

MCIA Hosts Seed Program Advisory Group Meeting

MCIA recently hosted the December meeting of the Seed Program Advisory Group (SPAG). The group provides advice to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), on how the Minnesota Seed Law is administered in the state. The group meets three times annually with staff members from the Seed Regulatory program. The 8 member group includes representatives from agricultural organizations as well as the Minnesota seed industry. Steve Malone, Seed and Noxious Weed Supervisor conducts the meeting.

A typical meeting agenda includes updates on inspections and sampling activities of the MDA field staff, issues of concern for seed control officials on a national level as well as seed related items specific to Minnesota, legislative issues and other topics important to the seed industry. The advisory group is encouraged to ask questions, offer input on the issues and provide insight from the seed industry and those that utilize seed products. We also receive updates on the activities of the Seed Regulatory staff.

The report for the December meeting included a summary of the Seed Inspection season. By mid-December over 1500 official samples had been obtained by MDA staff in 2009. Samples were drawn from over

50 different types of seed products including every agronomic crop from alfalfa to wheat as well as bird seed, turf grass, flower and vegetable seeds, wildlife mixes and native species. Violation notices were issued on 151 samples for factors that would likely affect the performance of the seed lot compared to the label. Issues that may result in violations include out of tolerance or below standard for percent of germination, pure seed, inert matter, weed seeds or the presence of prohibited noxious weeds.

Warnings notices were issued for 142 samples this year, many for labeling issues such as incomplete address for labeler or missing lot numbers. Warnings were also issued for minor discrepancies related to seed purity but not likely to affect seed performance.

The Seed Regulatory staff also conducts seed facility inspections of all types, including farm seed suppliers, hardware stores, garden centers and "big box" stores. These typically involve inspecting seed inventory with labeling and storage requirements. The most common violations are expired germination test dates. Other correctable violations are often done immediately or confirmed by a follow-up inspection. These reports are helpful in identifying issues that are important to MCIA and its members.

As a member of the advisory group MCIA can bring forward the concerns of its members as well offer insight on how actions by the Seed Regulatory program and MDA may affect them. As the Seed Regulatory staff works to provide protection for the consumer and maintain a fair and competitive marketplace for seed industry we are fortunate to have this opportunity to participate in the Seed Program Advisory group.



Seed Program Advisory and Minnesota Department of Agriculture

All Roads Lead to the Shooting Star!

On January 7 and 8, 2010, members of Minnesota Crop Improvement Association will gather at the Shooting Star Casino Hotel in Mahanomen, Minnesota for their Annual Meeting. In addition to the annual business meeting, the program includes presentations on the Canadian Seed System, the University of Minnesota Soybean and Turf Grass Breeding Programs, a grower's perspective on the use of biotechnology in wheat, and updates from association partners – the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council, the Midwest Shippers' Association and the Minnesota Wheat Research & Promotion Council.

For more information contact MCIA at 1-800-510-6242 or visit online at www.mncia.org

President's Corner

Ben Lang, MCIA President/CEO

I recently returned from the American Seed Trade Association's Corn and Soybean Research Conference and Seed Expo in Chicago. The conference is widely attended by those in the corn and soybean seed industry and I noted numerous long-time MCIA members in attendance again this year. They find the conference of value not just for the networking and business opportunities it presents, but also to hear presentations on the latest research initiatives in the industry. This year the presentations included soybean and corn breeding efforts in drought tolerance, bio-energy, herbicide and pest tolerance and new methods of breeding to enhance yields. I'm sure that many in attendance wondered about what the changes will mean to agriculture and how their businesses can benefit from the opportunities that will emerge.

The conference reminded me again of the need for MCIA to continue to adapt to change and anticipate areas where it can assist its members with services that support their businesses and add value to the products they produce. MCIA has greatly expanded the number of services it provides in recent years. However, this ongoing reinvention process requires us to consider how potential clients perceive us and to insure the image that we project, accurately represents the organization as it is today.

This has led MCIA to undertake a rebranding effort. Over the coming months you will see these efforts in an updated MCIA logo, new promotional materials, modified program documents, tags and certificates. We will offer new ways for you to utilize the MCIA seal on your products to indicate program conformance and quality. We will undertake a major overhaul of the MCIA website to make it more informative, easier to navigate and more valuable to program participants and potential buyers seeking to purchase products produced by our members. Even this publication, The Minnesota Seed Grower, will sport a new updated look. Maybe MCIA's efforts in this area will give you some ideas that you can use to market your own business.

We will be unveiling the first phases of the rebranding effort at the 2010 MCIA Annual Meeting. In addition to the rebranding introduction, the program includes presentations on a diverse range of topics that will be of interest to you. You will find more details on the Annual meeting on page 3. Please join us at the Shooting Star Casino Hotel in Mahanomen on January 7th and 8th.

All of us at MCIA wish you a very happy holiday season and a successful new year!

Organic Corner

Michelle Menken, Organic Coordinator

Conference season is coming up. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture's organic conference is in St. Cloud on January 15 and 16. MCIA will have a booth there and we will be holding our annual organic services committee meeting on Friday the 15th at 5 p.m. We will announce the room number later. All members are welcome. Check out www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic for more information.

The following week, January 21-22, the Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association conference is also in St. Cloud. MCIA will also have a booth there. It is not strictly an organic conference, but it will have two days of seminars that should be of interest to all fruit and vegetable growers. Check out www.mfvga.org for more information.

In February, there are three conferences in South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. February 9-10 the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society Conference meets in Watertown, SD. This is a good conference for producers in the Dakotas and western Minnesota. MCIA will be there. Check out www.npsas.org for more information.

On February 20, the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (SFA) is meeting at St. Olaf's in Northfield, MN. Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Secretary of State, will be the keynote speaker.

The Organic Farm Conference is held in La Crosse, WI on February 25-27. This conference is in its 21st year. On Thursday the 25th there are all day classes on special topics. These are especially good for producers new to organic production. This year there are 10 classes to choose from: Building biologically active soil; Using draft horses; Quality forages and dairy rations; Interdependence of plants and soil; ABC's of CSA; Intro to organic agriculture; Market your own meat; Organic poultry production; Understand weeds to control them; and, Transitioning to organic row crops. On Friday and Saturday, there are sessions on a wide variety of topics, keynote speakers, and a wide range of vendors. MCIA will have a booth here as well. Please stop by. Check out www.mosesorganic.com for more information.

MCIA at the Prairie Grains Conference



Kris Folland, MCIA Field Supervisor, visits with a grower at the 2009 Prairie Grains Conference, held in early December in Grand Forks, North Dakota. An estimated 600 growers and attendees were present to meet and hear the latest in research and agricultural developments. Numerous MCIA members, board members, and staff attended, we were excited to see the turnout for one of the first extensive meetings of the winter.

Foundation Seed for 2010

Now is the time to order your Foundation Seed for 2010 planting. A list of available varieties and an order form were mailed to all eligible growers earlier this month. Orders are now being taken on a first come, first serve basis. Interested in obtaining varieties from other states? We will assist you. Call Craig Thelander or Roger Wippler at 1-800-510-6242 for further details. Order now for best availability!

Seed Certification Update

You may notice a new look to the certification reports from MCIA. We are currently working on revisions to reflect that they are no longer lab reports but reports on the seed lot status. The title "Lab Analysis Report" has been changed to "Seed Certification Report." Additional reports for QA, OECD and Canadian programs are currently being developed. The lab test results are still included on the certification report so that you will have a complete document for reference.

As a reminder, lab results alone are not proof of certification. Final certification is complete once you receive a Certification Report from MCIA noting the status of the seed lot as passed or failed. Seed buyers should look for certification labels attached to the containers or a bulk certificate that accompanies the seed as their assurance that it meets MCIA's high standards for germination and purity. Without the certification label or bulk certificate, the seed is NOT certified.

We are teaming with the North Dakota State Seed Department to make improvements to the sample submission process. Our goal is to enable you to submit sampling reports to MCIA electronically that will automatically transmit testing requests to the lab at NDSSD. You will also be able to indicate release of records to MCIA on this form. After the process is developed we will expand to the other approved labs. We will keep you informed as we develop these improvements.

Statement of Activities and Financial Position For the Year Ended May 31, 2009

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	Inspection and Laboratory Services	Foundation Seed	Total
Revenues			
Fees	\$1,244,509		\$1,244,509
Seed Sales		\$528,804	528,804
Royalties & Other Income	88,158	6,663	94,821
TOTAL REVENUES	1,332,667	535,467	1,868,134
Expenses			
Program	861,164	162,683	1,023,847
Supplies/Maintenance	69,457	19,401	88,858
Insurance, Prof. Services,			
Payroll Taxes	240,182	52,715	292,897
Seed Procurement		301,880	301,880
Miscellaneous	3,826	(5,400)	(1,574)
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,174,629	531,279	1,705,908
Net Increase in Net Assets	158,038	4,188	162,226
Net Assets, Beginning of Year			975,765
Net Assets, End of Year			\$1,137,991

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	
Cash	274,275
Accounts Receivable	162,874
Accrued Interest Receivable	815
Inventories	16,828
Prepaid Expenses	32,264
Investments	974,582
Equipment	536,013
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(478,066)
Net Equipment	57,947
TOTAL ASSETS	1,519,585

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities	
Note Payable - Auto	11,717
Accounts Payable	65,270
Royalty & VDF Fees Payable	201,231
Accrued Salaries & Vacation	103,376
TOTAL LIABILITIES	381,594

Net Assets	1,137,991
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	1,519,585

Email and Contact Information

MCIA needs your updated email and contact information. Please send your information to mncia@umn.edu.

We would like to establish an accurate email listing for MCIA members, so we can contact you quickly regarding information and events.

The Minnesota Seed Grower

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

Ben Lang..... President & CEO
 James Hunzeker Chairman
 Glenn Rivard Vice Chairman
 Myron Behm..... Secretary
 Cal Spronk Treasurer
 Tim Backman Director
 Brent Benike Director
 David Boehm..... Director
 Rick Brandenburger..... Director
 Duane Dahlman..... Director
 Nancy Ehlke..... Director
 Mary Hanks..... 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.



The MCIA Annual Meeting is on
 January 7-8, 2010 at the Shooting Star
 Casino Hotel in Mahanomen, MN

The Minnesota Seed Grower

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Address Service Requested

Calendar

December 24-25 MCIA Office Closed
 January 1, 2010 MCIA Office Closed
 January 7-8 MCIA Annual Meeting, Shooting Star Casino, Mahanomen, MN
 January 11-12 MN Ag Expo -Soybean Growers Assn & Corn Growers Annual Meeting, Morton, MN
 January 12 AOSCA National Alfalfa & Misc Legumes Variety Review Board Meeting, Las Vegas, NV
 January 16-17 MN Organic Conference and Trade Show St. Cloud, MN
 January 18 MCIA Office Closed
 January 18-22 University of MN Small Grains Update Meetings
 January 21-22 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show, St. Cloud, MN
 January 27-28 Conservation Tillage Conference, Jackpot Junction, Morton, MN
 February 7-9 MN Grain and Feed Assn (MGFA) Annual Convention & Trade Show, Mankato, MN
 February 10 Best of the Best in Wheat and Soybean Research, Alerus Center, Grand Fork, ND
 February 10-11 NPSAS Winter Conference, Watertown, SD
 February 11 Best of the Best in Wheat and Soybean Research, Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN
 February 15 MCIA Office Closed
 February 25-27 21st Annual Organic Farming Conference, La Crosse, WI

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the New Year from all the MCIA Staff!