

MCIA Annual Meeting

2016 MCIA Annual Meeting

January 12-13

Bigwood Event Center, Fergus Falls

Meeting Highlights

Tuesday

- Fee Changes - State Seed Program Updates
- The Forever Green Initiative
- GMO's - Perspectives of a Food Company
- Advances in Soybean Research
- Reopening of the MCIA Seed Lab
- Tradeshow Reception & Awards Banquet
- Guest Speaker: Kurtis Greenley -
Seed Corn: From Maize to Amazing

Wednesday

- Ag Standards & Legislative
Committee Meetings
- Annual Business Meeting
- Seed Certification - Back to the Future
- Use of Drones in Agriculture
- University of Minnesota Update

For more information visit www.mncia.org
or call the MCIA office.

Members of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) are encouraged to attend the organization's annual meeting on January 12 & 13th, at the Bigwood Event Center in Fergus Falls. The meeting addresses issues important to the seed industry and provides an excellent opportunity to visit with other seed professionals.

Activities begin on Tuesday afternoon with presentations on several interesting topics and an opportunity to meet Cliff Watrin, new Seed Unit Supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Prior to the Tradeshow reception attendees will hear information about the re-opening of the MCIA Seed Testing Lab.

Tuesday evening our featured banquet speaker is Kurt Greenley. The Greenley family was one of many that produced hybrid seed corn in the Dassel area. He will provide a historical and informative look back at seed corn production in that region. You will likely recognize many of the companies that produced seed corn in that area.

During the banquet, we will also recognize this year's Premier and Honorary Premier Seed Growers and present the Achievement in Crop Improvement Award.

Wednesday the program will continue with the MCIA Annual Business meeting, board elections, additional presentations and an update from the University of Minnesota.

To register for the meeting or to obtain more information contact MCIA at 800-510-6242 or visit us online at www.mncia.org

MCIA Seed Lab to Re-Open

At their November meeting, the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) Board of Directors approved plans to re-open the MCIA seed testing laboratory.

Attend the Annual Meeting to hear details and a timeline for the re-opening. Opening of the seed lab and other changes will help streamline the entire seed certification process and enhance overall communication with MCIA members.

In this Issue...

Chairman's View - Paul Adams	Page 2
News You Can Use	Page 2
President's Corner - Fawad S. Shah	Page 3
Organic Corner - Michelle Menken	Page 3



Chairman's View

Paul Adams, Board Chair

Disconnected in a Connected World



Welcome to the new age of communication! The consumer is just a click away from an overwhelming amount of information and opinion. You can find it on everything from the food we eat to the latest app that monitors your mood and changes your vehicles radio stations to make you feel better while driving.

This information age can have positive effects for both the consumer and producer. As producers we can inform the consumer about our products and consumers can make their buying decisions based on their wants and needs. Unfortunately, it can also have negative effects by misinforming the consumer about products and telling them what their wants and needs should be.

This is where I feel agriculture has a big disconnect with the consumer. We produce the highest quality and safest food in the world and yet few people understand how their food got on their plate. Saying that food comes from a grocery store is a common answer. Before food gets to the grocery store, few can explain the process correctly. Some call this disconnect a failure, but I would call it an opportunity.

Agriculture has one main purpose. We need to feed a world population which is always increasing. The only way we can accomplish this goal effectively is to educate the consumer. We have the technology now with the internet and Smartphone's to reach consumers from all over the world.

We need to tell our story! Why don't you post a video and tell everyone how you grow your product? If you don't know how to post videos, find someone under the age of 18. They will know how to do this in about 12 seconds. Show the process you use on the farm to produce your ag products. Share your story! It is crucial that we share our stories in order for agriculture to have a positive future. We can't have anyone else tell our story, that's our job.

On my farm, I want to be the one to explain these things to the consumer because my boots are on the ground every day. From start to finish, I have a hand in all the processes. I don't want my story told by someone, who has never been on a farm or sits in a large corporate board room in a big city. If we do not share our stories and do nothing, the stories that will get told to the consumer might not be the truth. They can get spun a different way, for the gain of some corporate market share or turned into a lie that the consumer is led to believe because no one has told them otherwise.

We now have the tools to reach and educate the consumer. We can explain how we are going to feed the world, directly from our tractor seat. It has never been easier to communicate to the masses. We need to move people away from the negative perception that seems to be looming around the dinner plate. Get connected, and show people why we are the best in the business. Get connected and share your story!

News You Can Use

Agronomic Standards Committee (Industrial Hemp and Tall Fescue)

The Agronomic Standards Committee will meet during the Annual Meeting at 8:00 a.m., Wednesday morning January 13th. On the agenda is the adoption of new standards for Industrial Hemp and Tall Fescue. The committee will also discuss changes to the corn standards. This is an open meeting and all MCIA members are encouraged to attend.

Selling Certified Seed

We have noted that offers are being made to sell Certified seed through on-line sites, like Craigslist. Remember varieties protected by PVP-Title V can only be sold as Certified seed. Field Inspected Seed is not Certified. Certification is complete once the seed has been conditioned, laboratory tested, a Seed Certification Report issued and the seed properly labeled. Unconditioned seed can only be sold to an Approved Conditioning Facility or to another MCIA member. If you have questions contact your Field Supervisor.

MN Field Crop Trials Online

The 2016 Field Crop Trials from the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) are available online at www.maes.umn.edu. The Field Crop Trials are printed in various other publications including the Minnesota Seed Guide, Agri News, Prairie Grains and Soybean Business magazines. The Trials can also be accessed through the MCIA website.

Foundation Seed Orders

The price list and order form for Foundation seed were mailed out to eligible members in early December. Currently we are accepting orders on a first come first serve basis, so order now for best availability. Information on new varieties will be distributed later this winter.

Opportunities to Connect at the MCIA Annual Meeting



As the old year ends and a new one begins, we are putting the final touches together for the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association's 2016 Annual Meeting. The meeting is scheduled from January 12-13 in Fergus Falls. I encourage you to attend and be an active part of your organization.

This year's program includes a wide range of topics such as, 'GMOs - Perspectives of a Food Company' and the use of drone technology in agriculture. Minnesota Department of Agriculture representatives will provide an update on the State

Seed Program and recent increase in seed fees. Chet Boruff of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agency (AOSCA), our international organization, will talk about opportunities in Seed Certification. Overall we have a great program planned.

We are fortunate to have a number of great sponsors and exhibitors in the tradeshow. The MCIA Annual Meeting is a better event because of their participation. We greatly appreciate their support.

In addition I am excited about the opportunity to discuss with you our plans to reopen the MCIA Seed Laboratory. Please plan to attend as I look forward to meeting you at the MCIA Annual Meeting.



Organic Corner

Michelle Menken, Organic Coordinator



MCIA Organic ended the year with 87 new clients- processors, crop and vegetable producers and livestock operations. This was our biggest growth ever in one year- almost 36%. Thank you to everyone who referred a new client to us. To help handle the increased growth, we

have added Wendy Paulsen to our staff. She has been an organic inspector for many years.

The growth in MCIA Organic matches that reported by the Organic Trade Association (OTA). They report U.S. organic sales of \$39.1 billion in 2014, an increase of 11% over the previous year. OTA projects continued double digit growth in organic sales. However many processors indicate there is a shortage of organic production in the U.S., this despite a 5% growth in the number of organic farms and \$5.5 billion in farm-gate sales in 2014.

As the demand for organic grows we have seen an increasing number of farmers asking about transitioning acres to organic production. The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program just published a workbook for producers interested in transitioning to organic: "Organic Transition; A

Business Planner for Farmers, Ranchers and Food Entrepreneurs." This book is available as a free download at: <http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books>.

They also have several other books that can be downloaded for free, including "Managing Cover Crops Profitably." In addition, both the Minnesota and North Dakota Departments of Agriculture offer cost-share programs for farmers who want to transition with a certifier. Please contact MCIA Organic if you want more information.

The conference season has begun. Once again we encourage everyone to attend one of the organic conferences. They are great places to meet new buyers and learn about new methods of production and management. Look for us at the Minnesota Organic Conference, January 8-9, in St. Cloud. During the conference we will host an MCIA Organic Committee meeting Friday at 5:30 p.m. in the Blue Room of the Conference Center, this meeting is open to all MCIA Organic members and anyone interested in organic certification.

There are several other conferences that we will attend, check the back page of this issue for a list of meetings, dates and locations. We hope to see you at one of these meetings, please stop to say hi or introduce yourselves if we haven't met.



Happy
New Year!
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

- 8-9 MN Organic Conference, St. Cloud
- 12-13 MCIA Annual Meeting, Fergus Falls
- 14-15 Midwest Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conf., St. Cloud
- 18-22 Small Grain Update Meetings, various locations
Check the MCIA website calendar for times and locations
- 22-23 NPSAS Winter Conf., Aberdeen, SD
- 27-28 MN Ag Expo, Mankato
- 30-31 Immigrant & Minority Farm Conference, St. Paul

February

- 13 SFA Annual Meeting, St. Joseph
- 17-18 SFA Midwest Soil Health Summit, Alexandria
- 25-27 MOSES Organic Farming Conference, La Crosse

March

- 29-30 AOSCA Northern Region Meeting, Minneapolis

See the MCIA website for more upcoming events at www.mncia.org