

December Meetings Important to MCIA

Early December offers two excellent meeting opportunities for MCIA members and staff. The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) - Corn and Soybean Seed Expo in Chicago and the Prairie Grains Conference in Grand Forks provide timely information to those in the seed industry.



The ASTA Seed Expo brings together people from around the world who are involved in all aspects of corn and soybean seed. Divided into three main components - meeting sessions, trade show, and networking - attendees can explore everything related to seed production from research through marketing.

The opportunity to network and meet with many people in a two day period is a big reason why this event is attended by over 2000 participants. From the small seed business to the multi-national corporations all facets of the seed industry are represented.

The meeting sessions focused on agronomics, business management and research. Popular topics this year included Intellectual Property Rights and Patent Expiration, Herbicide Resistance, and the Global Ag Economy. Smaller meeting groups and committees meet each year to address issues important to the seed industry providing input to ASTA leadership. Topics of interest to MCIA were stewardship, organic seed, phytosanitary issues and biotechnology.

The Seed Expo trade show brings in 120 companies featuring products and services for the seed industry. Whether you are looking for equipment, testing services, seed treatments, packaging or information management software the trade show is a good place to find it.

The Prairie Grains Conference is an opportunity for producers in Minnesota and the Dakotas to hear the latest information on

wheat and soybean research, crop marketing and other current topics. This year's program included Minnesota and North Dakota wheat variety trial results, grain protein management, soybean fungicide research, as well as general sessions on grain markets, soil issues and tax planning.

The trade show also provides options for the attendee. Trade show exhibitors range from seed companies and input providers to the latest in electronic technologies. MCIA participates in the trade show, visiting with members and producers, as well as attending the sessions to stay informed about agriculture in that region.

Both the ASTA Seed Expo and The Prairie Grains Conference are important to MCIA and its members. Attending these meetings keeps the MCIA staff informed about issues important to our members and their customers. It also provides an opportunity to seek out new business for the organization. Perhaps you might find attending them beneficial for your business as well.



Brenda Rogers – MCIA Field Supervisor, speaks with David Boehm, AgriPro Wheat.

MCIA Annual Meeting

Please plan on attending the Annual Meeting

January 10 - 11, 2012

Shooting Star Casino Hotel in Mahanomen

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Organic Corner

Michelle Menken, Organic Coordinator



Conference Season

Once again it is time for the conference season to begin. We in the MCIA organic program highly recommend attending at least one of these conferences. You will hear about the latest research, be able to inspect new equipment, meet other organic producers, and meet your certifier- MCIA will have a booth at each of the following venues.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture conference in St. Cloud Jan 13-14 begins with pre-conference courses in beekeeping, post-harvest handling and meat selling on Jan. 12th. Topics for the conference are now posted on the MDA website: www.mda.state.mn.us/organic. MCIA is once again planning to hold its organic services committee meeting at the conference on Friday afternoon. All MCIA members are welcome.

For fruit and vegetable growers there are the Wisconsin Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Growers conference at the Wisconsin Dells January 16 & 17, 2012: www.wisconsinfreshproduce.org, and the Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers conference January 19 & 20 in St. Cloud: www.mfvga.org/educational-opportunities.shtml. While these are not specifically "organic", many of the speakers and attendees will have organic experience and expertise.

The Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society conference will be January 27 & 28 in Aberdeen, South Dakota. This conference is usually more suited to western Minnesota and North & South Dakota producers and livestock people: www.npsas.org.

The Minnesota Food Association will host the 7th Annual Immigrant & Minority Farmers conference on February 3 & 4th in St. Paul. They have a great program for beginning organic farmers: www.mnfoodassociation.org.

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota will host its 21st Annual conference on Feb 18, at the College of St. Benedict, MN: www.sfa-mn.org/conference/.

And finally the biggest of them all (last year there were about 3000 people!) - the Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin hosted by MOSES. This will be February 24 & 25. There will also be an all-day Organic University the day before on February 23 with classes on: Advance crop agronomics; High tunnels; Livestock health; Balancing soil fertility; Farm financials; Quality Forage for beef & dairy; Pastured Poultry; Organic beer; Intro to organic farming; and Scaling up vegetable production. For the full conference schedule: www.mosesorganic.org.

If you sometimes feel isolated from your neighbors because you are an organic producer, attending a trade show can be an energizing experience. Imagine spending time with hundreds or even thousands of people who are interested in doing what you do. Most conferences have early registration discounts, so sign up early if you can. We look forward to seeing you this winter!

MCIA Annual Meeting January 10-11

Don't miss these important sessions!

Seed Treatment Workshop

Herbicide Resistant Weeds

**MCIA Endowed Chair Update on
Wheat & Barley Genomic Research**

Plus - join us in congratulating
this year's award recipients

Visit www.mncia.org or call MCIA for registration information

Soybean Growers to Celebrate 50th Anniversary

Join your fellow soybean growers during the 2012 MN Ag Expo, on January 22-24, at the Verizon Wireless Center in Mankato. Celebrate 50 years of influencing proactive farm policy for Minnesota soybean growers! For more information visit www.mnsoybean.org.



MCIA's New Store Front



2011 has been another year of rapid advances in technology and no area seems to change faster than communication technology. Tweets, Facebook and blogs are bombarding us with information on top of the mail, faxes and email.

Every business is challenged with meeting the new standard for effective communications which requires universal accessibility at all times through computers and other web-based devices. The website home page is now the "store front" that influences a customer's critical first impression .

At MCIA we recognized the need to update our on-line presence and have launched a major effort to provide more resources to our clients through a comprehensive reconstruction of our website. The new website will feature an updated layout designed to allow our customers to quickly and easily access on-line information and training tools, including forms, standards, handbooks and other information needed to participate in our programs.

The site will include new client resources such as webinars and other program training resources. In addition, the site will feature information on the value of our programs and the benefits to end users of MCIA certified and quality assured products. It will also offer tools that direct these potential buyers to producers and product providers.

There will be an opportunity for our members to offer input on the new website this year at the 109th MCIA Annual Meeting. We also have several interesting presentations planned including herbicide resistance in weeds, a seed treatment workshop, genomics research and other issues that impact MCIA's members.

There will also be great networking opportunities with an expanded trade show and the evening awards banquet, allowing you to connect with old friends and make some new ones!

I hope that 2011 has been a happy and productive year for you and your families. It has been our privilege to serve you this year and we look forward to working with you again in 2012!



Chairman's View

James Hunzeker, Board Chair

**Attitude: A mental position with regard to a fact or state.
(Merriam-Webster Dictionary)**

"The only disability in life is a bad attitude." - Scott Hamilton.
Is attitude the difference between a Republican and a Democrat? I'll explain.

Some guy is drowning 100 feet from shore. The Republican is walking down the beach and sees this. He grabs a length of rope that's close by and throws out 50 feet of it to help the victim. The reason for the short rope is that he doesn't want the guy to become dependent on others. The guy needs to do a little something to help himself.

The same scenario occurs for the Democrat only he tosses out 200 feet of rope to the victim. As soon as the guy grabs hold, the Democrat drops his end and runs off down the beach to help the next guy.

It's all about your mental position, like exploring the difference

between a recession and a depression. When you lose your job, it's a recession. When I lose my job, it's a depression.

In late September of this year, my wife and I completed a 15 state, 6,500 mile motorcycle tour of the US North West. Two main thoughts kept surfacing during the trip. The first was of the beauty, magnificence, and diversity of the land. The second thought was that the bulk of the US citizens I met and talked to were concerned and striving to provide the best future for themselves, their children, and grandchildren.

Prior to our trip I was very negative about the outlook for this country. After the trip I am very positive. Nothing was changed except my attitude.

The short version is that I have recently reviewed my attitudes and I believe that my very positive attitude of MCIA and their direction is correct.



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Happy Holidays
 from the
 MCIA Staff

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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.

Enhancing Value, Improving Marketability



Since 1903

CALENDAR

January

- 2 Holiday - MCIA Office Closed
- 10-11 MCIA Annual Meeting, Mahanomen
- 13-14 Minnesota Organic Conf., St. Cloud
- 15-17 WI Fruit & Vegetable Conf., Wisconsin Dells, WI
- 16 Holiday - MCIA Office Closed
- 16-20 University of MN Small Grains Update Meetings
- 19-20 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conf., St. Cloud
- 22-24 MN Ag Expo - Minnesota Soybean Growers Assn. & Minnesota Corn Growers Assn., Mankato
- 27-28 NPSAS Winter Conference, Aberdeen, SD
- 31 Best of the Best in Wheat & Soybean Research, Moorhead

February

- 1 Best of the Best in Wheat & Soybean Research, Grand Forks, ND
- 3-4 MN Food Assn Immigrant & Minority Farm Conf., St. Paul
- 18 Sustainable Farming Assn. Conf., College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph
- 20 Holiday - MCIA Office Closed
- 24-25 MOSES Organic Conf., LaCrosse