

Field Inspection Begins Up North

You may think that the first field inspection of the season would be in southern Minnesota where wheat, barley or oats may be planted as early as March. But believe it or not the MCIA field inspection season begins in far northern Minnesota. In early June inspectors begin walking over 30,000 acres of perennial grass seed fields. The sunny, cool days of early spring are ideal for turf grass seed production.

For over 40 years farmers in Roseau, Lake of the Woods and surrounding counties have been producing seed of Kentucky bluegrass. Minnesota is one of the leading producers of grass seed in the country, and seed production has become an important part of the agriculture economy in northern Minnesota. In fact, the variety Park Kentucky bluegrass developed at the University of Minnesota has been a popular choice and is still planted in the lawns of home and commercial property owners across the country. The turf grass breeding program at the University of Minnesota led by Dr. Nancy Elhke continues to develop and evaluate new varieties of grasses and legumes.

More recently the growers in northern Minnesota have increased the production of perennial ryegrass. Utilizing new varieties from the University of Minnesota and other sources around the country, growers have found a new opportunity to market Minnesota grown grass seed. Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, timothy and other perennials are important crops to Minnesota agriculture and mark the start of MCIA's inspection season.

Kris Folland Joins Field Supervisors



Kris Folland of Halma, Minnesota joined the MCIA staff in June. As Field supervisor he will conduct field and seed plant inspections, meet with members and represent MCIA at various meetings and functions. Kris will serve the counties of Beltrami, Clearwater, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Pennington, Polk, Roseau and Red Lake in northwest Minnesota.

Kris grew up on a farm near Halma. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, Crookston, with a degree in Plant Industries Management emphasizing Agronomy. More recently he has worked for Minn-Dak Grower Ltd. and the Karlstad Farmers Elevator. Kris brings with him a varied background and a good understanding of production agriculture in this area of the state.

Kris and his wife Bethany have two children Jazlynn and Isaac. They live on a beef and crop farm in rural Halma. Upon joining MCIA Kris was initiated immediately into grass seed field inspections and will roll right into the small grains season.

2006 Field Inspection Season

Field inspection season is underway! Whether you are applying for Seed Certification, Quality Assurance, Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage & Mulch or any of our other programs, read on for tips and information about field inspection:

At a Glance: Application Deadlines

- July 31..... Native grasses planted before July 1
- August 1..... Soybeans requiring only one inspection
- November 1..... Native grasses planted after July 1

Tips for Field Inspection Applications

Field Inspection Applications were sent out in mid-May. If you have not received them or need extras, call the office or find them online at www.mncia.org. Please take a moment after filling out your application to make sure all the required information is included. Incomplete applications are not processed until all the necessary information is gathered.

- Note the due date for your application (see above)
- New Variety? - be sure to include a description
- Include a proof of seed source (tags or bulk sales certificate)
- Include payment with your application
- Include the date planted for every field
- Remember to sign your application

Field Supervisor Contact Information *Got a question about your inspection?*

Jim Boots - jim.boots@mncia.org
Phone: 507-644-3093
Cell: 507-420-5867

Kris Folland - kfolland@wiktel.com
Phone: 218-265-2614
Cell: 218-791-2156

Jerry Hermann - jherm@feltontel.net
Phone: 218-494-3757
Cell: 701-361-4728

Ben Lang - bjlang@willmar.com
Phone: 320-235-5677
Cell: 320-905-1872

Brenda Rogers - brenda.rogers@mncia.org
Phone: 218-342-2747
Cell: 218-841-9964

Organic Corner

NOP Revisions

The USDA published a final rule in the Federal Register on June 7 that revised the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations to comply with the court order in the Harvey v. Johanns lawsuit and the 2005 amendments to the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. The final rule restores the National List of synthetics used in products labeled as “organic” to the pre-lawsuit status. In addition, these revisions state that non-organic agricultural materials may be used as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as “organic” only when such organic products are listed in §205.606 of the NOP and are deemed commercially unavailable. Lastly, the final rule eliminates what is commonly known as the “80/20” feed provision. The rule does allow for third year transitional crops and forage to be used for dairy animals in their last year of conversion. The final rule and multiple effective dates can be found at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/Newsroom/HarveyvJohannsFR05_23_06.pdf

Organic Livestock Training

MCIA co-sponsored an Organic Livestock Training with the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) during May 22-24 at the University of Minnesota’s St. Paul campus. The comprehensive three day training covered topics such as allowed health treatments for organic livestock, the threat of avian influenza to organic poultry, and the effects of high-voltage power lines to organic dairy operators.

Organic Livestock Conference

From August 23-25, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) will hold the first-ever international conference on organic livestock at the University of Minnesota’s St. Paul campus. Leading organic livestock researchers and producers from throughout the world will share research findings and information during the three-day event. Complete information about the conference, including on-line registration, can be found at:

http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/IFOAM_Animal_Production_Conference.html

Producer Applications for Organic Certification

If you wish to become a certified organic producer or if you are a certified producer who needs to renew your certification, the deadline to submit your applications was June 1! Late fees will apply, but there’s still time to submit your applications and schedule an inspection. Contact Anne at the MCIA office for more information.

Chairman’s View

Summertime is here, and heat and dryness have set in much earlier than normal for us along the Canadian border. I live on the south shore of Lake of the Woods, and fishing is great, at least that is what I hear from the radio reports and the tourists. Farming takes up so much time that I rarely get out fishing.

One of our primary crops in this area is turf grass, which require a cool and wet climate and it has been just the opposite this June. We have had nearly two decades of above normal precipitation, so it is ironic that the weather should get dry just the time of year when the grasses need moisture the most.

Minnesota Crop Improvement staff, Jerry Hermann, Paul Mickelson, Jon Anderson and the new Field Supervisor for our area, Kris Folland, have been busy inspecting our certified turf seed acres. They will finish shortly and move on to small grain inspections.

I am happy to report that the preliminary information from the 05-06 fiscal year is positive. Certification fees were up slightly from the previous year, the Organic program is up significantly, Tech Marketing did well and returns from our investments were very good. In addition, Gary and the staff have worked very diligently to keep expenses as low as possible. This is evident by most actual expenditures remaining below the budgeted amount.

The MCIA staff has been implementing the MCIA Strategic Action Plan which has been discussed at length at the Annual Meeting and previously in the Seed Grower. The overall goal of this plan is to improve the operations and program offerings in order to help MCIA fulfill its mission and operate profitably. A significant benefit to the Strategic Action Plan has been the award of a USDA Value Added Producer Grant to MCIA, which will fund a study to assess the feasibility of an Identity Preserved and 100% traceable specialty soybean venture in Minnesota. This feasibility study is intended to shed light on new ways for MCIA, our members, and Minnesota farmers in general to remain profitable.

-Steve Helmstetter

Interim Dean at U of M Kathryn A. VandenBosch

As of July 1st, 2006 Kate VandenBosch will be the interim Dean of the University of Minnesota College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences. Kate will return to her position as professor and head of the University’s Plant Biology department once a permanent Dean is named*.

During her short stay as interim Dean, she will assist in making a stronger community among faculty, students, staff, alumni, and external constituents. She will also help with making a greater focus on academic synergies, and strategize priorities within the college’s units, and will enhance interdisciplinary research opportunities.

She is from Michigan and now resides in Arden Hills, MN with Tom, her husband, and two children.

* A national search is underway. The University is expected to announce a permanent dean this fall.

Beil's Spiel

IS MCIA RELEASING ANY NEW WHEAT VARIETIES THIS YEAR? This is the most frequently asked question when I visit with MCIA members who produce hard red spring wheat seed in Minnesota. Most understand, but we usually explain that MCIA does not “release” varieties. New public varieties are developed by researchers at the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) and are released by the University of Minnesota. MCIA’s role is to increase foundation seed quantities of the variety, manage the varieties’ introduction into production, and oversee seed product quality assurance through MCIA’s seed certification program.

All these details aside, the core question remains—will Minnesota wheat growers continue to see more new releases in the future? I am asked this question because everyone is aware this situation has changed significantly in recent years.

The question of whether there will be a continuing stream of technology emanating from the MAES is not just a question being asked by MCIA members. Over the last several months, the University of Minnesota has been involved in a reorganization that resulted in the co-mingling of several groups of colleges. As a result, the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) emerged, and most of the departments at the University that historically interacted with production agriculture are consolidated into CFANS. Stimulated by a concern about what this reorganization would mean for production agriculture, most of the Ag-commodity and producer groups in Minnesota have coalesced around the question of how this reorganization at the University will impact the flow of technology required to support today’s production agriculture. More than 20 commodity and producer groups have been meeting together under the leadership of the Farm Bureau to discuss this issue. Meetings have been constructive and focused on identifying ways to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between the core elements of production agriculture and the University. Several meetings that included both representatives of Ag production and administrators of the University have resulted in good communication and improved understanding of the needs of both producers and the University.

One of the key questions we have been exploring is the difference between what we refer to as “applied” research as opposed to “basic” research. For many MCIA members, the term “applied” research primarily means new varieties. On the other hand, we tend to think of “basic” research as some kind of high powered genomic or biotechnology research that we don’t really understand. To understand what the future holds for information and technology coming from the MAES to MCIA members is to know that applied research and basic research are not mutually exclusive events. Much of what we have always thought of as “basic” research contributes directly to the success of products MCIA members sell, whether they originated as public or private varieties.

Things change! In the discussions between the representatives of production agriculture and the administrators at CFANS it has become clear that in today’s age of inadequate legislative financial support, researchers are severely restricted in what they can afford to do. The reality is that funding drives research. Legislative support of the University may be sufficient to pay for the salaries of faculty, but it has been insufficient to support research projects. Researchers have to direct their research in areas where they can receive immediate financial support. In today’s world, research is expensive, and researcher’s projects are drawn to available resources that will support those projects.

This is where we have to understand what we have become accustomed to receiving as the benefits of “applied” research, i.e. new varieties, is changing. What we were classifying as “basic” researches in the past, we now understand has significant benefit.

The question is where are new products for MCIA seed producers coming from? For conventional soybean growers, we have seen the nearly complete transition from public varieties to conventional roundup ready varieties from the private sector. I am sure we will see some new wheat, barley and oat varieties coming from the University in the near term, but we are also seeing a rapid increase in new varieties coming from the private sector, particularly in hard red spring wheat. New amenity grass seed varieties developed at the MAES are also coming into production as we move forward.

This transition does not mean that the University has abandoned production agricultural interests in Minnesota. Certainly the way technology is delivered from the University to MCIA members has changed and will continue to change. In many ways, this has changed MCIA’s role as an organization. We have been talking about reinventing our association to be able to continue to meet member’s needs going forward. The changes described above are clearly one of the reasons why this reinvention process has been so important. Be assured that MCIA remains dedicated to continue to fulfill its mission to deliver the kinds of technology from the University and elsewhere to support your efforts to become more profitable.

That is still what it is all about.

-Gary Beil, President/CEO

The Minnesota Seed Grower

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Minnesota Seed Grower, 1900 Hendon Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

- Gary M. Beil President & CEO
- Steve Helmstetter Chairman
- Dennis Sjogren Vice Chairman
- Neal Anderson Treasurer
- John Lundquist Secretary
- Tim Backman Director
- Nancy Ehlke Director
- Pete Friederichs Director
- Mary Hanks Director
- James Hunzeker Director
- Glenn Rivard Director
- Cal Spronk Director



The Minnesota Seed Grower
 Published quarterly by the
 Minnesota Crop Improvement Association
 1900 Hendon Avenue
 St. Paul, MN 55108
 Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN.
 Publication No. 352240

PERIODICAL

MISSION STATEMENT

MCIA is an organization dedicated to improving the productivity, profitability and the competitive position of MCIA members by providing services to producers, conditioners, and distributors of plant products enabling them to provide high quality plant products to Minnesota, the U.S. and the World.

Calendar

- July 26-28** North Central Seed Conference, St. Paul, MN
- July 31** Field inspection applications due: native grasses planted before July 1
- August 1** Field inspection applications due: soybeans requiring only one inspection
- August 1** New variety descriptions due: soybeans, IP Grain, QA and pre-harvest only inspections
- August 22-23** US Upper Midwest Specialty Grain Conference
- November 1** Field inspection applications due: native grasses planted after July 1
- November 10** MCIA Board meeting, St. Paul, MN

Advertising Space Available in the MCIA Directory

Advertising space will be available again this year in the MCIA Directory. The Directory is mailed to approximately 2000 users who are seed producers, seed conditioners, seed wholesalers, retailers and many more in the agri-business industry. Please plan to submit your ad by August 15. For more information, please contact the office.

Advertisement rates:

- Centerspread (15" x 10") \$700.00
- Inside Front Cover (7-1/2" x 10") 450.00
- Inside Back Cover (7-1/2" x 10") 350.00
- Full Page (7-1/2" x 10") 275.00
- 1/2 page horizontal (4-3/4" x 7") 200.00
- 1/2 page vertical (3-3/8" x 9-3/4") 200.00
- 1/4 page (3-3/8" x 4-3/4") 125.00
- 1/8 page (3-3/8" x 2-3/8") 75.00

Carryover Seed

Please report your carryover from 2005 of seed eligible for certification by August 15 to maintain its eligibility for certification. If certification is applied for more than 3 years after filing a "Declaration of Carryover Seed", a copy of the field inspection report must be furnished with the application. The form "Declaration of Carryover Seed" can be obtained from the MCIA office.

Part-time Field Inspector Job Openings

We are still looking for part-time field inspectors for the coming field inspection season.

Visit us on the web at: http://www.mncia.org/SN_about_positions_available.htm, or contact the office at 1-800-510-6242 for information and an application.