficult catching up with Barb. She maintains a busy travel schedule and works diligently at staying on track with the latest traits in today’s ever-changing direction of agriculture. McMullan, works with IFSI’s five research stations to bring products to market through the SGI hybrid testing system. Barb works with originators and trait providers, gathering information to bring together a successful product lineup for IFSI’s sales team and customer’s. She takes the approach of “doing what is best for the customer and doing so with integrity.”

“Today’s technology gives us moment to moment access to information to view agriculture at a global level. “The issues we face in agriculture have always existed – however, we now have the information, the resources and the technology at such a fast pace that we are better equipped to bring about change,” says Barb. When you consider the changes in agriculture, and how many years our business (IFSI) was primarily U.S. based, there has been such progress with international relationships and information sharing that now we are looking at developing seed at a global level.

Barb, who is in her first year on the ICIA Board of Directors, said it is a great opportunity to meet with others in the industry and learn about ICIA capabilities and services they provide to members. “The new native seed testing program and ICIA’s genetics lab bring high value services to the seed industry. ICIA’s thinking ‘outside of the box’ from conventional testing will continue to move them forward,” said Barb.

When Barb isn’t pursuing the latest and greatest traits and technologies for her customers, she values spending time with her husband, John and son Patrick, who works in production for Monsanto. Traveling is at the top of Barb’s favorite “to do” list - specifically international travel; however, a relaxing week in sunny Florida is always something she looks forward to. On a late, summer afternoon, you might find McMullan and her husband on the patio in the quiet surroundings of their home in West Lafayette.

Quality, Expertise and Commitment: Inside ICIA Laboratories

Autumn arrived in its usual fashion with a splendor of beautiful landscapes and cooler temperatures. As we anticipate, fall brings the return of football Saturday's with tailgating, store shelves stocked with candy corn and combines bringing in harvest from the fields. During the summer months, ICIA begins preparing for the fall season by increasing staff in its laboratories. This year, ICIA hired three new part-time staff for the 2013 testing season. "The addition of new part-time staff has generated enthusiasm among our staff and always leads to the development of fresh ideas," said Emily Dierking, ICIA Genetics Lab Director.

Bruce Graves, one of ICIA's newest lab technicians understands the importance of delivering quality, timely results to customers. He joins ICIA after working 10 years with Purdue Printing Services. Bruce said the credibility ICIA has with its customers is evident, "ICIA staff has continuous interaction with customers and we strive to meet their testing needs." Bruce had a concept of ICIA testing services prior to joining the staff, however he was not aware of the extent of their abilities in genetics testing. "There is a lot of expertise on staff - a great depth of knowledge in testing," stated Bruce.

The expertise of ICIA's staff lends itself to many active departments as the testing season is in full swing. The labs are busy providing customers with tests they have come to rely on - and new tests in our Native Seed Program.

John Rieser, ICIA lab technician works with the ICIA genetics team each morning - and then lends a hand in the conventional lab in the afternoon. "I'm learning something new each day - like the significance of testing for the adventitious presence of GMOs."

On any given day if you stop by the ICIA Technology Center for a tour, you will see an abundance of activity. "There are so many different tests going on in the labs," says Katherine Long, ICIA genetics lab technician. Katherine, a graduate of Purdue University in Ag Education says "When you think of farming; planting and harvest come to mind, however there are many aspects in between prior to seed going in to production."



*ICIA Genetics
Lab Technicians -
Pictured upper L to
R: Katherine Long,
John Rieser and
Bruce Graves*

It begins with field inspections - and following harvest, it continues with the testing season at the ICIA laboratories. "I'm impressed in working with the ICIA staff. They are focused on meeting the needs of customers and I'm learning their commitment to give 110% to work in getting the task at hand completed and delivering timely results."

Although Katherine has her teaching license, she is looking beyond teaching at this point in her career. She stated she enjoys working at ICIA "I want to stay connected in a unique way with the ag industry, this is a small company making a big difference!"

ICIA Trait Seminar



ICIA was pleased to host its annual trait testing seminar on Tuesday, October, 15th at the ICIA Technology Center. The session featured Dow, Monsanto and Syngenta representatives and was open to anyone interested in planning for the upcoming testing season, specifically understanding quality and testing requirements for certain biotech traits.

Please visit our website at www.indianacrop.org to view the presentations from the trait seminar or contact the ICIA office at 866-899-2518.

Seed Quality Update

In a normal season our average wheat germination is between 93 to 95 percent. This season, due to an increased presence of fusarium, wheat germination for untreated wheat samples is 87.7% and for treated is 91.7% on over 2,000 samples.

We have tested several carryover samples and are just now starting to test new crop corn and soybean samples. The testing averages below reflect a few new crop samples but mostly carryover. Quality generally looks good for both corn and soybeans for the recently harvested new crops and soybean moistures in the lab are also positive running between 12 and 13%. A reminder for soybeans if you do experience mechanical damage in a lot of seed, the Tetrazolium (TZ) Test is a quick test to predict the germination potential as well as the amount and severity of damage present.

For any of our members who move seed into Canada, please note that ICIA is authorized to assign Canadian grades. Having ICIA grade the seed eliminates the extra grading step that occurs when the seed crosses the border. If you have other crop types moving into Canada for which you need Canadian grading assigned, please call the ICIA office.

New to the ICIA Seed Lab this season we are excited to offer testing capabilities for additional crop types such as, Vegetable, Native, Reclamation and Wildflower species seeds. Please contact our Native Seed Program Director, Gil Waibel, for more information.

Please remember to submit a full 2 lb. sample of seed - especially when requesting multiple tests for that sample. Not only will this ensure we have enough seed on hand to complete all the requested tests, but we will also have a file sample to be used if a retest is required or other future reference. Thank you!

Soybeans

Warm Germ	95.0%
Cold Test	89.3%

Corn

Warm Germ	96.7%
Cold Test	93.1%

For more information or questions please contact Kevin Seward, RST, Seed Lab Director or Susan Dadacz, Sample Data Dept. Head at 866-899-2518 or email seward@indianacrop.org or dadacz@indianacrop.org.





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