

Donald Wyse Receives Achievement in Crop Improvement Award

University of Minnesota Professor Dr. Donald Wyse is the 2021 recipient of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association's Achievement in Crop Improvement Award. The award is MCIA's highest honor. It recognizes individuals who have contributed to the betterment of agriculture through their work and service to MCIA and the seed industry. Presented annually since 1972, the award is sponsored by *The Farmer* magazine.

It all began in 1974, when Don Wyse came to Minnesota to begin a weed science research and teaching position at the University of Minnesota. Northern Minnesota's grass seed industry and MCIA had lobbied to create the position, which was to focus on perennial weed management. Quackgrass was a particular problem in the Park Kentucky bluegrass fields of northern Minnesota.

When he began his work, Don worked with a host of MCIA seed producers and seed processors. Some of the names included Charles Habstritt, Gustav Kveen, Ed Baumgartner, Doc Berry, Yvonne Magnusson, and Evert Helmstetter. These families and others are part of an established tradition in which grass seed producers, MCIA, and the University of Minnesota all work together to produce high quality, certified grass seed for the global market.

Under Dr. Wyse's leadership, his research team made numerous discoveries that would help make a relatively new seed industry prosper in Minnesota. The work benefitted not only grass seed producers, but others involved in production agriculture. One of their efforts led to an herbicide-resistant form of perennial


ryegrass. Collaborating with Nancy Ehke's turf breeding program led to the development of perennial ryegrass varieties suitable for seed production in Minnesota.

Today, perennial ryegrass is a key part of the agricultural economy in the Roseau and Lake of the Woods region, where the cooler, wetter microclimate offers favorable growing conditions. Approximately 55,000 acres of grass seed is produced and processed annually in the northernmost part of the state.

Dr. Wyse has taken the collaborative philosophy that helped the grass seed industry succeed and applied it to other initiatives in which he has been involved, and there have been many. Most recently, he used that philosophy as a model for the Forever Green Initiative.

This program is focused on the development of new perennial and winter annual crops that can be incorporated into Minnesota's agriculture system. Prominent among them is the intermediate wheatgrass Kernza.

Dr. Wyse has played a leadership role in many efforts that have contributed to the success of the seed industry and agriculture in Minnesota. Expressing his appreciation for the recognition, Don said, "It really does take a village, from the grass seed producers and processors, the MCIA staff, my university cohorts and many others, that have led to the success of the grass seed industry in Minnesota."

Today, Dr. Wyse continues to make a difference, working to improve agriculture and to make Minnesota a better place. 



Donald Wyse, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota, looking at intermediate wheat grass.

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Foundation Seed Update

There are three new Minnesota soybean varieties available for certification or possible licensing. All three are good yielding, conventional varieties, with SCN resistance.

MN0811CN is a 0.8 maturity, with very good standability.

MN1807CN is a 1.8 maturity, with Rps1c *Phytophthora* resistance, and good standability.

MN1901CN is a 1.9 relative maturity, with good standability.

Contact MCIA for yield data and additional information.

Foundation Seed: We are still accepting seed orders. Contact MCIA for availability.

MCIA Presents Premier and Honorary Premier Seedsman Awards

The Minneosta Crop Improvement Association presented its Premier Seedsman awards at the MCIA Annual Meeting on January 13, 2021. Bob Ehlers, Clyde Kringlen, and Dennis and Dean Tarning received the Premier Seedsman Award. Randy Krzmarzick and Donn Vellekson were recipients of the Honorary Premier Seedsman Award.

Bob Ehlers owns and operates Red River Marketing Company, near Elbow Lake. Forty-five years ago, Bob and his brother began producing registered and certified seed. For many years, nearly the entire farm was in seed production. They grew wheat, oats, barley, and soybeans and worked with Adams Seed for conditioning. Some of the varieties back then included Era wheat, Morex barley and Evans soybeans. Today, in addition to producing certified public wheat varieties, Red River Marketing is also a Pioneer dealer.



Bob Ehlers

Bob's entry into the seed business was based on the belief that, "The farm economy cycles up and down, but farmers need quality seed every year." He states that one of the reasons he enjoys the seed industry and being involved in MCIA is the positive, quality people he has met and worked with over the years.

With a degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Minnesota, Bob built his own approved seed conditioning facility in 1994. He was also a partner in building a second seed facility in Thompson, North Dakota.

With a philosophy of helping others and finding blessings in every situation, Bob has been active in various local organizations, including his church and the area school board. An active MCIA member, he is currently vice chair of the board of directors and serves on various committees. 🌱

Clyde Kringlen, a native of Churches Ferry, North Dakota, has been associated with certified seed since he and his father purchased McIntosh Farm Service in 1981. He quickly took over management of the facility, which included an MCIA-approved seed plant.

His father taught him that they need to keep the farmers in business. They implemented that philosophy by working with

local seed growers, who in those early years grew certified seed of Marshall wheat, Robust barley, and Lodi oats.

Over the years, Clyde developed a passion for wheat seed production. In 2004, they sold the McIntosh facility and Clyde began working for Triangle Ag. There he worked with private seed companies and explored ways to enhance wheat production and improve profitability. Today he manages the wheat seed operations for West Central Ag Services.



Clyde Kringlen

Clyde is described as a mentor and someone who is willing to share his expertise with other seed producers. An optimist, he sees the value of wheat in the rotation and enjoys seeing the advancements being made in wheat production. As Clyde said, "I like to be involved in the changes and progress we see in agriculture."

He has been involved in the Minnesota Wheat Growers organization, the Polk County Crop Improvement, and the Larry Sing golf tournament to support ALS research. In service to his community, he has served on the McIntosh Fire and Rescue, the local school board and church council, and he even found time to be a girls' basketball coach. 🌱

The Tarning family has been producing seed corn since the 1960s. Ralph, father of Dean and Dennis, grew seed for Weather Master, Payco, and Top Farm Hybrids. In 1974, he built his own seed plant and began growing certified seed of small grains and soybeans.

Dean and Dennis grew up doing all the jobs necessary for seed production: detasseling and rogueing, sewing and stacking bags, and cleaning equipment. All the while they were learning the importance of quality and attention to detail.

In the spring of 1985, with support from their dad, Dean and Dennis made the decision to produce hybrid seed corn for their own retail brand, Tarning Seeds. Those first two hybrids have grown into a large-scale seed corn production operation.

Over the years, Tarning's have continued to grow and condition soybean seed. They have also mixed in some sweetcorn seed for Green Giant, popcorn, blue corn seed, and oats for export to Japan.

Their seed corn production facility has expanded several times. Today they have the capacity to produce, harvest, and dry production from over 6,000 acres. Early in 2020, they sold their retail brand and entered into a production agreement with Western Integrated Seed.

Throughout their years in the business, Dean and Dennis have learned from neighboring seed producers. They are grateful for the knowledge and they continue to work in cooperation with other local seed companies.

Dennis continues to manage the business side and Dean the production part of the operation. They both acknowledge that their success is due in part to longtime employees who take pride in producing high quality seed. [QR](#)

Randy Krzmarzick has been a reliable MCIA field inspector for 22 years. From his home farm near Sleepy Eye, he has walked thousands of acres across southwest Minnesota.

Hired by Jim Boots, Randy has spent a lot of time inspecting fields and writing reports. Modestly, Randy says that he is “glad to be a small cog in the seed industry.” When hired, his mother-in-law wanted to know if the job was safe. To date, outside of a couple of close encounters with skunks, and dogs with uncertain intentions, he has found it to be a great part-time job.

He has inspected fields for family-owned farms as well as multinational corporations. He enjoys the interactions with people across the industry. As Randy said, “Farmers know it all begins with a seed.”



Doris, Dennis, Dean, and Tonya Terning

planet. As a farmer himself, he likes looking at fields and seeing up close the different practices and techniques farmers use.

Randy is involved in the Brown County Farmers Union, the area food shelf, and other local organizations. He also writes a column in the *New Ulm Journal*. [QR](#)

Donn Vellekson began working at the University of Minnesota in 1975. Most of his time there has been devoted to research of turf grass and forage seed production. The results of his work have helped the grass seed industry prosper in Minnesota.

Donn grew up on a crop and livestock farm near Dawson in southwest Minnesota. A crop science major at the University of Minnesota Crookston, he was encouraged by Chuck Habstritt to seek a job with Dr. Laddie Elling on the St. Paul campus of the UMN Twin Cities.

Thus began Donn’s long and productive career. In the early years, much of the work was focused on seed production management of Kentucky bluegrass, timothy, and birdsfoot trefoil. Other grass and legume species were also investigated for their potential in northern Minnesota. Now, perennial ryegrass is a primary focus.

The location of much of Donn’s research work is near Roseau, which is about 370 miles from St. Paul. He makes the trip to Roseau roughly 14 times a year. Total that up over 45 years and he is close to 500,000 miles!

The Honorary Premier Seedsman Award, presented annually since 1930, recognizes individuals not directly involved in the seed industry but who have actively supported the seed industry, the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, and their local community.

Donn appreciates the cooperation he has received, stating, “The farmers, local coops, and folks in northern Minnesota have been great to work with through the years.” Today, Donn manages research on the Magnusson Research Farm, a 40-acre site donated to the University of Minnesota. The farm plays a critical role in the University’s turf, forage, and cover crop research, as well as its breeding projects.

Donn has maintained a good relationship with MCIA as well, producing and cleaning breeder seed of perennial crops and conducting ryegrass growouts. [QR](#)



Randy Krzmarzick

Randy loves the outdoors and most days it is great work. Walking fields on warm summer days or crisp clear September mornings is always pleasant. Mix in a thunderstorm, swarm of mosquitos, or a cold, windy fall day, just makes one appreciate the nice days even more.

The years of inspecting oats, wheat, soybeans, and occasionally corn has provided him the opportunity to see some of the best farmland on the



Donn Vellekson

MCIA Board of Directors Election Results

At the 118th MCIA Annual Meeting, hosted in Saint Paul and convened virtually on January 13, 2021, one new member was elected to the MCIA Board of Directors: Kelsey Henke of Anderson Seeds, St. Peter, Minnesota. Henke represents District 3. As well, incumbent directors Nat Forster, District 3; Denise Thiede, Related Industry; and Nancy Jo Ehlke, University of Minnesota, were reelected.

The board directors subsequently elected Brad Barth as their new chairman. The three other incumbent officers were all reelected to serve another one-year term leading the board.

A complete list of current board members follows:

OFFICERS

Brad Barth, Thief River Falls, Chairman
Bob Ehlers, Barrett, Vice Chairman
Duane Dahlman, Cokato, Secretary
Darius Thiel, Wendell, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Brent Benike, Baudette; Matt Bohn, Breckenridge; Nancy Jo Ehlke, UMN; Nat Forster, Hastings; Kelsey Henke, St. Peter; Grant Mehring, Fargo, ND; Denise Thiede, St. Paul

MCIA thanks all of the members of the Board of Directors for their service to the association!

Kelsey Henke Joins Board

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association welcomes Kelsey Henke to MCIA's Board of Directors. She was elected to represent District 3 at the MCIA Annual Meeting on January 13, 2021.

Kelsey Henke, who resides in Gaylord, is the fourth generation to be involved in Anderson Seeds of St. Peter, Minnesota. She has been involved in various aspects of the family seed corn business. She currently serves as sales and office manager. Independently, she raises market beef and maintains a small direct marketing business.

Kelsey holds an AS degree in agribusiness from South-Central College, North Mankato. Outside the family business, her work experience includes conducting audits and inspections for MCIA, seed testing work at BioDiagnostics, and serving as a crop scout during a summer internship with a local cooperative. Kelsey has been a 4-H volunteer for many years. She is also active in the Nicollet County Farm Bureau, serving as chair of the Young Farmers and Ranchers, and she serves as the secretary of the local corn and soybean growers' organization.



Kelsey Henke

Thank You, Sponsors!

MCIA thanks all the sponsors of our 2021 Annual Meeting: Albert Lea Seed, Bjerke Brothers, *The Farmer* magazine, Minnesota Corn Growers Association, Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council, Richland IFC, Running Wealth Management Group, and Soyko International.

Official Minutes of the 2021 Annual Business Meeting

Chairman Kurt Flegel called the 118th annual business meeting of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association to order at 10:25 a.m. on January 13, 2021. The virtual meeting, held via Zoom, was hosted at MCIA's office in St. Paul, Minnesota. Mr. Flegel confirmed that proper notice of the meeting had been published in the winter 2020 issue of the *Minnesota Seed Grower*. Mr. Flegel determined that a quorum was present and introduced the MCIA Board of Directors. The following agenda items were addressed.

Minutes and **Secretary's Report** of the 2020 MCIA Annual Meeting:

Treasurer Darius Thiel moved that the meeting minutes of the 2020 MCIA Annual Meeting, as published in the spring 2020 issue of the *Minnesota Seed Grower* and included in the meeting's documents, be approved. Vice Chairman Bob Ehlers seconded; the motion passed.

Treasure's Report: Mr. Flegel indicated that a Statement of Activities and Financial Position for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2020, was included in the meeting documents. Mr. Flegel noted that complete financial reports are received by the treasurer and chairman on a regular basis and at every regular board of directors meeting. At its November 2020 meeting, the board of directors received and accepted a report of the financial condition of the association, the result of an independent audit.

President's Report: Dr. Fawad Shah began by reporting MCIA's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. MCIA developed and implemented a preparedness plan, adopted from CDC and MDH guidelines to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the MCIA staff.

Dr. Shah reported that MCIA is in good financial health, the fiscal year 2019–2020 was very successful, and MCIA investment funds also saw strong growth. Growth in Organic Services continued and yielded another profitable year. Bailey Webster was hired to fill an open organic certification specialist/inspector position, after Susan Stewart's retirement. Carl Anfinson was hired in Foundation Seed Services to fill the Seed Production Coordinator position. Field inspection districts were realigned, increasing the number of districts from three to four. Tom Keskey and Dan Krenz were hired as field supervisors to fill district three and four positions.

MCIA established a relationship with West Central Technology to provide MCIA with IT support services. In April, MCIA launched a new website. The new website is secure, mobile-friendly, and has better site navigation than previous websites.

MCIA has developed a 99% Non-GMO Corn Seed Program. It has been approved by AOSCA's IP program standards.

Dr. Shah then reported on the MCIA's collaboration with the University of Minnesota (UMN) in protecting the intellectual property rights of university-developed crop varieties. MCIA joined with the Farmers Yield Initiative, UMN's general counsel and the dean and director of the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to address the issue of "brown bagging" and level the playing field for all seed producers and sellers.

MCIA's Seed Laboratory successfully developed and implemented a Quality Management System and received

accreditation by the USDA's Accredited Seed Laboratory Program. Chase Mowry is qualified as a Canadian Seed Grader. Now, seed tested and graded in the MCIA Seed Laboratory can be shipped into Canada without further testing. Thus, saving customers time and expense. Sam Banks recently passed his Registered Seed Technologist exam.

MCIA's priorities for fiscal year 2020–2021 include, training of new staff, completion of the database project, adding new lab services, supporting the sale of PVP-protected varieties, and continued efforts to identify local, regional, and international opportunities to increase the visibility of MCIA.

Mr. Flegel then presented his **Chairman's Report**. He praised the good work and dedication of MCIA staff and notable accomplishments in different departments.

Mr. Flegel then provided a chart showing the business footprint of each MCIA department versus their expense contributions. Organic Services continues to grow. Seed Certification, Field Services, the Seed Laboratory, and Foundation Seed Services, all traditional services of MCIA, continue to be an integral part of the business. Seed Certification is stable, and MCIA has been gaining business in Non-GMO and non-traditional certifications and inspections. All departments contribute to the expenses of the business.

Mr. Flegel then turned to elections for four seats on the MCIA Board of Directors. He introduced the Election Committee, led by Duane Dahlman.

Mr. Flegel announced the nominated candidates. Kelsey Henke and Rodney Moe were candidates for District 3A. Nat Forster, incumbent, was the sole candidate for District 3B. Denise Thiede, incumbent, was the sole candidate for a Related Industry seat. Nancy Ehlke, incumbent, was the sole nominee for the University of Minnesota seat. Each candidate in attendance spoke a few words expressing their aspiration to be elected to the MCIA Board of Directors.

Meeting attendees then cast their votes via an electronic ballot. (Following the adjournment of the meeting, the Election Committee counted the ballots and reported the election results. The results were then posted on the MCIA website.)

Mr. Dahlman expressed appreciation to Kurt Flegel for his 6-year tenure on the MCIA Board of Directors, which included 3 years as chairman. Mr. Dahlman thanked Mr. Flegel for his leadership and credited him for his key role in implementing two board initiatives that have been important for MCIA: succession planning and salary adjustments.

Mr. Flegel then called for other business. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Chairman's View

Brad Barth, Board Chairman



Hello, my name is Brad Barth! I was elected to the MCIA Board of Directors in 2019, and subsequently elected to chair the board in 2021.

I am a graduate of Moorhead State University with a BS degree in accounting. My wife Joyce and I live on our family farm just east of

Thief River Falls, we have four grown children and eight grandchildren.

Our farm has been in the family for over fifty years. In 2012, we started raising seed wheat, and in 2013 we built a seed conditioning plant. Currently, we raise and condition wheat, non-GMO soybeans, and RR1 soybeans.

I joined the board because I was very interested in the organization and wanted to share my past corporate experiences, while looking to help guide the organization into the future. Secondly, I hope that my service to MCIA will further my own knowledge and help me become a better seedsman.

Since joining the board, I have come to know more of how the organization is run and how the staff makes it all happen. In my observation, the staff is not only very proficient at what they do, but they are willing to go above and beyond to make it happen. If the past two years is any indication, the future of this organization is looking very bright.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, almost all companies and organizations have been affected by employee quarantines, sickness, and remote working situations. MCIA has not only gotten through this tough time, but the staff doubled down and worked together seamlessly. They are also working diligently on major improvements for the future. I am proud to be a part of an organization that can persevere through the tough times and come out even better than before.

Have a great 2021!

In Memoriam

Eugene Hook, of Tracy, passed away January 12, 2021, at the age of 88. A certified seed grower in Lyon county, Eugene was an active MCIA member and on the Minnesota Public Seed board. He supported many organizations and was a recipient of the Achievement in Crop Improvement Award.

Alan Adams, of Wendell, passed away January 31, 2021, at the age of 86. A longtime MCIA member, he and his brother owned and operated Adams Seed. Alan was also a partner in Thunder Seed. He was active in the Grant County Crop Improvement.

Field Notes

By Kris Folland, Field Services Manager and
Seth Dagoberg, Field Services Special Services Manager

During February and March, MCIA field supervisors have been busy conducting facility visits and inspections. There is optimism in agriculture and spring is right around the corner. Now is a good time to finalize seed decisions as some varieties may be in short supply.

MCIA members producing certified seed this year will need to plant foundation or registered seed, respectively. Some varieties do not have a registered class, so be sure you understand the limitations of the variety you are planting. If you have any questions about seed production, feel free to contact your MCIA field supervisor or Foundation Seed Services Manager Roger Wippler.

A reminder: Any variety with Plant Variety Protection (PVP) or that is required to be sold as certified seed must have a passed MCIA seed certification report. A seller must issue the appropriate MCIA seed label, such as a seed tag for bags and portable bulk totes or a *Bulk Seed Sale Certificate* for bulk seed.

If you are uncertain about any part of the process, please contact MCIA. Any protected variety from other states must follow the same PVP and labeling requirements. PVP applies to all seed no matter the intended use, including cover crops. Purchasing certified seed of known quality can be the first step in producing a successful crop and may also help prevent the spread of noxious and hard to control weeds.

It has been a busy year for noxious weed seed-free forage and mulch producers. All bales that are sold as “certified straw,” must be tagged. If no tag is attached, it does not meet the program standards.

When planting this spring, remember to save your proof of seed source, including seed tags or *Bulk Seed Sale Certificates*. You need to submit them with your MCIA application for field inspection.

We look forward to working with each of our MCIA members in a safe and successful 2021. 🌱

Lab Report

By Chase Mowry, Seed Laboratory Manager

We frequently stress the importance of obtaining a representative sample of your seed lot for testing. This includes sampling intensity and storage of the composite sample. You may not be aware, but the components of your seed lot or composite sample can separate over time with movement or shipment.

For instance, lighter seeds of a particular kind will make their way towards the top of a sample bag during transit whereas the denser seeds will move towards the bottom. Similarly, seeds of larger size will also separate towards the top of the sample whereas smaller seeds will move toward the bottom.

This type of separation can easily be observed when opening a container of mixed nuts—you will likely notice several nuts of one kind located on the top! In addition, at the bottom of the container you will find the smaller, broken pieces of nuts, much of which would be classified as inert matter in seed testing.

So, what does all of this mean? Much like the importance in sampling of your seed lot, we want to ensure that the

testing that takes place in the lab is also representative. To achieve this, we obtain the required amount of a working subsample for purity analysis through a process called mixing and dividing.

Prior to testing, each sample is thoroughly mixed by passing the entire sample through a calibrated divider three times. Following the third passage, sample reduction takes place through successive halving and combination of half-ports until the required minimum working weight for the particular kind is obtained.

For instance, after mixing, a 1000-gram wheat sample will be divided down to obtain a minimum of 500 grams for the noxious exam. From this noxious portion, a minimum of 100 grams will be divided out to conduct the purity analysis, in which the component percentages used for labeling are determined.

Altogether, this process of mixing and dividing provides randomization of the sample while eliminating bias and it lays the foundation for subsequent tests.

Is there a seed testing topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the *Minnesota Seed Grower*? Please email your suggestions to chase.mowry@mncia.org. 🌱



Seed divider in action.

Staff News

In February, after 22 years of diligent service to the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, Mary Beth Sampica retired. Her first job at MCIA was in the Seed Laboratory. Back then, the lab was a larger operation, with four full-time and three part-time staff members, as well as several student workers. Mary Beth was one of the part-timers. She planted seed germinations and was a doer of odd jobs. When the Seed Laboratory closed in 2007, Mary Beth's work shifted to administrative support for MCIA's seed certification programs. Among her chief responsibilities was the printing of certification tags. Over the years, she has printed thousands of them! Mary Beth's husband, Dave, is also retiring this year.



Mary Beth Sampica

They plan to spend more time with their two granddaughters and travel. Mary Beth aspires to visit all 50 states—and she's already half-way to her goal! MCIA truly appreciates all the work that Mary Beth has done for the association. Farewell and happy trails, Mary Beth! 🌱



President's Corner

Fawad S. Shah, MCIA President/CEO

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association has been serving the needs of the seed and agricultural community at large for over a century. Along with its rich history, the organization enjoys a forward-thinking staff who not only provide mission critical services but also regularly figure out creative ways to

solve customer issues. MCIA is fortunate to be in excellent financial health and to have a supportive board of directors. The year 2020 will be remembered for a devastating pandemic. However, for MCIA, 2020 will also be remembered as one of the organization's most successful years in recent history.

Following is an update on some of the efforts we undertook in 2020.

- Realignment of inspection districts from three to four helped ensure timely and effective inspection service throughout the state.
- A well thought-out technology initiative led to investment in a database project that will streamline processes in the field, lab, foundation, and organic services areas of the business. Much of the database is already built; however, advancements in each of these service areas are urgently needed.
- The rollout of MCIA's new and improved website combined what once were two websites into one. The new website is secure, mobile-friendly, and offers superior navigation.
- MCIA established help desk support for its staff, furnished by a Minnesota IT services company.

- MCIA addressed customer demand by developing a 99% Non-GMO Corn Seed Program. This program has been developed in line with the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies' (AOSCA) Identity Preserved (IP) program standards and is approved by AOSCA.
- A salary review initiative helped identify and bridge gaps to ensure fair compensation for all employees.
- The MCIA Seed Laboratory was accredited by the USDA's Seed Lab Accreditation (ASL) Program, an unprecedented and aspirational achievement. Chase Mowry, Seed Laboratory Manager, became qualified as a Canadian Seed Grader. Seed graded in the Seed Laboratory can be shipped into Canada without further testing, saving customers time and expense.

These improvements would not have been possible without the engagement and approval of the board of directors, who reviewed each proposal and provided essential oversight for the ongoing success of these efforts.

MCIA held its 2021 annual meeting in early January. Due to the pandemic, the meeting was held virtually. Speakers highlighted the seed industry's resilience to the challenges posed by Covid-19. The industry remained operational, producing seed and participating in trade, and thus ensuring food security in these tough times. The event was attended by growers, state officials, researchers, and professionals from the seed industry. Feedback from attendees was very positive. We would appreciate receiving your feedback, too, on what topics you would like to learn more about at our next annual meeting, making the event both enjoyable and educational for you, our members.



Organic Corner

Michelle Menken, Organic Services Manager

Crop applications went out by mail and email this year. If you would like to have electronic renewals in the future, please let us know. The producer applications were due back March 15 and the crop and livestock applications are due back April 1.

During the annual USDA NOP training, which MCIA staff attended in January, we were informed that the NOP wants everyone to be looking at pasture management, days on pasture, records of temporary confinement, and animal identification. We do have a new *Livestock List* form that was sent out with the renewals. All animals should be listed, including young stock. The exception is that poultry can be listed as a flock. If you are already keeping the livestock identification records in another format, such as a computerized record, you may continue to

use those forms. Please print out a list to submit with your application.

With your renewals be sure to let us know about all updates—new labels, new products, new inputs, new fields, etc. Contact the office if you have questions.

We have been notified that the USDA will conduct our accreditation audit in August of this year. The NOP usually sends auditors who come and review client files, pesticide residue records, unannounced inspection records, and adverse action records (noncompliances, suspensions, and revocations). This year, they will be doing a desk audit—meaning we will have to send our records to them and then respond to their questions and concerns electronically. It should be interesting—like a week-long Zoom meeting.

Remember, please return your renewal applications promptly. Thank you!



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- Denise Thiede.....Director

Mission Statement

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association is an organization dedicated to improving the productivity, profitability, and competitive position of producers, processors, and distributors of agricultural products by providing services to enable them to provide high-quality products to Minnesota, the United States, and the world.

Improving your process • Enhancing your products • Increasing your profits

Job Openings

MCIA is seeking candidates to fill two open positions:

- Administration and Certification Assistant**
- Lab Technician**

Both are full-time positions with benefits. The jobs are located at MCIA's main office on the St. Paul campus of the UMN Twin Cities. For more information, visit the Job Openings page of the MCIA website, <https://www.mncia.org/job-openings>.

CALENDAR

APRIL

- 2** MCIA Office Closed
- 21** AOSCA Northern Region Meeting, Location TBD

MAY

- 31** MCIA Office Closed

JUNE

- 19–23** ASTA Policy & Leadership Development Conference, Washington, DC
- 22–23** AOSCA Annual Meeting, Location TBD

For more event information visit www.mncia.org/events